

Palm Beach State to dedicate Fire Training Tower June 14

***Local fire rescue units will help celebrate opening of
unique training facility***

(Lake Worth, Fla. – May 31, 2011) Palm Beach State will celebrate the completion of its new Fire Training Tower with an opening ceremony on Flag Day, Tuesday, June 14 at 4:30 p.m. at the College's Fire Academy complex on the Lake Worth campus. The five-story structure—the most advanced of its kind in South Florida—will be used to conduct sophisticated training drills for area fire rescue units as well as Palm Beach State's Fire Academy students.

Local fire rescue units and the public are invited to attend the opening ceremony, which will feature a Presentation of Colors by the West Palm Beach Fire Rescue Honor Guard and music by the Palm Beach County Fire Rescue Pipes and Drums band.

Local firefighters, including recent Palm Beach State graduate Michael Frattaruolo, Jr. of West Palm Beach Fire Rescue, will rappel down the side of the Fire Training Tower to unfurl a 20x40 American flag. A ceremonial fire hose "uncoupling" will take place, in lieu of a ribbon cutting, with College President Dennis P. Gallon disconnecting fire hose sections stretched across the front of the tower.

"There's a lot of excitement at the Fire Academy about our new training tower," says Barbara Cipriano, associate dean for Public Safety programs at the College, which include Fire Science, Criminal Justice, Emergency Management and Emergency Medical Services. "The tower reflects all our efforts and commitment to turning out the best prepared firefighters, capable of handling any situation."

The Fire Training Tower is part of the 147,000-square-foot Public Safety Training Center being developed on the campus. Like the indoor firing range completed last year, the Fire Training Tower was



designed by Stephen Boruff, AIA, Architects + Planners, Inc. and constructed by Balfour Beatty Construction.

“This tower fulfills a real need for Palm Beach State and the community,” says Kerry Weiss, interim director and lead instructor of the College’s Fire Academy. “Its unique features allow us to create training simulations that are as close to the real thing as possible.”

The tower’s multi-tiered design means students can practice high-rise building rescue techniques one day and single- and two-story house fire rescues the next. No actual fire will be used in the tower—the Fire Academy has a separate “burn building” and a full complement of burn props for live fire training. Rather, the tower’s function is to train firefighters in all aspects of fire rescue and survival.

One distinctive feature is the tower’s high-rise alarm system, which tells the status of the heat and smoke detectors and water sprinklers on each floor. It mimics those found in high-rise buildings, but with one difference: the tower’s system is programmable, allowing instructors to preset conditions for different fire scenarios. Trainees won’t know what to expect and will need to evaluate alarm status on the spot. Alarm sounds and strobe lights add to the realism of the training. All training employs redundant safety measures and mannequins.

Other features include a fully operational elevator covering three of the five floors, allowing for simulations involving passenger rescue; an isolated fourth floor will be used for rescues of trapped victims from confined spaces; a floor cutout on the fifth story allows for exercises involving floor breaks that often endanger firefighters as well as victims; and the tower’s roof has davits for hoisting tools and equipment, or hanging scaffolding to simulate a scaffolding rescue.

The tower will serve the Fire Academy students, area firefighters taking advanced courses with the College’s Public Safety continuing education division, local fire rescue units conducting training modules, and those pursuing the College’s Fire Science Technology A.S. degree.

“Firefighters never stop training, and this facility will be heavily used by both students and firefighters from South Florida, and potentially those from other states. We look forward to giving this tower a workout,” said Weiss.

For more information about the Fire Training Tower opening ceremony, please call 561-868-3993. For more information about the College’s Public Safety programs, please visit www.palmbeachstate.edu and click on Areas of Study.

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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Photo Caption: Palm Beach State College to open new Fire Training Tower, part of College’s Public Safety Training Center, on June 14.

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