



High school baseball coach graduates from college

His players attended his graduation to support him

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WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. —

Today was a big day for Rene Leon Jr.

The Glades Central High School baseball coach graduated from Keiser University.

Leon, 24, is the first of eight children to finish college.

"It was difficult, but it motivated me to get my degree and to be the first in my family to graduate with a bachelor's," Leon said.

Eight players from the baseball team travel from Belle Glade to West Palm Beach to attend the graduation ceremony.

"I couldn't miss for nothing in the world because he's a great guy," said Rudolph Cameron.

"He support us for a lot of things, so we got to be here to support him the same way," said Lazaro Hernandez.

Leon said coaching has made him a better man.

"Being with the kids, people think I changed their lives, when they really changed my life," Leon said.

Leon attended Glades Central and played on the varsity baseball team.

He went on to play ball at Morris College in South Carolina, then transferred to Keiser University his last two years.

But his heart was always in the Glades.

"So me coming back, being alumni from Glades Central and coaching them and showing them everything I know that my coaches taught me helped me to coach them and lead them to the most wins in our history," Leon said.

Dr. Arthur Keiser was the keynote speaker and was moved by Leon's story.

"He's able to be a role model for his students and it's very exciting to see the smile on their faces," Keiser said.

Leon is taking home a degree in sport management.

Becoming an athletic director, college coach or teacher could be in his future someday.

He said giving back is in his blood.

"I wanted to do something I love and I'm passionate about," Leon said.