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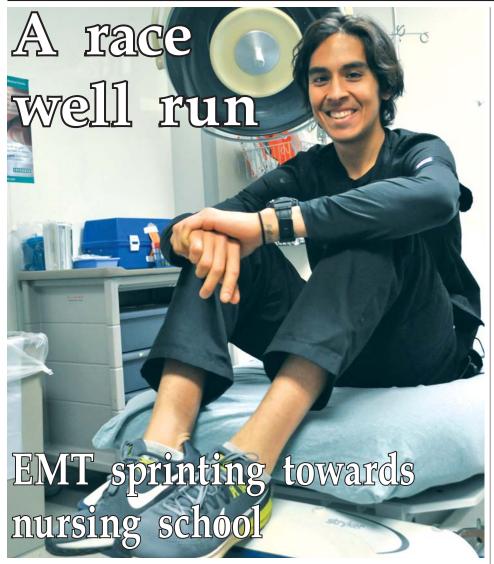
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April 15, 2019

Information for the Oklahoma Nursing & Health Care Professional

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Joel Salazar, EMT at Integris Southwest Medical Center, is racing towards nursing school.

by Bobby Anderson, RN, Staff Writer

Joel Salazar ran headlong towards counseling, getting a bachelor's then master's degree in the field that he thought would be his future career.

"Come to find out mental health wasn't what I wanted to do. I felt like I wasn't cut out for it," the Integris Southwest EMT said.

Then he set out on the pre-med track and

figured becoming a physician would be his calling.

"But sometime last semester I had to do a lot of soul-searching, got burned out really bad and just have been struggling this last couple years with personal stuff," he said. "I was searching for what I wanted out of life and I didn't want my life to revolve around school and work for

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## Lymphoma Survivor and Long-Time Nurse Pursues **Passion**



Jennifer Oakley is a nurse at Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) in Tulsa.

Jennifer Oakley has been a nurse for more than four decades. The daughter of a lymphoma survivor, and a lymphoma survivor herself, her most meaningful years have been spent at Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) in Tulsa caring for patients battling the same disease. She has also taken her passion outside the walls of the hospital into her community to offer hope to others in their journey with blood

In April 2013, Oakley was working as a registered nurse in the intensive care unit. While changing multiple dressings on a patient that took two-anda-half hours to complete, she developed an intense back pain that wouldn't go away. A few days later, she consulted the hospital nurse and was sent to the minor emergency clinic for evaluation. After hearing

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## PASSION Continued from Page 1

her symptoms, the physicians sent her to the emergency room to have a CT scan done.

The scan revealed that her peritoneum was filled with enlarged lymph nodes, and she was given the diagnosis of lymphoma or non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

"I was relieved for a moment that I had an explanation for the pain but alarmed at what the final outcome might be," Oakley said. "The doctor suggested that I be admitted immediately, and I told her I would call CTCA."

The next day was filled with scans, lab tests, a lymph node biopsy and a bone marrow biopsy. The lymph node biopsy was conclusive for non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL), but inconclusive as to what kind. An open biopsy revealed an eight-inch-long abdominal tumor that was wrapped around her aorta and vena cava that could not be surgically removed. An exploratory laparotomy was then performed, followed by a five-day hospitalization. With her pain increasing daily, Oakley met with a pain management physician to control the pain. She was given a final diagnosis of Stage 2 Large B-Cell

NHL and would be treated with the R-CHOP regimen.

"I was told by the oncologist that there was no cure for NHL, but it could be treated and controlled, with a five-year survival rate of 85 percent," Oakley said. She began chemotherapy quickly after surgery, rather than waiting the typical four to six weeks post-surgery. "My doctor wanted to begin treatment quickly, as he felt the cancer was aggressive."

Oakley began her first round of chemotherapy on her birthday. A few days prior, her fellow nurses threw her a birthday party, and her beautician shaved her head. She went on to complete six rounds of chemotherapy, spaced three weeks apart.

Oakley battled various side effects throughout her treatment, including nausea, hair loss, fatigue, anorexia and mood swings. She remembered the fatigue and weight loss her father had experienced during his battle with lymphoma years earlier.

