

PALM BEACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PBCC Criminal Justice Institute Recertified

COCOA BEACH, Fla. (Feb. 1, 2007) -- The state Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission voted unanimously today to approve full recertification of Palm Beach Community College law enforcement and corrections training programs.

Dr. Ginger Pedersen, PBCC dean of curriculum, planning and research, said the five-year recertification enables the College's Criminal Justice Institute to continue to train and educate police officers, which it has done since 1973. The Institute had been operating for the last six months under an extension of its previous certification while the Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigated a complaint on classroom procedural irregularities and some previous noncompliance citations.

"We are pleased that our continued certification has been unanimously approved. Our criminal justice instructors and staff have worked hard over the last year to set standards and procedures to ensure quality control. Our recertification allows the College to expand and continue in its critical role of preparing the professional law enforcement and corrections officers serving our communities," Dr. Pedersen said.

Michael D. Crews, director of FDLE's Criminal Justice Professionalism Program, informed the commission that FDLE has completed its scrutiny and was recommending recertification. "Over the last six months, staff has seen noticeable improvements with the school, and the efforts of Director Patrick Kelly to improve the school's services are apparent," Crews observed.

Kelly, a veteran law enforcement officer and former police chief for departments in Osceola and Miami-Dade counties, joined PBCC Sept. 1 as Institute director. Kelly has worked closely with the local law enforcement leadership to strengthen the Institute, which trains more than 80 percent of Palm Beach County's police officers.

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