



Palm Beach State to graduate first class of bachelor's degree students May 9

They are among 1, 694 students receiving degrees and 459 receiving certificates during two ceremonies at the Palm Beach County Convention Center.

(Lake Worth, Fla. – May 2, 2011) Palm Beach State College will graduate its first class of bachelor's degree students May 9, marking another milestone for the 78-year-old institution.

The College will award the Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Supervision and Management to 122 spring graduates during a Commencement Ceremony at 1 p.m. at the Palm Beach County Convention Center. They are among 1, 694 graduates of degree programs, which also include the Associate in Arts, Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science.

A separate ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. for the 459 graduates of the College's certificate programs designed to prepare students to go directly into the workforce in such fields as dental assisting, welding, massage therapy, and medical assisting.

The College first began offering the B.A.S. in Supervision and Management in fall 2009 with concentrations in general management, health management and public safety management. It has since added two other bachelors' degree programs: the Bachelor of Applied Science in Information Management, which began this year, and the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, which will begin next year.

"This is a historic moment in the history of Palm Beach State College," said Dr. Dennis Gallon, president of Palm Beach State College. "The addition of the bachelor's degree to our curriculum inventory was significant for the College and the residents of Palm Beach County. I am so pleased that we had the foresight to pursue offering these degree programs and to create this opportunity to see them finish a goal that will lead to better career opportunities."

Catherine Pascale, who will be among the Commencement speakers, said she is proud to be a part of the first class of bachelor's degree graduates. "We're precedent setting," she said. She completed the program while working two jobs at one point, including her current technician

position at an optometry practice, and maintaining a 3.6 grade point average. The Greenacres resident enrolled in the bachelor's program in fall 2009 after completing the coursework for the A.A. degree. She said that with the program she was able to avoid a long commute to class, save on tuition since she funded her own education and live at home to save money while completing her degree.

She was determined to finish her undergraduate education in four years. "This fit the direction that I wanted to go. I fulfilled my educational goal. This degree will give me the potential to run a company and maybe even become a C.E.O. because I have the skills and the drive," said Pascale, who pursued the general management track and now hopes to get a master's degree.

The majority of spring graduates are receiving the Associate in Arts, the College's transfer degree that guarantees them admission to one of Florida's 11 public universities. Among them are four Palm Beach County and two home-schooled high school senior students who, through the Dual Enrollment program, completed the requirements for college while pursuing their high school diploma.

Serving more than 52,000 students annually, Palm Beach State College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, providing bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, professional certificates, career training and lifelong learning. Established in 1933 as Florida's first public community college, it offers more than 100 programs of study at locations in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Gardens and Belle Glade.

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