"My husband called it the 'worst diet ever'," Oakley recalled, regarding the 39 pounds she lost during treatment. "But together, we made it through."

Since then, she has worked in the stem cell transplant unit in two of the CTCA hospitals, which involves taking care of patients with a variety of blood cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma and NHL.

"There was an instant connection for me with those patients," she said. "They were intrigued that I was one of them. We swapped stories, and I was sought out with questions about my reaction to the medications. I was also able to give reassurance that we will fight this together," Oakley said.

"Jennifer has some of the fiercest passion I have ever seen," said Maloree Hamel, Special Care Unit Manager at CTCA. "As a cancer patient, Jennifer has been where our patients are, and because of this, she can articulate hope in a very raw, honest and vulnerable way with her patients. She can walk into a patient's room and be quick to respond as well as empower the patient to remember that they can persevere."

Oakley participated in her first "Light the Night" walk for Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) a few months after finishing chemotherapy and has attended every walk since. She has been the CTCA Tulsa team captain for the past three years and has recruited her nursing team to help with her annual fundraising campaign, which raises thousands of dollars for LLS each year.

"It is so magical to see all of the people carrying their lanterns as survivors, supporters or in memory of loved ones," Oakley said. "Light the Night is an emotional experience that touches the lives of people affected by blood cancers; but most importantly, it helps fund education, research and various types of support for patients and their families. LLS is near and dear to my heart, as I have a passion to help others with blood cancer."

This past year, Oakley celebrated five years since her diagnosis and received CTCA's first Community Impact Award, recognizing her for her community involvement efforts.

Cancer Treatment Centers of America Global, Inc. (CTCA) is a comprehensive cancer care network of hospitals and outpatient care centers in Atlanta, Chicago, Philadelphia, Phoenix and Tulsa. Specializing in the treatment of adult cancer patients, CTCA® offers an integrative approach to care that combines surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, and immunotherapy with advancements in precision cancer treatment and supportive therapies designed to manage side effects and enhance quality of life both during and after treatment. CTCA also offers qualified patients a range of clinical trials that may reveal new treatment options supported by scientific and investigational research. CTCA patient satisfaction scores consistently rank among the highest for all cancer care providers in the country. Visit cancercenter.com, Facebook.com/ cancercenter and Twitter.com/cancercenter for more information.

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## OU's Susan Dresser Honored for Work as Clinical Nurse Specialist and Educator

At its annual conference in Florida recently, the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS) presented its Educator of the Year Award to Susan Dresser, MSN, APRN-CNS, CCRN, director of the Adult-Gerontology CNS Program at the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma.

The award recognizes an NACNS member for outstanding professional achievement as a clinical nurse specialist (CNS) educator and acknowledges his/her commitment to excellence and innovation in preparing CNSs and implementing the NACNS Statement on CNS Practice and Education

Dresser has been a member of NACNS since 2001. As an

expert in cardiovascular nursing, she enthusiastically shares her clinical and professional knowledge to engage students in dialogues that will enrich students' learning experience. Students say she has "a passion for advancing nursing practice that shows in everything she does."

"It is my great honor to present the Educator of the Year Award to Susan Dresser," said NACNS Immediate Past President Anne E. Hysong, MSN, APRN, CCNS, ACNS-BC. "She is an expert in cardiovascular nursing and an educator who enthusiastically shares her clinical and professional knowledge in order to engage students in dialogues that enrich their learning experience."

### SALAZAR Continued from Page 1

the rest of my years."

Friends, family, a family of his own - all are on the horizon for Salazar as he attempts to grab one of the coveted spots in Oklahoma City Community College's accelerated nursing program.

He's on the fast track now, but just a few years ago Salazar wasn't too sure what he was running towards.

#### NEWFOUND PASSION

Salazar started running his junior year of high school. With a passion for soccer, he was dead set on making the varsity club his junior year.

He thought going out for cross country would help get him in more aerobic shape.

"Turns out I was pretty good at it," the Yukon grad said. "It didn't take long for me to make the varsity seven and I wound up being the second-best runner on the squad."

