

# **KEISER** **UNIVERSITY**

## **News Release--Immediate Release**

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### **Adult Students among Keiser University's West Palm Beach Campus's First Class of Nursing Graduates**

*State Representative Kelly Skidmore to Deliver Keynote Address*

West Palm Beach, Florida—May 13, 2008—Lantana mother of two, Yvette Simpson has fulfilled the dream she had since she was 13 years old; she became a graduate nurse at the age of 45. Simpson will take the stage at Keiser University's West Palm Beach campus's commencement ceremony, joining 55 graduates including 18 from the inaugural nursing class, on Friday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m. at the Crown Plaza Hotel at 1601 Belvedere Road in West Palm Beach.

"I have worked as a secretary and in the hotel industry but nursing is my passion," said Simpson. I would tell any mothers out there that are questioning whether they can pursue college later in life, they have to go for it. Simpson accepted a position as a Graduate Nurse in The Pavilion at Columbia Hospital.

Graduate Lascelles Tarrant of Royal Palm Beach was an elementary school teacher and worked as an LPN for eight years before his wife, also a registered nurse, encouraged him to apply to complete his degree in nursing. At age 47, he left a slow pace career in elder care for the excitement of working as a graduate nurse in the Emergency Room at Columbia Hospital.

Another graduate Orlando Hernandez, 37, also accepted a nursing position at Columbia Hospital in the Critical Care Units.

The U. S. Department of Labor states that registered nursing as a career is projected to generate about 587,000 new jobs over the 2006-16 period.

"Keiser University established the program at its West Palm Beach campus in Spring of 2006 to further meet our mission of filling critical workforce shortage needs in our communities," said Belinda Keiser, Vice Chancellor and Vice-Chair of Workforce Florida, Inc.'s Board of Directors. We have over 800 students pursuing degrees in nursing at our Florida campuses and as is typical with our graduates, we expect those nurses to fulfill positions locally and throughout Florida, she added.

Gary Reardon, Director of Surgical Nursing for Columbia Hospital added that having worked with the Keiser students on rotation at Columbia, their eagerness to learn and their willingness to work hard set them apart. "We wanted to capture that energy and skill and we were able to do that by hiring three recent graduates and we intend to hire more," he explained.

Keiser University, Florida's is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Keiser University serves more than 12,000 students pursuing master's, bachelor's and associate degrees at its 13 campuses throughout Florida and through the online division.

In 2006, Keiser University was the nationwide leader in production of Associate of Science graduates in Health Professions and Related Sciences (Community College Week Analysis of US Department of Education Data Released July 8, 2007).

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