



# The Graduation Pledge

The graduation pledge has been put into practice at over one hundred schools around the country. They range in size from small private colleges like Harvard to large public schools like the University of Wisconsin. Visit [www.graduationpledge.org](http://www.graduationpledge.org) for information on carrying out the pledge as well as a list of other schools that are part of the Graduation Pledge Alliance.

Sponsored by the BCC Committee on Environmental Sustainability, it is offered to Broward Community College graduates beginning in May 2006. The wording reads:

"I \_\_\_\_\_ pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job I consider and will try to improve these aspects in any organization where I work."

Taking the Pledge is voluntary and if the commitment is made, it allows students to determine for themselves what they consider to be socially and environmentally responsible. Instituting the Pledge gets at the heart of a good education and a good educational institution. And it can benefit society as a whole. Not only does it remind students of the ethical implications of the knowledge and training they received, but also it can help lead to a socially conscious citizenry and a better world. In a sense, the Pledge operates at three levels: students making choices about their employment, schools educating about values and citizenship rather than only knowledge and skills; and the workplace and society being concerned about more than just the bottom line.

Each year well over a million students enter the work force. Think of the impact on our society if even a significant minority of applicants and jobholders inquired about or attempted to change the ethical practices of their potential or current employers. Or what if applicants turned down jobs and told their potential employers the ethical reasons why they did so? And shouldn't a job represent more than just a paycheck? Shouldn't it be a place where one can feel good about his/her own assignments and the general practices of the company?

Graduates who voluntarily signed the pledge have turned down jobs with which they did not feel morally comfortable and have worked to make changes once on the job. For example, they have promoted recycling at their organization, removed racist language from a training manual, worked for gender parity in high school athletics, and helped to convince an employer to refuse a chemical weapons-related contract.

You can sign the pledge by sending an email to Jane Grell, Enrollment Communications Coordinator at [jgrell@broward.edu](mailto:jgrell@broward.edu). Put "Graduation Pledge" in the subject line and include your full name in the email. When you check in at the graduation ceremony (or pick up your diploma if you do not participate in the ceremony), you will be given a wallet-sized pledge card to remind you of your commitment. You will also receive a green ribbon recognizing your commitment to social equity and healthy ecosystems to wear on your graduation gown. Faculty who support the students who sign the pledge will also wear green ribbons.