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Law Offices of
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Keiser University-Tampa
5002 W. Waters Avenue
Tampa, FL 33634

Re: Keiser University Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

Keiser University has served our community for over 43 years. The Office of the Public Defender places great value in our relationship with the University. Together we have been able to change and enrich lives in our community through their education excellence. In support of the University, please allow me to briefly explain the tremendous value our partnership is to my office and our community.

The Office of the Public Defender was established in the 1960's and I have been the elected Public Defender in Hillsborough County since 1993. There are twenty elected Public Defenders across the State of Florida, representing the twenty Judicial Circuits in the State. Our office represents indigent criminal defendant's accused of crimes in Hillsborough County. Our office employs staff in a range of positions that each contribute to the representation of defendant's charged with crimes from misdemeanors through capital crimes such as homicide. We employ data entry staff, legal assistants, social services staff, investigators, administrators, and attorneys.

Having staff with higher education at all levels enhances the quality of representation that our clients receive. In the case of attorneys, a quality education before law school is important to their success in law school and beyond. For other areas such as social services or investigations, Keiser provides the type of education that develops competent, knowledgeable, and empathic staff who can communicate with clients and witnesses, and assist with mitigation and defense strategy. While the substance of my office is legal defense, these other areas are important to ensure our clients also receive assistance with social issues such as employment, housing, counseling, or drug treatment and can improve their lives to reduce or avoid future contact with the criminal justice system.

Employing graduates of the University is a strong benefit to having the University in our community. Having their students intern is also a strong mutual benefit, whether they return for employment after graduation or pursue other opportunities. Public Defender Offices' throughout the country have

Legal representation and public service with dignity and respect

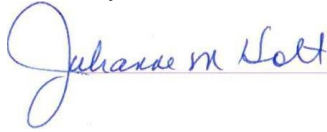
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historically had high turnover rates and workloads, and our intern staff provide invaluable assistance to our full-time employees while developing themselves through their experiences in this office. Their experience in our office provides them with practical insight to what is happening in our community which they can relate to lessons from the classroom.

I am extremely proud of our partnership with Keiser University and the education that they provide to the future workforce of our community. My office is grateful for the employees and interns who have passed through our doors, and I believe our clients and the community at large reaps the reward of them as well.

Sincerely,



Julianne M. Holt
Public Defender
Thirteenth Judicial Circuit