**K E I S E R**

**UNIVERSITY**

News Release—*For Immediate Release*

Media Contact: Kelli Lane / 954-235-0331 / kellil@keiseruniversity.edu

**This Mother’s Day Weekend a Mother and her Three Sons Will Graduate Together at Keiser University West Palm Beach Campus Graduation**

*Sisters, brothers, and spouses also set to graduate together*

West Palm Beach, FL—May 7, 2015— Throughout May and June, approximately 5,400 Keiser University graduates statewide will cross stages signifying completion of their college degrees and the beginning of the next chapter in their professional lives.

At Keiser University’s West Palm Beach campus graduation fittingly falls on Mother’s Day weekend where this year’s ceremony has become a truly family affair. Mom, Phillipa Allen and her three sons, Kyle, Justin and Brandon will graduate together from the University’s Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) degree program. Having attended college earlier in life and establishing a career as a senior bank secretary, Allen placed her own life on hold, spending 25 years focused on her four children.

“I was very involved in their (my children’s) education, transporting them to and from Catholic school, band, piano lessons, sporting events, and finally back home to complete homework,” said Allen.

When her sons were accepted into Keiser’s OTA degree program they also arranged an interview for her. She too was accepted and quickly realized her sons were more determined to excel than ever because she was going back to school with them.  Allen referred to the rigor of the program as ‘strenuous hard work.’

“I faced major struggles like completing perquisites, as well as maintaining a 3.0 GPA in order to be accepted in the OTA core program.   It was extremely tough with many late nights.  There were many times I broke down, but I always had the support of my children. My journey was far from being over,” said Allen.

Allen said she never imagined she would be given another opportunity to go back to school. She expressed her gratitude to Mrs. Kristin Salvato, Director of the OTA program, for being a mentor, friend, and extraordinary teacher to her and her sons.

Allen was presented with the recognition of “Outstanding Clinical Performance.” Providing advice to older students, she said, “You are never too old, and most of all don’t give up, always look forward to the next phase of life.”

Keiser University’s West Palm Beach campus graduation will recognize nearly 300 graduates and it will take place Fri. May 8, at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, located at 650 Okeechobee Boulevard in West Palm Beach. The ceremony begins at 7:00 p.m. and the Honorable State Representative Bobby Powell will serve as the distinguished keynote speaker.

Allen and her sons’ graduating class also includes a series of other family members, sisters Gerline and Chella Alexis are earning degrees in Occupational Therapy Assistant, brothers Jeffrey and Michael Thomsen are graduating from the Sports Medicine and Fitness Technology degree program, and husband and wife, Collis and Jennifer Colson are graduating together with separate degrees in Health Services Administration and Master’s in Business Administration, respectively.

”Keiser University has been serving Florida for close to 40 years, graduating tens of thousands of students prepared to make an immediate impact in the workforce and as leaders in their communities,” said Belinda Keiser, Vice Chancellor of Community Relations and Student Advancement.  “It is encouraging and inspiring to see the genuine commitment among generations of families, supporting one another as they experience the rewards of completing their college degrees together,” she added.

For the last several years, Keiser University has held the top ranking in Florida and second in the nation for production of associate graduates in the health professions and related clinical sciences. Over 20 percent of Keiser’s student body are Veterans, service members or military family members.  Having served and sacrificed for their country, many returning Veterans choose health care fields to continue their life of service.  The US News and World Report ranked Keiser University the thirteenth “Best College for Vets” in the Southern region of colleges in the United States.

“Sharing this proud day and celebrating the graduates’ journey with their families, the faculty that have guided them to this moment and Florida’s federal, state and local elected officials is our greatest honor,” said Keiser.

**About Keiser University:**

Keiser University is a private, not-for-profit University serving nearly 20,000 students offering 100 degrees at the doctoral through associate level on 17 Florida campuses, online and internationally, employing 3,500 staff and faculty.

Annually 62 percent of graduates are in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) and health care fields contributing to Florida’s economy locally and abroad.

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, specialist, 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.  Keiser University holds Level VI accreditation signifying recognition of its expanded doctoral degree offerings.

For additional information regarding Keiser University, go to [www.keiseruniversity.edu](http://www.keiseruniversity.edu)

###