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

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 **Keiser University Celebrates Summer Commencement**

*More than 370 Keiser University graduates are expected to cross the stage*

Lakeland, FL—May 16, 2016 – Keiser University’s faculty and staff from the Lakeland campus will join family and friends of the Class of 2016 this week as they receive their commencement address from Polk County Commissioner Melony Bell. The ceremony takes place at The Lakeland Center-Youkey Theatre, located at 701 W. Lime Street on Wednesday, May 18 at 7:00 p.m.

“I continue to be amazed and humbled by the stellar academic achievements of our graduates, many of whom are balancing full-time careers and family obligations while excelling in their coursework.  On behalf of the entire Lakeland campus faculty and staff, I wish to offer my sincere congratulations to the graduates,” shared Rebecca McDonnell, Campus President. “This educational milestone epitomizes the diligence, passion, and strength of character that each graduate who crosses the stage possesses.  These are the qualities, along with many others, they will carry into the workplace as they fill needed professional roles in Polk and surrounding counties.”

For this graduating class their valedictorian will be David St. Pierre, who has followed in the steps of four family members who also earned their degrees at Keiser University. He is a veteran and member of Alpha Phi Sigma and has earned his Bachelor’s degree in Homeland Security. Bethany Tait, who earned her Bachelor’s degree in Dietetics & Nutrition, will be the salutatorian for the class of 2016.

The keynote speaker for this graduating class will be Polk County native, Commissioner Melony Bell, who was first elected to the Polk County Board of County Commissioners in November 2010. She has been a champion for the arts, economic development, education and youth outreach. Prior to serving on the Board, Commissioner Bell served as Fort Mead mayor for three terms and as a Fort Meade city commissioner for 14 years.

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.

**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 18 Florida campuses, online and internationally, employing 3,800 staff and faculty. Keiser University holds Level VI accreditation signifying recognition of its expanded doctoral degree offerings.

Statewide Keiser University campuses currently have 60 accredited programs, spanning 21 program offerings, from 18 accrediting agencies/regulatory agencies to ensure that the top industry standards are met in degrees such as nursing, occupational therapy assistant, radiologic technology, physical therapy assistant, physician’s assistant, and many others.

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.

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

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