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**NEWS RELEASE**—*For Immediate Release*

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**Keiser University to Hold Third Annual Statewide Commencement**

*The Honorable John Kline, United States Congressman and The Honorable Ritch Workman, State Representative to serve as Commencement Speakers*

Lakeland, FL—Jan. 20— On Saturday, Jan. 24, Keiser University will hold its third annual statewide commencement ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments of its Florida graduates and students that attend classes online across the nation.  The University is pleased to announce that nearly 400 graduates and 2,500 expected guests will be in attendance. The ceremony will take place at the Lakeland Center’s Youkey Theater located at 701 West Lime Street, in Lakeland, at 11:00 a.m.

The Honorable United States Congressman John Kline, serving the 2nd district of Minnesota, and the Honorable State Representative Ritch Workman serving Florida’s 52nd district, will deliver commencement addresses.  Congressman Kline is a 25-year veteran of the United States Marine Corps. He is the Chairman of the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce, and serves on the U.S. House Armed Services Committee. He is a tireless advocate for students seeking opportunities in higher education and also for returning Veterans and military families. During his successful career in the Marine Corps, he served as a helicopter pilot and earned the responsibility of flying Marine One, the President’s personal helicopter.

Prior to State Representative Workman’s distinguished public service career, he served 14 years in the United States Army and as a member of the National Guard. In the Florida House of Representatives, he is the Chairman of the Rules, Calendar and Ethics Committee and serves on the Finance and Tax Committee, the Regulatory Affairs Committee, and the Government Operations Subcommittee. Seen as a rising leader in the Florida House, Representative Workman is an admired advocate for Florida families, responsible government, economic development, and job creation.

“The statewide graduation ceremony is undoubtedly the most fulfilling moment for all of us as we share in the celebration of hard work, accomplishment, and the commitment of our students, and their families,” said Belinda Keiser, Vice Chancellor.  “At Keiser University, we encourage lifelong learning, leadership, and community service to prepare each individual student to make a real impact in their professions and communities.  We are extremely proud that Congressman Kline and Representative Workman, both distinguished men of public and military service, will address our graduating class and their special guests at the statewide ceremony,” she added.

Keiser University’s graduating class will recognize two Co-Valedictorians. Jeff Wells, of North

Georgia, is a husband, father of two, a 20-year Veteran of the United States Air Force, and earned his bachelor’s degree in management information systems. Wells nobly volunteered to serve in Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, and Operation Enduring Freedom for multiple deployments.

Iliana Ardila, of Plant City, also earned Valedictorian status completing her bachelor’s degree in dietetics and nutrition. Ardila is married, and moved to Florida from Venezuela to pursue her second college degree and a career as registered dietitian.

Commencement ceremonies are also held each summer at 17 Keiser University campuses honoring approximately 5,000 graduates per year. The winter statewide event is a second opportunity for eligible Keiser students from any Florida campus, across the nation, and internationally to graduate with their classmates in one convenient location.

**About Keiser University:**

Keiser University is a private, not-for-profit university serving nearly 20,000 students pursuing doctoral through associate degrees on 17 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. Over 20 percent of Keiser University students are members of the armed services, veterans, or military family members.

Keiser University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges 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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