



Palm Beach State to launch Ophthalmic Medical Technology associate degree program in August

***First-of-its-kind program in South Florida
Information sessions begin March 1***

(Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. – Feb. 2, 2012) Palm Beach State College will begin offering an Associate in Science degree in Ophthalmic Medical Technology starting in the 2012 fall term. Classes for the two-year program will be held on the Palm Beach Gardens campus commencing Aug. 23, in a newly constructed learning center, complete with a laboratory featuring the latest ophthalmic equipment. There are only about two dozen such programs nationwide, and Palm Beach State College's will be the first in South Florida.

Information sessions will be held from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursdays, March 1, April 5, May 3 and June 7 in Room SC152 in the BioScience Technology Complex on the Palm Beach Gardens campus, 3160 PGA Blvd.

The Ophthalmic Medical Technology A.S. degree program will provide comprehensive training in one of the nation's fastest-growing medical occupations. Ophthalmic medical technologists work closely with M.D. ophthalmologists—eye physicians and surgeons—in the evaluation of vision and treatment of patients with eye disorders. Using advanced diagnostic instrumentation, ophthalmic medical technologists obtain medical histories, measure patients' visual acuity and assess optical correction, assist the physician, and perform clinical and administrative responsibilities.

"This program has been five years in the making," says Robert M. Kershner, M.D., M.S., F.A.C.S., the board-certified ophthalmologist who developed the program and will serve as department chairman. "A career in vision is one of the most satisfying and rewarding you could choose. Certified ophthalmic medical assistants, technicians and technologists are among the most sought-after careers in all of medicine and in high demand by eye physicians and surgeons."

Preference for admission will be granted to residents of Florida, where the need for eye medical treatment and surgery is strong and growing. Students will develop technical proficiency through a hands-on curriculum taught by ophthalmologists and certified technicians, and perform externships in local ophthalmic practices, clinics and hospitals. Following program completion and industry-standardized examination, graduates will be qualified to be certified by the Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology as a Certified Ophthalmic Assistant, Certified Ophthalmic Technician or Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist.

Palm Beach State received final approval to offer the A.S. degree in Ophthalmic Medical Technology from its accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The program joins more than 20 other health care-related degree and certificate programs offered by the College. For more information call 561-207-5726 or visit www.PalmBeachState.edu/OMT.xml.

Serving more than 51,000 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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