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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### MassBay Community College Celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

#### Boosting Academic Excellence at Forefront

(December 2010, Wellesley, MA) -- Five years ago, when Carole Berotte Joseph became the first woman to take the helm of Massachusetts Bay Community College (MassBay) and the first Haitian-American to head an institution of higher education in the country, those who knew her history never doubted that she would be able to move the institution forward. Five years later, as the college prepares to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, MassBay has undergone a significant positive transformation.

Boosting academic excellence has been the centerpiece of the college's transformation. Several programs have been established to provide students with the quality of education they would receive at a four-year institution.

"Academic excellence takes many forms at MassBay," says MassBay president Carole Berotte Joseph. The College is the only community college in the nation to consistently produce Barry M. Goldwater Scholars – the premier national undergraduate award recognizing academic excellence in science and mathematics. As of 2010, 17 MassBay students have received the award. MassBay has received more Goldwater Awards than private four-year colleges in Massachusetts such as Boston, Tufts and Northeastern Universities.

In addition to the Goldwater Scholars, the College's most recent successes include:

- A \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the largest in college history. The grant will go toward customizing classroom instruction to help low-income students and equipping classrooms with the new technology needed to support teaching and learning.
- MassBay's Automotive Technology Program this year earned the prestigious School Recognition Award from Toyota USA, for being among their two highest performing Automotive Service Technology programs in the U.S.
- Recognizing the increasingly global nature of the economy, MassBay is one of the few community colleges to have created a comprehensive semester-long Study Abroad Program, similar in quality to those found at four year institutions. The program, which includes China and Costa Rica, includes language and culture preparation courses before traveling to the country.
- The expansion and reaccreditation of the college's nursing program boasts just a 9% acceptance rate, making it one of the most highly sought-after and competitive programs in the country.
- The college has volunteered to participate in the Foundations of Excellence program, a national movement that focuses on the first year student experience. Studies have shown that students who successfully complete their first year of college have a far greater chance to complete their degrees. The Foundations of Excellence program provides eight specific areas of focus that help to ensure first year students get the guidance and support they need to navigate the all-important first year of college.

More than 18,000 students have graduated from MassBay since the college was established fifty years ago and 5,000 are currently enrolled. The student body is diverse, 24 percent are people of color and over half are women. Twenty-five percent of its students are the first in their family to attend college.

To celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the MassBay campus is alive with activities ranging from a Holiday Fair to a weekly Calendar for Cash raffle, and special 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary t-shirts, blankets and trinkets are on sale. The signature event is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala, scheduled for March 4, 2011, which is the primary fundraiser to benefit student scholarships. Additional activities will be announced throughout 2011, including a "Through the Decades" event planned by the Student Government Association and a 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party scheduled for September.