



A thriving community rich with history, culture, and opportunity.

The Glades is a diverse community with its residents representing many different cultures and backgrounds. The majority of residents in the Glades identify as Black or Hispanic. English is the most commonly spoken language, followed by Spanish and Haitian Creole.

Three cities make up the Glades:

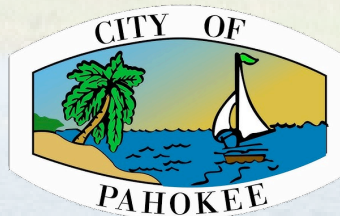


Belle Glade

(Originally known as Hillsboro)

Incorporated in 1928

Population: ~17,000



Pahokee

Incorporated in 1922

Population: ~5,600



South Bay

Incorporated in 1945

Population: ~4,900

History of Lake Okeechobee & the Storm of 1928

Lake Okeechobee, the eighth largest freshwater lake in the United States, is not only an iconic Florida landmark but also holds an important place in the hearts of Glades residents.

Before European settlers arrived, the area around Lake Okeechobee was inhabited by Native American tribes, including the Seminole and Calusa. European settlers arrived in the late 19th century, and agriculture became a significant industry in the region due to the fertile land around the lake.

The Storm of 1928, one of the greatest natural disasters to ever strike our state, made landfall on September 16, 1928, as a Category 4 hurricane. Violent winds pushed all the water

from the northern part of the lake down south flooding the Glades. Water reached as high as 25 feet above sea level, houses were ripped from foundations, and it is estimated that 2,500 people died as a result.

The high death toll gained national attention, resulting in the construction of the **Herbert Hoover Dike** to control Lake Okeechobee flooding.

Today, the area surrounding the lake continues to provide rich, fertile soil for agriculture and has become a popular fishing destination that is considered the premier trophy **bass fishing** location.

Learning in the Glades

Opportunity awaits for students in the Glades. Glades schools are part of Palm Beach County School District, the 10th largest school district in the U.S., boasting a 94.1% graduation rate and is an A-rated school district.

The Glades is home to a campus of **Palm Beach State College, West Technical Education Center** "Where You Learn to Earn", and two high schools: **Glades Central Community High School** which offers a variety of Choice Programs, including Medical Sciences, Agritechnology, and more, and **Pahokee Middle/Sr. High School** which offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. The Glades also has one middle school, two charter schools, two private schools. and seven elementary schools. Situated in Belle Glade is **Crossroads Academy Alternative School** where smaller class sizes afford for more unique instruction.

The **Glades Area Boys and Girls Club** also offers important youth development programs and resources for children and teens throughout the community.



Jobs & Industry in the Glades

Rich soil and the vast waters make the Glades a haven for virtually any industry, be it agriculture, distribution, manufacturing, tourism, or recreation.

The Glades is part of the **Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA)**, one of the most fertile farmlands in the United States and is the largest supplier of winter vegetables including sweet corn, radishes, green beans, lettuce and other leafy greens, as well as rice and sugarcane – making agriculture a major contributor to the local economy.

The **Palm Beach County School District** is another major employer in the Glades, as is **Lakeside Medical Center**, a top-ranked public hospital that was recently named the #1 most racially inclusive hospital in the nation by the Lown Institute.



Exploring the Glades & Celebrating our Culture

Whether you're a visitor or a lifetime resident of the Glades, there is plenty to do and see! The **Pahokee Campground and Marina**, the ONLY city with direct access to Lake Okeechobee is a destination for hiking on the lake rim, fishing, camping, and more.

The **Dolly Hand Cultural Arts Center**, a local theater in the Glades, that has been providing the community with quality arts and entertainment since 1982. The **Lawrence E. Will Museum of the Glades** displays a collection of artifacts from the Seminoles, early pioneer settlements, agricultural tools and innovations, local history, and more.

The Glades community is known for a host of popular annual festivals, including the annual harvest end celebration known as the **Black Gold Jubilee Festival**, the **Glades Festival of Afro Arts**, the **Bayfest Cultural Arts Festival** in South Bay, the **Glades Hispanic Heritage Festival**, and the **Torry Island BBQ Festival** at the Belle Glade Marina.

Without question, high school football plays pivotal role in bringing the Glades community together. Many NFL stars have emerged from the small community and the Glades is home to one of the nation's greatest high school football rivalries. Each year, Pahokee Senior High School and Glades Central Community High School draws thousands upon thousands of people to watch the two teams face off in the **Muck Bowl**.

