



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State grant boosts three workforce programs

(Sept. 5, 2006 – Lake Worth, FL) Palm Beach Community College has received almost half a million dollars to address critical workforce shortages in the county from the state Department of Education through the SUCCEED, Florida! Career Education Grants. PBCC programs were allotted:

- \$226,189 for a Paramedic to RN Transition program
- \$105,383 for a bilingual Child Development Associate (CDA) program, and
- \$151,000 for the Teacher Certification program.

“PBCC has led the state in innovative programs. The College’s child care ESOL is one-of-a-kind, and the entire teacher education statewide community college initiative started here,” said C.B. Wohl, grants development manager.

The Paramedic to RN Transition program is a new initiative that will allow paramedics wanting to become registered nurses to advance place into the third semester of the nursing program. PBCC nursing program personnel will use the fall semester to develop a bridge program where paramedics will gain first-year skills and knowledge, modeled after the successful practical nursing to registered nursing (PN to RN) program, and the bridge course be offered in January 2007.

Registered nurses who were paramedics are in high demand in the county, said Jacqueline Rogers, dean of health sciences and occupational education. The county fire-rescue department requires Trauma Hawk flight paramedics to also be registered nurses, and hospitals report that RNs with paramedic backgrounds are ideal to staff their emergency rooms, Rogers said.

The new, hybrid Child Development Associate course child care professors will develop with this year’s funding will pave the way for Spanish-speaking child care workers to continue their education. In the past, the CDA credential has only been taught in English at PBCC, but for those who don’t speak English well, this can make achieving this credential more difficult, said Sheila Scott-Lubin, manager early childhood education and K-12 program.

The new bilingual CDA class will have an ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) component, which will help those professionals advance toward one of PBCC's degree programs. CDAs are in high demand in Florida, she said, because state law requires lead teachers in voluntary pre-kindergarten to have the CDA credential. PBCC's child care courses for Spanish speakers are always full, Scott-Lubin said.

The new grant funding for the teacher certification program will allow PBCC to continue to help professionals with bachelor's degrees to become teachers. The one-year academic course work includes seven courses and two field experiences taught by adjunct professors with K-12 teaching experience. The courses help participants gain competencies in areas such as classroom management, instructional strategies and technology, said Susan Caldwell, associate dean of academic affairs. The new funding will also help train program professors to develop Web components for their classes and attend professional development workshops. Grant funds also will be used to purchase laptops for the classrooms and to refine the curriculum, Caldwell said.

"State funding of PBCC's SUCCEED projects allows the college to address some of the most critical workforce needs in Palm Beach County and is indicative of the Department of Education's confidence in our ability to carry out these model programs," said PBCC President Dennis Gallon.

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