

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Celebration held for PBCC's inaugural class of bachelor's degree students

(Lake Worth, Fla. –Aug. 24, 2009) Students in the inaugural class of Palm Beach Community College's first bachelor's degree program marked the beginning of their journey during a 15-minute celebration Aug. 24.

Dr. Dennis Gallon, PBCC president, and Dr. Magdala Ray, dean of baccalaureate studies, led a ribbon cutting outside the classroom doors where some of the students were scheduled to take their first required classes.

"This is a large and significant moment in the life of Palm Beach Community College," Gallon said, addressing the roughly 75 students, faculty and staff at the Technical Education Building on PBCC's Lake Worth campus. "I hope that 30 years from now, you will be able to look at some photos with your grandkids and say, 'Here I am. I was a part of that great life of Palm Beach Community College. I am so delighted that I was there in that inaugural class.' "

PBCC received approval last year from the State Board of Education and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to offer its first Bachelor of Applied Science degree in supervision and management. The program has three tracks in health, public safety or business administration. Five hundred students have been accepted into the program, and more than 340 are enrolled in courses for the fall term.

When College leaders first sought approval for the program, they were only expecting 100 students to enroll in the first three years. However, the demand for the program, which drew 667 applicants, has been much greater. "We've tripled the anticipated enrollment, which is evident that we are listening to the needs of Palm Beach County's workforce and continuing our mission of accessibility and affordability," Ray said.

That workforce includes people like Alicia Heerah, an emergency room registration specialist at JFK Medical Center who holds an Associate in Arts degree from PBCC and is now pursuing the B.A.S. health administration track to advance her career. She's going to school during the day while working full-time at night. "I'm really happy," she said of the program. "I knew it was going to be cost effective, and it's close to home, so it worked out perfectly."

About Palm Beach Community College: Serving more than 49,000 students annually, Palm Beach Community College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, providing the bachelor's degree, associate degrees, professional certificates, career training and lifelong learning. Florida's first public community college, PBCC offers more than 100 programs of study at locations in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Gardens and Belle Glade.

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Editor's note:

To watch the celebration on YouTube visit: <http://www.youtube.com/palmbeachcc>.

Pictures from the event can be found on flickr at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/39106155@N04/?saved=1>