

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PBCC forms partnership with company that “revolutionized the truck driving school business”

Palm Beach Community College students who want to earn a commercial driver’s license (CDL) can now study with the top-rated truck driving school in the nation, SAGE Technical Services.

SAGE received the “editor’s pick” rating from the All-American Truck Driving Schools Guide at www.truckschoolsusa.com. The tractor-trailer driving program is offered at PBCC’s location in Lake Worth and will be offered in Belle Glade later this year.

Students who complete PBCC’s tractor-trailer driving program earn a Post-Secondary Adult Vocational Certificate and are eligible to take the test to receive a CDL. SAGE issues a certification upon completion as well. “It’s a nice combination of public-private partnership that provides good training at a reasonable cost,” said **John Schmiederer**, vice president of workforce development.

“SAGE revolutionized the truck driving school business by being the first company (and the only one that we are aware of) that guarantees every student’s driving instruction will be private, with only one student per truck,” Truck Schools USA has written on its Web site. Many truck driving schools teach groups of students in one truck to cut costs. SAGE students receive a minimum of 44 hours behind the wheel with experienced instructors as part of the 160-hour program.

“Our students receive 78 percent more driving instruction than at typical CDL schools,” said **Ron France**, CDL program director. “There’s no paying to watch someone else drive.”

“We’ve been very pleased with their training and sharing expertise,” Schmiederer said. “By them working with the college, it puts the students in a college environment where they can have the course documented on a transcript.”

France said the high demand for tractor-trailer drivers in coastal communities and the county’s western communities is increasing, and jobs come with great benefits and bonuses. Typical first-year earnings for drivers on local routes is \$20,000-\$30,000. First-year drivers on regional routes earn from \$32,000-\$40,000, and “over the road” national route drivers earn between \$36,000 and \$50,000 their first year.

Tuition for the four-week program is less than at many other CDL schools, France said, plus most trucking companies offer tuition reimbursement. PBCC's tuition is \$3,361.40. Many of PBCC's driving students are funded through the Veterans Administration, Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Development. Bank loans also are available.

Both women and team drivers are in great demand, France said. Many trucking companies allow drivers to take along a companion, including pets. Applicants for the CDL program must pass a criminal background check, a drug screen and a Department of Transportation physical. Motor vehicle reports of applicants' driving history also are required. To inquire further, call Ron France at (561) 868-3120.