**NEWS RELEASE--***Immediate Release*

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**Keiser University Celebrates Occupational Therapy Month**

Tampa, FL—April 22, 2014— April is Occupational Therapy Month so Keiser University (KU), which offers an Associate in Science degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) at 11 of its campuses, including Tampa, has made it a point to highlight the field.  Occupational Therapy is the art and science of helping people gain skills needed to become independent in daily living activities.  Students learn the therapeutic use of self-care, work and play/leisure activities to maximize independent function, enhance development, prevent disability and maintain health.

The American Occupational Therapy Association has designated April to be Occupational Therapy Month – “Living Life To Its Fullest” - so we at KU want to shine a spotlight on our program and highlight some of our exceptional students and graduates who have chosen a career that enables people of all ages to regain their mobility and functionality in their day to day life.

After going through a bitter divorce, following her move from Morocco to America, Naima Habti knew she needed a change.  For the new life-journey she was about to embark on, she determined earning a new degree would give her a fresh start and a rewarding new career path.  While in Morocco, she had earned a Bachelor’s degree in Biology but had always wanted to be in healthcare, so she looked into earning a degree as an Occupational Therapy Assistant.  She currently works at a rehabilitation facility and her goal each day for her patients is to give them a reason to get out of bed.  Aside from the professional and personal satisfaction her job provides her, it also helps that her son is proud of his mom and what she does.

“I feel truly blessed to have this second career opportunity that sincerely makes me happy every day I am at work,” Naima Habti, OTA graduate from KU Tampa.

The program includes clinical affiliations at the areas’ hospitals, rehabilitation centers, skilled nursing facilities, schools, and private clinics.  An Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) works under the supervision of a licensed occupational therapist to help people of all ages enhance their performance of important everyday activities such as work, education and self-care despite the effects of illness, disability or injury.

“We are proud of our OTA Program graduates, such as Naima. Those in this profession strive every day to meet our Centennial Vision of, ‘OT is a powerful, widely recognized, science-driven, evidence-based profession with a globally connected and diverse workforce meeting society’s occupational needs,’” shared Mary Pavao, OTA Program Director at the Tampa campus.

**About:** Keiser University is a private, not-for-profit university serving nearly 20,000 students pursuing doctoral through associate degrees on 15 campuses, online and internationally, employing 3,500 staff and faculty.

Sixty-two percent of KU students graduate in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and healthcare fields, providing the talented workforce necessary for Florida to compete globally.

Keiser University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award certificates and degrees at the associate, baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral levels. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Keiser University.

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