His love for running earned him a scholarship from Southwest Christian in Bethany but so much else in his life was weighing him down.

Watching his parents go through a really ugly divorce preceded losing his father a week before his senior year in high school.

Other issues mounted.

"I guess I never really dealt with it even though I thought I did," he said. "After I graduated I was going through those years of school. I hadn't dealt with it so as soon as I got out of school, being sheltered at Southwest Christian, once I got out in the real world all that had built up started coming out."

He can talk about it now, but a four-year lull after college saw him hanging out with the wrong crowd. He poured more into the wrong relations as a way to deal with his mounting depression.

Substance abuse seemed to help at the time, although later he realized it did more harm than good.

"There were really difficult times in my spiritual life as well," Salazar said. "A bunch of things got really bad."

Trying to pull himself out, he realized that running had always propelled him.

He'd run the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon a few times before, the half one year and the full course twice. Each time was with little to no training.

"This time around it just made sense," he said. "I reference my faith a lot in my training but it was like the good Lord was challenging me at that time in my life. I looked back at the races I had gone through and a lot of the things I had struggled with it was a repetitive pattern."

"I'd have these highs and go right back to lows, repeating the same cycles. He challenged me it was time to stop playing games."

It was that challenge to wade into it, making the effort and being consistent that brought him from the depths.

"The common denominator in those four years was I just wasn't running. I never realized how much of an outlet it was for me and how much it was a tool to grow in my faith, grow as person and understand

my life," he said.

Certain toxic relationships started to drop out of his life. He started eating better. He slept better and trained better.

"It just kind of snowballed," he said. "(Running) was very, very important to my recovery. It's been one of the more pivotal things in my life."

Salazar still has those lows, but running seems to always be there for him.

There's an old saying that life is a marathon, not a sprint.

Salazar smiles when he hears that.

"It couldn't be any more real," he said. This winter, Salazar won the Route 66 Marathon in Tulsa.

And now he's happy to be running toward a career where he can help others at their lowest moments.

## Hospitals and Clinic Partners Recognized by OHA

Hospitals Helping Patients Quit (HHPQ), an initiative of the Oklahoma Hospital Association (OHA) and program of the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET), recently recognized nine hospital and clinic partners that have achieved notable benchmarks in reducing tobacco use in Oklahoma.

These leaders have made a critical commitment to their patients, employees, and communities to reduce Oklahoma's leading cause of preventable death, tobacco use and related illness. The visionary hospitals and clinics recognized have implemented a permanent and standard best-practice protocol for identifying, counseling and referring individuals to the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline (OTH) for coaching support and nicotine replacement therapy.

OHA celebrates these leaders for achieving notable benchmarks in clinical tobacco treatment: • AllianceHealth Ponca City – 350 Helpline Referrals • Duncan Regional Hospital – 700 Helpline Referrals • Integris Affiliated Clinics – 4200 Helpline Referrals • Integris Grove Hospital – 600 Helpline Referrals • Mercy Hospital Ada – 200 Helpline Referrals • Mercy Hospital Ada – 200 Helpline Referrals • Mercy Hospital Ardmore – 450 Helpline Referrals • Purcell Municipal Hospital – 180 Helpline Referrals • SSM Health St. Anthony Healthplex South – 550 Helpline Referrals • Stillwater Medical Center – 300 Helpline Referrals

Through effective, health care provider-driven tobacco treatment services, HHPQ partner hospitals and clinics have referred more than 36,000 patients to the OTH resulting in an estimated 25,300 years of life saved and millions of dollars in reduced health care costs as well as personal spending on tobacco products.

The Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust (TSET) supports OHA's Hospital Helping Patients Quit and the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline. For more information on the HHPQ initiative, go to www.okoha.com/hhpq. For information on the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline, see <a href="http://okhelpline.com">http://okhelpline.com</a>.

# INTEGRIS Health.



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## PASSION IN NURSING FULL CIRCLE OF LIFE: EPWORTH VILLA

by Vickie Jenkins - Writer/Photographer

At Epworth Villa, you'll enjoy friends, family and the activities you love. As the premier provider of quality retirement living in Oklahoma City, Epworth Villa is redefining retirement living with a vibrant life style that will spark your interest.

