

## **SOUTHWEST FLORIDA COLLEGE PLANS 35TH COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY**

Fort Myers, Fla., (May 8, 2009) – A leading local educator will accept an honorary degree and another will deliver the commencement address to 376 students receiving degrees, diplomas, and certificates at Southwest Florida College's 35<sup>th</sup> commencement exercise, planned for Saturday, June 20 at Harborside Event Center.

“Graduation marks an important milestone for our students and is the culmination of years of dedication, hard work, and sacrifice,” said Dr. Stephen Calabro, Executive Vice President of Southwest Florida College. “We look forward each year with great excitement as we watch our graduates begin a new chapter in their lives.”

The commencement speaker for the ceremony, Dr. Jane Kuckel, was elected to Lee County school board in November 2000. She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Miami University, her master's degree in administration and supervision from Bowling Green State University and her doctorate from Michigan State University in Curriculum and Administration.

Dr. Kuckel has distinguished herself in the field of education for over 30 years and has made invaluable contributions to the children of Lee County by serving on the Lee County school board for the past 9 years. She is a nationally recognized expert in the field and held positions from classroom teacher to college professor.

“Dr. Kuckel has a demonstrated interest in elementary education and it is most fitting to have her as our commencement speaker this year as the College graduates its first class of bachelor's degree student in early childhood education and elementary education,” said Dr. Calabro.

When Dr. Kuckel retired as assistant superintendent from Lee County Schools, she sought the board seat to continue her commitment to improve the quality of education in Lee County schools. She said her hard work and service has been focused on “preparing today's students for the challenges of tomorrow.”

SWFC has awarded approximately 10 honorary degrees in past years. This year, the honorary degree recipient will be Kathy Mizereck, Executive Director for the Florida Association of Postsecondary Schools and Colleges. Mizereck has held positions as a high school reading and English teacher. She has earned her bachelor's degree in English and secondary education from the University of Florida and her master's degree in curriculum and instruction from the University of Wisconsin– Madison.

Some of Mizereck's credentials include working with critically low performing schools as Executive Director for the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability; partaking in the School Code Rewrite and Workforce Education Task Force as Director of Legislative Affairs for the Florida Department of Education; and managing the development of teacher certification subject area tests as Project Manager for the Center for Instructional Development and Services.

Since the College was founded in 1974, approximately 4,500 students have graduated with degrees, diplomas and certificates in career fields such as allied health, legal studies, education, business, design and information technology – all of which offer high growth potential. This year's ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, June 20 at Harborside Event Center. There will be a reception to follow for the guest speaker and honorary degree recipient. For more information on the event and directions to Harborside Event Center, please call (239) 939-4766.

*Southwest Florida College is an accredited, private, nonprofit institution of higher learning centrally located in Fort Myers, Tampa, Port Charlotte, and includes the Institute of Interior Design located within the International Design Center in Estero. The College has been providing post secondary education to Floridians since 1974 and offers programs in Allied Health, Business, Design, Education, Information Technology and Legal Studies. Its mission is to provide educational opportunities for individuals to acquire*

*knowledge and skills that will help prepare them for rewarding careers in fields with high growth potential.*  
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