



ON  
CAMPUS:

# Pearl River Community College

www.prcc.edu

PUBLIC 2 YEAR

**A** 14 percent increase in enrollment fueled in large part by the sagging economy marks the beginning of Pearl River Community College's second century of service to South Mississippi.

Figures show 5,184 students enrolled at one of the three PRCC campuses, satellite locations or on-line.

Much of the increase is attributed to the poor economy, which has saddled the state with a 9.8 percent unemployment rate.

"A lot of it is because they're out of work and they need retraining, especially adult students," said Dr. Ann Moore, director of the counseling center in Poplarville. "A lot of it is driven by the economy."

Traditional students realize they need more than the high school diploma to make a decent living, she said.

PRCC, the state's oldest community college, opened its doors on Sept. 8, 1909, as Pearl River County Agricultural High School and observed its centennial with a slate of activities during the 2008-09 year.

PRCC offers a full range of academic courses for students planning to earn an associate's degree and transfer to a four-year institution. It also offers more than 20 career-technical programs, ranging from nursing and dental hygiene to welding and auto mechanics technology.

Several programs, including construction equipment operators technology and utility line-man technology, are funded by grants at reduced or no cost to students.

PRCC did not increase tuition or fees for the 2009-10 academic year, which also factors into the spike in enrollment, said Dr. Adam Breerwood, dean of student services.

"It seems like our message of a good quality education for a good price is getting out," he said. "Lines for admissions and financial aid have been out the door."

A full-time student at PRCC pays tuition of \$850 per semester.

"It's cheaper," said PRCC freshman education major Blair Hardin of Lumberton. "I planned to go to USM but I realized I need to save my



For Next Magazine

**Students show their support** for the Pearl River Community College Wildcat football team.

## Pearl River Community College, 1909

**Main Campus:** 101 U.S. Highway 11 North, Poplarville, MS 39470.

**Forrest County Center:** 5448 U.S. Highway 49 South, Hattiesburg, MS 39401

**Hancock Center:** 454 U.S. Highway 90,

Suite D, Waveland, MS 39576

**President:** Dr. William A. Lewis

**Recruitment:** (601) 403-1197

**Admissions:** (601) 403-1214

**Financial aid:** (601) 403-1029

**Web site:** www.prcc.edu

money."

PRCC students get the full college experience with a variety of special-interest clubs and organizations, performing arts groups and sports. The PRCC Wildcat football team, National Junior College Athletic Association champions in 2004, annually contend for the state championship.

Residence halls on the Poplarville campus are full with a waiting list of about 35 males, Breerwood said.

A new athletic field house is under construction near Dobie Holden Stadium and work is expected to begin early next year on renovations to Moody Hall. Hurricane Katrina destroyed the auditorium at the back of Moody

Hall and heavily damaged the rest of the building.

Longer-range plans include construction of a new M.R. White Coliseum to replace the original building destroyed by Katrina and a state-of-the-art performing arts center.

PRCC hired several part-time and adjunct instructors to accommodate the increase of almost 350 students on the Poplarville campus, said Dr. John Grant, vice president for instruction.

"We've had to increase class sizes," he said. "We've had to be very creative in scheduling."

An increase of slightly more than 250 students stretched personnel and facilities at the Forrest County Center.