

Palm Beach State College President Dennis Gallon helped the SBDC fuel Palm Beach County economic recovery

by delivering a powerful message to an audience of county economic leaders, entrepreneurs, and college staff. His message, the keynote address at March 19's Fueling the Economic Recovery program, was a promise to devote the college's resources at every opportunity to helping facilitate local recovery from the worst economic recession since The Great Depression.

Speaking on the Boca Raton campus, Dr. Gallon expressed particular concern for residents who find themselves unemployed as companies disappear or down-size. Palm Beach State College's SBDC, Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), degree and certification programs, and Corporate and Continuing Education programs will spearhead the effort, he said.

"The great thing is that a student can enroll at Palm Beach State and within a short period of time have the knowledge and qualifications to obtain a good job." He also emphasized the assistance the college's entrepreneurial specialists at the SBDC and PTAC render to the county's small business owners. The centers joined the Boca Raton campus at the beginning of 2009.

In addition to Dr. Gallon's address, attendees enjoyed breakout sessions delivered by guest speakers and by SBDC and PTAC staff. SBDC CBAs Ted Kramer and Phil Scruton spoke on small business financing and contemporary marketing. PTAC Specialist Mike Bell described the process of doing business with Palm Beach County. Successful U.S. Department of Defense contractor Mark Llano, and SBDC/PTAC client, spoke about his odyssey from start-up entrepreneur, working out of his home, to receipt of a government contract in excess of \$5.5 billion. Francisco J. Palacio, founder of Social Media Mentoring, Inc., spoke on opportunities for business inherent in the latest social media, such as Face Book and Twitter. Andrew Duffell of the Business Development board of Palm Beach County presented an overview of the county's economic situation and its prospects for recovery.

**Rudy Magasrevy, Managing Director of Lean and Green LLC, spoke on green technologies for businesses.

Supporters and attendees of the event included representatives from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Workforce Alliance, the Boca Raton Chamber, the West Boca Chamber, Mercantile Bank, SunTrust Bank, PNC Bank, Florida first Capital, the Florida Department of Financial Services, the Boca Raton Tribune, and the Palm Beach County Office of Small Business Assistance.

As a result of the program's success, Tom Gallman of the SBA asked Dr. Gallon to reprise his address at the SBA-sponsored program Economic Recovery One Year Later. This event, held at the Boca Raton campus on April 27, also featured economic overviews by Gallman and presentations by local resource partners including the Paragon Foundation and the Florida Women's Business Center. Former SBDC Director Jacie Keeley and PTAC Specialist Carole Hart spoke about the services provided by their respective units.