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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **NAACP honors Palm Beach Community College provost**

(Lake Worth, Fla.—March 1, 2005) Maria Vallejo, Ph.D., provost of Palm Beach Community College's Lake Worth campus, was recently honored by the South Palm Beach Branch of the NAACP for her extensive work in the community.

She was among 13 community leaders honored in various categories at an awards ceremony in February. Dr. Vallejo received the Louise E. Buie Founders Award, named in honor of the late civil rights activist who championed the integration of schools, housing, employment, as well as ballfields, hotels and restaurants in Palm Beach County. The honorees received beautiful framed and engraved artwork.

"It was a humbling experience," Dr. Vallejo, a lifetime member of the NAACP, said of the recognition. "If I could do 1/100th of what she did in her lifetime than I might come closer to feeling deserving of this honor."

Dr. Vallejo has more than 25 years of experience in higher education. Prior to becoming provost at PBCC in 1999, she served as vice president of academic and student services at Nassau Community College and vice president of student affairs at Rockland Community College in New York. She also has worked at private and public four-year colleges and universities.

She has become well-connected in Palm Beach County and has worked tirelessly for numerous boards and organizations, including the March of Dimes, the city of West Palm Beach Education Advisory Board and the board of directors of the Quantam Foundation.

She is active with the Women and Hispanic chambers of commerce as well as the Executive Women of the Palm Beaches where she forged partnerships that bring more scholarship opportunities to women and students of color.

She has partnered with Palms West Hospital in the areas of diversity and community outreach. She sits on the board of the ASPIRA of Palm Beach and has provided assistance with student conferences, summer camp and higher education opportunities for ASPIRA participants.

Nationally, Dr. Vallejo sits on several boards which focus on leadership

development and higher education. She holds a doctorate in bilingual curriculum development/higher education from New York University. She earned two master's degrees from Columbia University and her bachelor's degree from Hampshire College.

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