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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Polk State College To Celebrate 117th Commencement Ceremony Dec. 14

Winter Haven, December 7, 2017 — Polk State College’s 117th commencement ceremony will take place Thursday, Dec. 14, at the RP Funding Center in Lakeland and it will be President Angela Garcia Falconetti’s first.

Falconetti, along with nearly 500 graduating students, are eagerly awaiting the upcoming event.

“I am highly anticipating commencement as it is the culmination of everything we do here at Polk State College,” Falconetti said. “Each student is a testament to the institution’s ability to provide access to affordable, quality higher education to our community, and I could not be more proud of our graduating class.”

A total of 1,157 students qualify to march in the upcoming commencement ceremony. More than 90 percent of those are Polk County residents.

Here’s a more detailed look at Polk State’s 117th graduating class:

- 270 students will receive degrees from one of Polk State’s baccalaureate programs:
 - 166 will receive the Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management degree
 - 64 students will receive the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree
 - 33 will receive the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice degree
 - 7 will receive the Bachelor of Science in Aerospace degree
- 632 students will receive the Associate in Arts degree, which is fully transferable to any institution within the State University System.
- 254 students will receive the Associate in Science degree, which prepares students to directly go into the workforce in fields including nursing, engineering technology, and diagnostic medical sonography.
- 19 students will graduate Summa Cum Laude with a grade-point average (GPA) of 3.9 or greater; 40 will graduate Magna Cum Laude with a GPA between 3.75 and 3.89; and 160 will graduate Cum Laude with a GPA between 3.5 and 3.74.
- 9 students will graduate with a 4.0 GPA.
- 3 students will receive the College’s Honors Program distinction on their diplomas: Cielo Perez, Brianna Mundell, and Leticia Hernandez. These students have completed a minimum of 18 credit hours in courses with Honors Program designation and achieved a grade-point average of 3.2 or greater.
- The youngest graduate is 17 and the oldest is 63.

- In addition to Florida, there are graduates from Alabama, California, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New York, and Ohio.

Nearly 500 students will participate in the upcoming commencement ceremony, which will start at 6:30 p.m. at the RP Funding Center located at 701 W. Lime St.

The ceremony will feature remarks by Polk State District Board of Trustee Cindy Hartley Ross, who will also receive the College's Distinguished Alumnus Award. She received her Associate in Arts degree from Polk State in 1979 and studied Special Education at Troy State University.

Gov. Rick Scott reappointed Ross to serve on the Polk State District Board of Trustees in 2015, after she served for 12 consecutive years from 1999 to 2011. During that time, she served as chair and vice chair. She has also served on the Polk State College Foundation Board of Directors, as president of the Polk State Alumni Association, and has represented the College at the state and national levels in trustee-related organizations.

Ross's involvement with the Polk State College Foundation began in 1999 when she encouraged the Republican Women's Club to endow a scholarship for students. She has since been instrumental in the creation of additional scholarships that continue to transform the lives of students through the gift of education.

Ross has been married to her husband, U.S. Congressman Dennis Ross, since 1983. Their two adult children, Shane and Travis, are both Polk State alumni, having graduated in 2012 and 2014, respectively. Additionally, more than 15 members of Ross's extended family have graduated from Polk State.

On Dec. 14, she will share in the celebration of Polk State's 117th graduating class.

About Polk State College

Located in Winter Haven, Florida, and established in 1964, Polk State College is a multi-campus institution serving more than 16,000 students with Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Science, Associate in Arts and Associate in Science degrees, as well as a wide range of certificate and workforce training options. The College also operates three charter high schools. Polk State's advantages include small class sizes; hands-on learning; dedicated faculty; day and night classes; online options; affordable tuition; excellent financial aid; and a diverse community and vibrant student life, including fine arts opportunities, clubs, and intercollegiate athletics.