

Keiser University Expansion in the heart of the Research Coast

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Staff Reports

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By Shelley Owens

For Progress & Innovation

In May, expanding non-profit Keiser University announced the addition of two new technology bachelor's degrees on the Port St. Lucie U.S. 1 campus.

The new Bachelor of Science in Network Systems and Data Communications and the Bachelor of Science in Software Engineering signal an expanding list of undergraduate- and graduate-level technology degrees to create a Research Coast education hub for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), said university co-founder and Chancellor Arthur Keiser, Ph.D.

"In the 1990s, we were known for our technology degrees," Keiser said. "But the dot-com bust created less demand for the programs."

"So we are excited to see the rapid increase in technology demand in Port St. Lucie, Jupiter and across all of the Treasure Coast," said Keiser.

"Because of where we are geographically located, at the heart of the Research Coast, we want to be recognized as a STEM university," said Jean Claude Norman, dean of the Port St. Lucie campus who is himself a technology degree holder.

"And, in tracking our students annually, we find that 62 percent are graduating in the STEM and healthcare career fields," said Kelli Lane, associate vice chancellor.

It's no coincidence.

An advisory board comprised of area employers and industry leaders, including Dean Norman, provide recommendations and guidance regarding the Port St. Lucie campus's degree offerings. "And, it is largely based on employer demand," Norman said.

“And we are seeing the demand from both sides,” said Tom Creola, Ed.D., campus president.

“The students are seeking greater career marketability in a competitive job market and employers are demanding graduates with bachelor’s degrees, critical thinking skills and practical training experience,” he added.

The STEM fields attract an age-diverse student body to the working adult-friendly Port St. Lucie campus, Creola said.

“We attract seasoned professionals, people with A.A. (Associate of Arts) degrees as well as graduates of the high school academies,” Norman said. Public high schools on the Treasure Coast have many career- and college-focused small academies for students studying specific career fields, he explained. Keiser works with the academies and the students.

Under Florida’s 2+2 program, students with degrees can transfer their accredited general education credits such as English, history, and science, said Norman. And students with associate in science degrees and first-year students can take any missing general education credits right at Keiser.

Keiser’s class delivery system is high-tech, too, Creola said. Degree programs are available online as well as on-campus. Or both, he said. If you prefer to take some classes online, if illness or family needs require you to switch to online classes, you can switch at any time without disrupting your education, Creola said.

Keiser even has military men and women who switched to online studies when they were deployed to Iraq, Creola said.

Keiser University is set up for student success. Even on-campus courses, where you take one class at a time, Creola said, were designed to help students complete classes and graduate.

About the new degrees

Bachelor of science. software engineering

The software engineering program is designed for the new age of developers who will create computer and network software applications; “apps” for iPhones, smart phones, tablets, VOIP and all other digital communications; website innovations and new computer programs we have yet to dream up, Norman said.

Bachelor of science in network systems and data communications

The networking degree prepares graduates for entry-level positions in data management and in the network infrastructure, the two major requirements in the modern enterprise. Providing a

broad base of knowledge, graduates may choose from a large number of career paths from data analysis to disaster planning and recovery to management.



Keiser University student Shayne Edwards



Keiser University student - Amber Sexton



Keiser University student Kimberly Kelly