



MEET DONOR: BG Carter

BG Carter and Kay Carpenter shared an extraordinary life and love for more than two decades. Together, they made an impact on the future of nursing through the establishment of the Kay Carpenter “Pay it Forward” Scholarship at FAU.

BG and Kay’s partnership in supporting nursing began as he sold his last business interest in Key West, a guesthouse he had operated for 31 years. Before he made it home to their community, St. Andrews Estates in Boca Raton, Kay informed BG she had found his “antidote to boredom.” BG, who didn’t think he was bored, was soon enlisted in helping Kay create an organization of retired nurses within their community. He posted notice after notice on a bulletin board, inviting retired nurses to connect. Kay intervened, “adding a brief, handwritten message on my typed notice,” he said. “She signed her name and a very big ‘R.N.’”

In 2017, the group was created, and the retired nurses reminisced about their careers, met often, volunteered together and became good friends. Confident of the retired nurses’ dedication to the group, “Kay then recruited me for her next quest – to fund a nursing scholarship. Initially, I was a bit reluctant. That vanished when she said, ‘This, I just must do before I die.’” Kay charged BG with helping determine which local higher education institution would be the home of the scholarship. Her two criteria: the program had to be distinguished both academically and in its caliber of nursing education.

BG said, “Using my ignorance [of nursing] as a shield could not stop Kay! She brusquely advised me to engage two experienced and well-educated nurses to guide me through the jargon of nursing education.” BG and Kay worked closely with Sharon Drew and Lisa Allen to evaluate South Florida nursing programs in

February 2018.” Following a visit to FAU’s Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, they knew they had found the perfect place to support the next generation of nurses. BG noted, “While ‘excellence’ is not defined merely as a terrifically high passing score on the NCLEX, the fact that the FAU College of Nursing Class of 2018 scored 100 percent, and has maintained a very high score subsequently, testifies to the quality of the nursing education.” By June of that year, a jubilant Kay made the first of four annual donations to the Kay Carpenter Nursing Scholarship. The scholarship is unique in that recipients “pay it forward” and have a period of 10 years after graduation to repay the scholarship, making it a self-perpetuating fund.

Kay passed away in March of 2020, and with BG’s unwavering support, her goals of bringing together retired nurses in the community and establishing a scholarship were achieved; her legacy of caring is secure. BG continues to devote himself to furthering this legacy. He was so inspired by her passion for supporting nursing education in contributing \$250,000 to seed the scholarship, that he made the same commitment.

Now more than ever, BG is proud of FAU nursing students, who continue to pursue their careers despite the challenges brought on by COVID-19. “Every indication that I’ve seen to date demonstrates the abundant courage and enterprise of the Kay Carpenter Scholars,” said BG. He’s also proud of the work of the faculty to rise to these new challenges. “Tomorrow’s legacy is being fashioned today by students and teachers who earnestly believe in honor, reciprocity, and joy. Those were Kay’s most cherished qualities.” ■



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BG Carter, Donor