

BBN BREVARD BUSINESS NEWS

Indiana University School of Nursing graduate Brenda Kinsey named nursing program director at Keiser University; wide experience across the profession

By Ken Datzman

Professional people from around the nation continue to discover Brevard County, which has been rated as one of the best places to live in Florida in various surveys, including "Yahoo Voices," and has been featured in national magazines for its quality of life.

Brenda Kinsey, who previously worked in Indianapolis, is one of those newcomers to the county.

She was recently recruited to lead Keiser University's sizable associate of science in nursing program at the Melbourne campus.

Having received multiple offers from health-care organizations, specialty practices, and institutions as far away as the St. Thomas, Virginia Islands, Kinsey landed on the Space Coast.

"I was looking for a really good, well-established, year-round core nursing program that was already accredited by the National League of Nursing," she said.

"And Keiser University's program has those elements. It has a good reputation with a solid history, and, of course, the nice weather is a bonus. I love the beaches."

Keiser's A.S. nursing program in Melbourne has more than 120 students. Classes are currently capped at 24 students. Keiser University offers bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing online.

Kinsey was the director of nursing for the licensed practical nurse program at a private college in Indianapolis. Also, she has worked for other institutions in leadership positions, including Indiana Vocational Technical College.

In general, Kinsey has wide experience in the field of nursing, both as a practicing registered nurse, administratively, and in academic settings.

At St. Vincent Hospital system in the Hoosier State, Kinsey sat on the education council, overseeing continuing education for physicians and nurses as well as other departments.

She was on the Indiana State Board of Nursing and once worked as a nurse manager for a busy, 28-bed cardiac unit at Ball Memorial Hospital in Indiana, where there was an "80 percent patient-turnover rate every 24 hours."

Kinsey has a bachelor's degree from the Indiana University School of Nursing, which is consistently ranked as one of the top schools of nursing in America by the National Institutes of Health and other organizations.

She earned her master's degree in nursing from Anderson University in Indiana and followed up with an MBA degree from the same institution.

"I love teaching nursing students. I am excited

about the opportunity at Keiser University. I can impart a lot of my knowledge of nursing," said Kinsey, who was part of the bagpipe corps at Highland High School in Indiana, which performed at community events.

With more than 3 million members, the nursing profession is the largest segment of the nation's health-care work force. As a whole, the industry is facing work-force challenges as demand for front-line nurses, who have a direct effect on patient care, is outstripping supply.

"A report by the Health Services Administration says every single state in the nation will experience some kind of nursing shortage by 2015," said Kinsey, adding, "Florida is going to need 15,740 new RNs, not people coming back into the profession, by 2020."

Aging baby-boomers, who will make up nearly 20 percent of the population by 2030, will help drive that nursing demand. They will need more health-care services as they live longer and have more active lives, she said.

Kinsey came to this interview with a stack of reports from the U.S. Department of Labor, the Institute of Medicine and from other entities that compile nursing data.

Employment of registered nurses is expected to grow 26 percent now through 2020, faster than the average for all occupations.

"When I talk to my leadership students, I let them know just exactly how secure their jobs really are, because the average age of a nurse today is 44.5 years. The Department of Labor is projecting 1.2 million RN vacancies across the country (now through 2020). That is an incredible number. All of us in the profession have been circling these numbers," she said.

Nursing growth is expected to be much faster than average in outpatient care centers, such as those that provide same-day chemotherapy, rehabilitation, and surgery. Also, an increased number of procedures, as well as more sophisticated procedures once performed only in hospitals, are being done in physician offices.

The financial pressure on hospitals to discharge patients as soon as possible should mean more people admitted to extended and long-term care facilities, which will increase the need for home health care.

"Statistics show that only 57 percent of RNs work in hospitals," said Kinsey. "They also work in care facilities, freestanding surgical centers, clinics, physician offices and other settings."

She said the average age of a nursing student is 30. "We have students who have worked in other fields are now coming into nursing and earning their degree. They decided this is something they wanted to do all along and are



BBN photo — Adrienne B. Roth

Industry practitioner and educator Brenda Kinsey is the new nursing program director at Keiser University in Melbourne. Kinsey relocated from Indianapolis, where she was the director of nursing at a private college. She has held numerous leadership roles including positions at Indiana Vocational Technical College and the St. Vincent Hospital system.

going for it."

The enticement of job security weighs on their decision, she added.

Kinsey said she has had a lot of great experiences during her long nursing career working on the front lines as a practitioner and in other areas of the profession.

"For me, it is very special to be with someone when they take their first breadth and when they take their last breadth. It's so spiritual for me and will always be the highlight of my nursing career, no matter what is ahead."