

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PALM BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE GAINS 10% ENROLLMENT JUMP

PBCC enjoys seventh consecutive term with a higher headcount

(Lake Worth, FL – September 16, 2002) **Palm Beach Community College** is experiencing its seventh consecutive term of enrollment increases this fall with a 10 percent increase in total headcount.

The increase occurred in both college credit courses and career and technical programs. Total headcount at the end of the add/drop period was 23,393, up from last fall's enrollment of 21,243.

College officials attributed the ongoing increases to many factors, particularly the College's focus on serving students' needs and helping them to succeed, that has sustained PBCC's long-term growth.

"Our increased emphasis on service to our students has involved asking students and the community what they need, and responding to those needs," said Dennis P. Gallon, Ph.D., PBCC president. "We're doing a better job of helping students with educational planning and communicating about our programs. Our image in the community has changed in a positive way, as we are becoming more of an institution of first choice."

Scott MacLachlan, dean of enrollment management at PBCC, points to better intake procedures, better communication and new success initiatives. "We're looking at every area of the College, asking how we can better serve students. PBCC has experienced a collective cultural commitment within the college to focus on the needs of students and their success," MacLachlan explained.

That "collective cultural commitment" at the College also has produced better retention of students, with more PBCC students graduating and among them, a greater diversity of graduates, he said. One of those success initiatives, the **Student Support Services Program**, is a grant-funded program serving disadvantaged and first-generation college students. The program supports those at-risk students through the college process from matriculation to graduation.

More financial aid has boosted enrollment, too, MacLachlan said. In the last two years, financial aid has grown more than 10 percent, some of that going to part-time students who previously

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were not eligible for aid. This fall, part-time students carrying six credit hours rather than the previous requisite nine credit hours were eligible for aid.

Outreach programs and pre-enrollment initiatives have contributed to enrollment increases at the College as well. Pre-enrollment initiatives involve working with the K-12 system to encourage young people to go to college. This fall, PBCC will provide support services to encourage adults to attend college by establishing **Educational Opportunity Centers** housed in various community organizations.

About Palm Beach Community College:

Palm Beach Community College, a comprehensive institution established in 1933, offers more than 100 programs of study at campuses in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Belle Glade and Palm Beach Gardens. PBCC provides associate degrees in arts and science, professional certificates, workforce development and lifelong learning.

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