



Palm Beach State College to host Spanish Language Week April 16-20

Chef Omar Covarrubias is among the presenters

(Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. – April 13, 2012) Palm Beach State College will kick off its Third Annual Spanish Language Week Celebration April 16 with a series of musical events, films, guest speakers and other activities scheduled each day through Friday.

Among the highlights is a Mexican Gastronomy presentation by Chef Omar Covarrubias, who was named national Latino Chef of the Year at the Flavors of Passion Awards in Texas last year. The event will be held from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 17 in the Meldon Lecture Hall at Palm Beach State College in Palm Beach Gardens, 3160 PGA Blvd. There also will be a screening of “AbUSed: the Postville Raid” that chronicles the largest immigration raid in U.S. history. The screening will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. April 17, and Luis Argueta, director of the film, will be on hand to answer questions.

The celebration includes special days dedicated to Spain (Monday), Mexico and Central America (Tuesday), Latino Women (Wednesday) and Latino Youth and Education (Thursday). The event concludes Friday, April 20, with a spotlight on successful Latinos in South Florida, a 40-minute revue of the Broadway musical “Man of LaMancha” and a closing ceremony full of fanfare. All events are free and open to the public.

The College began holding the celebration in 2010 after Spanish Professor Patricia Betancourt, a native of Panama, received a grant from the Eisey Campus Humanities Opportunities (ECHO) Fund. The ECHO grants allow faculty and staff on the Palm Beach Gardens campus to provide innovative educational experiences in the arts or humanities. She received a third grant this year.

In addition to showing the talents of Hispanics, Betancourt said she hopes the festival will encourage individuals to embrace other cultures.

“We’re hoping that more students will be motivated to learn other languages and learn about other cultures to understand people and be more tolerant of people that are different from them.”

The event ties into Spanish Language Day April 23, which is celebrated largely in Spanish countries in honor of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, Spain's influential novelist, poet and playwright. Many believe his fame and literary work parallels that of English writer William Shakespeare. Cervantes died in Madrid, on April 23, 1616.

For the complete schedule and information on the presenters, visit www.palmbeachstate.edu/SpanishWeek.xml. For more information, contact Patricia Betancourt at 561-207-5050 or email betancop@palmbeachstate.edu.

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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