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## Keiser University students eager to get to work

Keiser 'known as career university'

*By Tim Engstrom*  
/ [tengstrom@news-press.com](mailto:tengstrom@news-press.com)

Keiser University students go to class every day as if they were going to their professional workplace, with allied health students in scrubs and business students dressed for the office.

They took that career focus a step further on Tuesday as they met with prospective employers at an on-campus career fair in Fort Myers.

“We are known as a career university, so our students come here with the intention of getting to work,” said campus President Nancy Tedros. “This is an opportunity for them to explore those opportunities, whether it is for part-time work while they are in school or career opportunities after graduation.”

About 27 employers and community organizations were on hand.

Student Christian Gaona, 19, said she is about a year away from finishing the medical assisting program at Keiser, but she wanted to meet with employers to see what they were looking for in employees.

“I want to keep working my way up in health care and I would like to eventually be a pediatrician, but that is going to take a long time,” Gaona said. “I just want to keep working at it.”

Gina Banasiak, human resources coordinator for Shell Point Retirement Community, said she is hiring everything from experienced health care professionals to hospitality workers and support staff.

“We are having a difficult time finding registered nurse managers with a background in Alzheimer’s care, but that is always a challenge,” Banasiak said. “It’s also a challenge to find the entry-level labor, like custodians and dishwashers, but we have some part-time jobs that work well for students.”

Holly Varela, 36, of Cape Coral said she already has a job she likes at an assisted living facility, but she hopes completing the occupational therapy assistant program will help her career.

“Hopefully, I will be able to advance where I am, but it is good to know that there is demand out there,” Varela said.

Mary Kate Hall, director of marketing for the Fort Myers-based Levin HomeCare Nurse Registry, said the demand for certified nurse assistants and home healthcare aides isn’t letting up.

“We are all very competitive and are trying to recruit the same people because the demand is strong,”

Hall said, saying she met some strong candidates at Keiser.

Student Jasmine Davila, 18, of Fort Myers said she is eager for the day when she is putting on scrubs every day to go to work at Lee Memorial or another health facility.

"It's the only thing I want to do," she said.

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