
< 2019 Health Care Heroes



IMAGE CREDIT: COURTESY PHOTO

Brian Powers



Brian Powers took to teaching like he'd be doing it for years. In many ways, he had.

As owner of Home Healthcare Connection for 17 years and former chairman of the board of the Wichita Independent Business Association, Powers spent a lot of time educating employees and fellow board members on the evolution of the health-care industry.

Powers found a different avenue to share his knowledge when he was hired to lead Friends University's Master of Health Care Leadership program in 2016. In that role, he earned the respect and admiration of students and colleagues with his ability to convey his experience to a younger audience and for his willingness to fulfill additional duties within the program.

Powers, 62, was recently hired by Bethany College as a professor of business.

“In business, we’re constantly teaching,” Powers said. “As the president of a company or chairman of the board, we direct others, but we need to give them the tools necessary to grow, to learn and to succeed. That’s no different than working with students or working with other faculty members, making sure that we have that platform in order to succeed.

“I don’t see a lot of different between my employees or my students in that regard.”

Powers was the President and CEO of Seneca Healthcare Group for 19 years, through the end of 2015. When he sold his businesses, those agreements came with a non-compete, so he began looking for a new challenge.

He found it at Friends, though many around him would say that Powers’ new role wasn’t really much of a challenge. Powers acclimated himself immediately and became a favorite of students and faculty.

“I will say one thing that he does that I’m pretty sure I don’t even do, but he’s available pretty much 24/7 for his students,” said Michelle Case, an assistant professor in business and technology at Friends.

“All they have to do is reach out to him, and whatever he was doing he would make them a priority. I think that was one of his biggest gifts in the classroom, that his students felt like they mattered to him and that he really was invested in their future.”

Case said losing Powers was more like Bethany’s gain, and Powers is eager to continue passing along his knowledge, now to even younger undergraduate students.

“I think it is a calling,” Powers said. “I really believe it is our duty to help those that are entering the field, through whatever channel in whatever discipline, to make sure that they receive the proper education and learn from those experiences that we’ve had in the field.”

– Jeffrey Lutz