



# INDIAN RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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**Date:** August 1, 2007

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## **IRCC DELIVERS CRISIS RESPONSE TRAINING AS FLORIDA'S BANNER CENTER FOR HOMELAND SECURITY & DEFENSE**

FORT PIERCE, FL (August 1, 2007) Training for community safety and support of the emerging homeland security/emergency management industry is the goal of Indian River Community College as the lead institution for the Employ Florida Banner Center for Homeland Security and Defense. Funded by a \$500,000 grant from Workforce Florida, Inc., the Banner Center at IRCC is focused on training of workers in nuclear plant, airport, port, highway and rail security to meet the challenges of natural and manmade emergencies.

"IRCC has earned a statewide reputation for excellence in training criminal justice and fire science personnel for over 30 years. Now with the College's selection as Florida's Banner Center for Homeland Security and Defense, IRCC is taking a lead role in coordinated and effective emergency response training for a variety of industries, in cooperation with national agencies such as the FBI and Department of Transportation," said Stephen Huntsberger, IRCC Associate Dean of Public Service Education.

Partnering with Florida Power & Light Co. (FPL) at the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant on Hutchinson Island, IRCC developed a Critical Facility Response Training Program (CFRT). U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission regulations mandate that nuclear power plants take measures to protect the public from the possibility of radioactive release caused by natural disasters or acts of terrorism.

The CFRT Program engaged FPL employees from several departments in Incident Command System training, including development of an emergency action plan. The participants completed 30 hours of training this summer, developing leadership skills in general operations and crisis management and culminating in an exercise related to fire containment and response.

The ability to make quick decisions with sound judgment was enhanced through virtual reality training on the VirTra IVR System Simulator in nine life-threatening situations, such as robbery, suicide bombing and office hostage. The FPL participants will now be engaged in customized virtual training

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## ADD ONE - IRCC DELIVERS CRISIS RESPONSE TRAINING AS FLORIDA'S BANNER CENTER FOR HOMELAND SECURITY & DEFENSE

modules relating to possible crisis scenarios in an industrial setting. The system utilizes a 300-degree enclosure of screens with high definition videos producing emergency situations that invoke a response by the trainee. Physical repercussions exist and a situation may escalate or downplay depending on the trainee's actions.

In addition to the power plant scenarios, IRCC is building scenarios with the Department of Transportation for training in the detection of nuclear and radiological devices to better protect the state's borders, ports and transportation systems.

IRCC also offers an interactive online training library for businesses engaged in emergency management, schools, and criminal justice agencies. Topics include biological and chemical threats, crises preparedness for schools, explosions, hazmat transportation, decontamination and more.

All branches of the College's Emergency Management programs will be housed in the 50-acre Treasure Coast Public Safety Training Complex, now under construction at the IRCC Main Campus. The \$38 million seven-building Complex is expected to serve as a national model for emergency management education.

Partners in the Banner Center for Homeland Security and Defense include representatives from the Florida Department of Transportation, F4W, Inc., Department of Law Enforcement, Florida Power & Light Co., Tropicana Products, the Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast, the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County and Enterprise Florida.

Educational partner institutions are Central Florida Community College, Florida Keys Community College, Okaloosa-Walton College, South Florida Community College and Tallahassee Community College.

The Banner Center for Homeland Security and Defense is one of 10 new Employ Florida Banner Centers aimed at addressing workforce training needs in high-value state sectors. Workforce Florida has awarded grants totaling \$6.2 million to establish these centers, which are charged with cultivating partnerships among regional and statewide workforce, education, economic development and industry leaders to develop new training for entry-level and experienced workers. The Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast is a key advisor to the IRCC-based program with President and CEO Gwenda Thompson serving on the Advisory Council. All of the Banner Centers fulfill a top strategic priority of the state's entire workforce system – Workforce Florida, the Agency for Workforce Innovation, the 24 regional workforce boards and nearly 100 one-stop centers.

"The mission and work of the Banner Center for Homeland Security and Defense is critical to the economy as well as the security of our state," said Workforce Florida Interim President Larry Champion. "We want to ensure workers responsible for securing our nuclear facilities and transportation hubs have the cutting-edge skills they need to get their jobs done."

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ADD TWO - IRCC DELIVERS CRISIS RESPONSE TRAINING AS FLORIDA'S BANNER CENTER FOR HOMELAND SECURITY & DEFENSE

For more information on the 10 Employ Florida Banner Centers, please go to [www.EmployFlorida.com](http://www.EmployFlorida.com). For more information on the IRCC-based Banner Center, go to [www.ircc.edu/BCHSD](http://www.ircc.edu/BCHSD).

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