

## Keiser University Combines Graduations Statewide Including 26 Polk Students

**Frostproof woman is valedictorian among 400 graduates.**

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Jessica Montanez

FROSTPROOF | Jessica Montanez had no problem commuting to fulfill her desire for a health care career.

After graduating from high school in Frostproof, she went to Lakeland for classes at Keiser University and earned her associate's degree in radiologic technology in 2007.

Internship training was a bit farther west, in Hillsborough County, but she persevered.

It had to be a relief, however, to earn her bachelor of science degree in health sciences through Keiser's online offerings while she was working full time.

Commuting and persistence paid off for the Frostproof resident, who finished her bachelor's-level work in August with a 4.0 average.

She will be valedictorian today when Keiser has an 11 a.m. statewide commencement ceremony at the Bob Carr Performing Arts Center in Orlando.

Twenty-six Polk County graduates are among about 400 expected from Keiser's 15 campuses, spokeswoman Kimberly Dale said.

"I will try to reiterate how important education is, and it will always be valuable," said Montanez, 25, who works for Tower Radiology of Tampa.

In her current job, she's moved beyond doing X-rays to training to do CT scans.

In the future, she's considering the relative merits of further education aimed at becoming a physician assistant or a doctor.

"You can never have too much education," she said.

This is the first statewide graduation for Keiser, a private, not-for-profit university. U.S. Rep. Daniel Webster, a Republican representing the 8th Congressional District, and U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown, a Democrat representing the 3rd Congressional District; will be commencement speakers in Orlando.

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