

Palm Beach Students Better Prepared for School Year, Thanks to 2010 Océ Future Authors Project

August 16, 2010 – Boca Raton, FL – Fifty-five middle and high school students in Palm Beach County, FL started school this year with better writing skills thanks to their participation in the *Océ Future Authors Project*. Now in its fifth year, the program is a partnership between the School District of Palm Beach County and Océ North America and is designed to help students experience the process of becoming published authors.

Andrea Aguirre, a junior at Royal Palm Beach High School, chose to spend eight days of her summer as a Future Author at the recommendation of her English teacher. She was pleasantly surprised by the program. “It was a fantastic experience,” she said. “I thought it would be a simple writing workshop, but instead it was a recreation of the entire publishing process.”

The budding writer, who plans to study journalism and psychology at the University of Florida and wants to write books some day, was especially touched by the intense feedback about her work. “The first time my writing was rejected, I was crushed,” she said, “but the experience taught me so much and took me out of my comfort zone. It was refreshing to sit down and write about anything without having someone tell me the topic was wrong.”

Spanish River High School senior, Whitney Fenelon, also found the program an effective way to improve her writing. “I learned that I don’t need as many words when I write,” she said. “I also learned a lot about the publishing process, which will help me when I try to publish my books.” Whitney, who will be attending Palm Beach State College as part of the early enrollment program, has already written and hopes to publish someday three books, including her most recent about a high school crush. She plans to be a meteorologist.

The *Océ Future Authors Project* is designed to help students improve their writing and critical thinking skills, develop an understanding of how authors are published, and learn about today’s digital print and publishing opportunities. The day-long sessions are taught by certified Palm Beach County teachers. Writings from each student are compiled, professionally published and digitally printed in final book form by the Boca Raton-based Océ North America Production Printing Systems division.

This year’s book, titled by the students, *If Writing Were Easy, This Book Would Be Huge*, will be unveiled on November 10 at a book signing hosted by the City of Boca Raton at the Spanish River Public Library.

Since the program’s inception in 2006, more than 250 students have participated in *Océ Future Authors Project* writing workshops. Each year the program features professional authors who share their successful publishing experiences with the students. Participating authors this year included Dr. John E. Becker, an award-winning author of 28 books, Poets Dwight Seon Stewart

and Katrina Sapp-Holder, and Cuban-born Carolina Garcia-Aguilera, the best-selling author of eight books.

“We were once again thrilled by the passion for writing and the quality works submitted by students this year,” said Sheryl Pattek, vice president, marketing services for Océ North America Production Printing Systems division in Boca Raton. “Océ is proud to work with our other generous sponsors to help so many Palm Beach County students experience the unique opportunity to become published authors, which is made possible through the advent of digital book printing technology.”

Assistant Superintendent for the School District of Palm Beach County, Constance Tuman-Rugg, Ph.D. added that programs like this demonstrate the power of programs which bring the private and public sectors together for the benefit of students. “Everyone benefits when creative ideas like this are put in place,” she said. “As a result, our students expand their horizons and get excited about writing.”

The *Océ Future Authors Project* is made possible with generous grants from the Lawrence Sanders Foundation, BankAtlantic Foundation and Xplor International, a not-for-profit educational and networking association serving users and suppliers of document technologies. All donations benefit the Education Foundation of Palm Beach County in support of Océ Future Authors Project. For information on how to donate to the program, contact the Executive Director, Mary Kay Murray, at murraymk@palmbeach.k12.fl.us.

For more information about the *Océ Future Authors Project*, visit www.oceusa.com/futureauthors.

NOTE TO EDITORS: A photo is available. Please contact Carro Weston at carrof@earthlink.net.

About Océ

Océ is a leading international provider of digital document management technology and services. The company’s solutions are based on Océ’s advanced software applications that deliver documents and data over internal networks and the Internet to printing devices and archives – locally and around the world. Supporting the workflow solutions are Océ digital printers and scanners, considered the most reliable and productive in the world. Océ also offers a wide range of display graphics, consulting and outsourcing solutions.

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