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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PBCC to celebrate fall commencement with two ceremonies

(Lake Worth, Fla. – Dec. 10, 2008) Palm Beach Community College will hold two separate commencement ceremonies to award certificates and degrees to summer and fall term graduates.

PBCC will confer 480 certificates to students in the Post Secondary Adult Vocational (PSAV) and certificate programs at 6 p.m. Dec. 18 at the Duncan Theatre at PBCC Lake Worth, 4200 Congress Avenue.

The student speaker for this ceremony is Betsy Unger, who began her educational journey at age 39 through PBCC's Crossroads program. With a 4.0 grade point average, Unger has taken honors courses while working as a supplemental instruction leader for math prep, a student assistant for the social sciences department and a volunteer with Crossroads, as well as being a full-time mom raising two daughters. She will be awarded her college credit certificate in human services from PBCC.

This ceremony will include alumni speaker Captain Javatis Midget of the Palm Beach County Fire Rescue. He is a PBCC academy instructor and future student of PBCC's bachelor's of applied science program.

A separate ceremony for those earning an associate in science, associate in applied science or an associate in arts degree, will be held at 1 p.m. Dec. 19 at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, 650 Okeechobee Blvd, downtown West Palm Beach.

The majority of the degrees earned are the associate in arts transfer degrees, which means that 1,996 graduates have completed the first two years of their bachelor's degrees.

Among those earning associate in science and associate in applied science degrees, registered nurses are the largest group, with 100 graduates—most of whom will go directly to work to ease the nursing shortage at local health care facilities. Radiographers are the next largest group of graduates in that area.

One of the more popular associate in science degree programs at PBCC, Emergency Medical Services, is graduating 26 students with degrees. Twenty-seven students will receive degrees in Business Administration and Management.

Student speakers for the degree ceremony are Paula Perez from PBCC's Belle Glade campus and Chris D'Aprix from PBCC at Boca Raton. Perez is a native resident of Belle Glade, a wife, mother and teacher who is very passionate about learning. As a student herself, Perez imparts knowledge into the lives of young children in her classroom. She plans to continue her education after graduating from PBCC.

D'Aprix, a U.S. Navy veteran, returned to study education at PBCC. In addition to his course work, he has served as the president of the ecology club, treasurer for Phi Theta Kappa and active member of the PBCC sustainability committee. He will be attending Florida Atlantic University in the spring to study ocean engineering.

Alumni speaker for the degree ceremony, Patrick Whitehead, is a successful local attorney who started his journey at PBCC. Whitehead was admitted to the bar in 1997 and currently practices estate planning, charitable planning, probate and trusts, non-profit law, business law, tax law, education law and general corporate counsel.

Palm Beach Community College, Florida's first public community college, is celebrating its 75th anniversary throughout 2008. The largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, PBCC serves more than 45,000 students annually through its associate degrees, professional certificates, career and customized training and lifelong learning. The College offers more than 100 programs of study at locations in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Gardens and Belle Glade.

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