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Summer programs for high school graduates offer free tuition and books at Palm Beach Community College

Support extends to helpful seminars, mentoring and possible scholarships

(January 18, 2005 – Lake Worth, FL) Higher education can be a rude awakening for recent high school graduates. A college student must adjust to the “sink or swim” atmosphere, and some drop out. Palm Beach Community College has programs to keep 250 students afloat by offering free tuition and books, workshops that orient new students to a college environment and college services, mentoring and possible scholarships.

The **Fast Break** program allows 100 recently graduated high school seniors in Palm Beach County to enroll in one summer course in math, reading or English without paying for tuition and books. A similar program, **Summer Bridge**, pays the cost of two courses for 150 students who need remedial courses in English, reading and math to prepare for college-level classes. Both programs in Lake Worth, Palm Beach Gardens and Boca Raton provide workshops, free tutoring and guest speakers to help students make the transition from high school to college.

PBCC student James Courbanou completed the Summer Bridge program last year, which gave him an opportunity to adjust to college life while the campus was quieter, he said. “Summer Bridge is a great program that gave me the motivation to go to college,” he said. “They taught me how to study, and my grades went up. I’ve also learned to be more responsible.”

Jacinta Ducreay kept in constant contact with her high school guidance counselor to find college scholarships. The PBCC student, who wants to be a news anchor, said Fast Break gave her “the best college experience to start out as I could have. The workshops helped me to feel good about college, and I became motivated to work hard.” At the end of the summer term, Ducreay wrote a winning essay on Fast Break, netting her a \$2,000 scholarship.

The early deadline to apply for Fast Break or Summer Bridge is Feb. 7, and the final deadline is April 29. To qualify for Fast Break, you must have a 2.0 grade point average (GPA) and be a resident of Florida. There is no GPA requirement for Summer Bridge. To apply for the summer programs, students may contact their high school guidance counselor or visit the Web site at www.pbcc.edu/fastbreak.

To find out more, call Trina Wagnac at (561) 862-4335 or e-mail her at wagnact@pbcc.edu To find out more about Summer Bridge, call Tom Ferazzoli at (561) 207-5335 or e-mail him at ferazzot@pbcc.edu

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