Epworth Villa is an amazing senior living facility in north Oklahoma City, with all levels of senior care. That includes independent living, assisted living, long term care, skilled nursing, and respite care.

Meet Marva Pikula, LPN, Assistant Director of Nursing at Epworth Villa. Being the Assistant Director, Marva wears many hats. Some of her responsibilities include; managing and overseeing LTC and memory care teams of providers, communicating effectively with caregivers, residents and families, managing staff schedules and time

off requests, doing evaluations, along with managing and ensuring care plans are being met. "This is the first time I have been in this position as Assistant Director," Marva says. "I have been here at Epworth Villa for a little over a year. I've been a nurse for fourteen years, working in different places. I have been a school nurse, a nurse in a jail, surgery centers, worked as a nurse from different agencies, along with working in several assisted living homes; they are all so different yet all rewarding," she commented.

Asking Marva why she decided to work in geriatrics, she said, "When I was little, I helped take care of my grandmother. Ever since then, I wanted to be a nurse. I never thought about doing anything else. In fact, being a nurse is the only thing I have ever done. There are so many

different facets of nursing plus a nurse can work wherever they

"I feel like I was meant to be a nurse and I am where I am supposed to be. What I like most about this age group is the fact that I get to interact with the residents and their families and the staff. I enjoy geriatrics and I get to grow with the residents as they transition with their age. It is so easy to form a bonding relationship with each one of them. The biggest challenge around here is there is never an uneventful day. There is always something new going on," Marva said with a smile.

Marva said her biggest asset at work is her ability to adjust to all of the change in such a fast moving environment.

What qualities make a good nurse? "Well, definitely compassion,

empathy, being a good manager, detail oriented, a great team player and knowledgeable about nursing skills. With all of these factors combined, you have a good nurse," she replied.

Describing herself, Marva said. "I am really critical of myself. I am compassionate and very adaptable to change. I would say that I am very flexible. Ever since I was little, I wanted to be a nurse. I have always felt like I needed to take care of others."

Asking Marva what advice she would give to someone if they wanted to go into the medical field, she said, "I would tell them to be prepared to be a charge nurse and be able to be in charge. That is very important. Also I would tell them to know how to communicate with the staff and the residents and everyone they

See PIKULA Page 5



Our son, Curtis, wasn't breathing when he was born. The first 30 days of his life in the hospital were a fight for survival. As his little body began to 'wake up', he finally came out of the coma.

Curtis defied all the odds. We watched him grow and develop. We remember when he ran on the field with his glove for his first t-ball game.

But Curtis' kidneys eventually failed, and he started dialysis when he was 12 years old. He was at the top of the transplant waiting list when we got the call in October 2009.

When he received his new kidney, it saved his life and now he has been crowned Prom King and is graduating from High School!



We learned that his donor was Mariee, a softball star from the University of Oklahoma. Mariee's donation not only saved Curtis, but she also saved the lives of five others.

Organ, eye and tissue donation saves lives. Please make your decision to donate life and tell your family. Register to be an organ, eye and tissue donor on your Oklahoma driver's license or state ID card or register online at www.LifeShareRegistry.org. If you don't have a license or state ID card and do not have internet access, call 800-826-LIFE (5433) and ask for a donor registration card.





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Marva Pikula, LPN works as the Assistant Director of Nursing at Epworth Villa in N.W. Oklahoma City, OK. Her favorite part of her job is the interaction with the residents, their families and the staff.

## PIKULA Continued from Page 4

come in contact with. Without

communication, you don't have anything," she said.

There is a special someone that motivates Marva to keep setting goals and reaching them; that special someone is her husband, Chris. "He supports me in everything I set out to do," she said. "He is helpful to me in every way and he has my back in everything," she added. "Also, I love all of my co-workers. They

support me in everything I do. We work well together. We have teamwork."

Marva is married to her wonderful husband, Chris. They have five children ages 10-27. Their pet is a cute little Yorkie. Marva's hobbies include reading, exercising and relaxing on the beach when she can get away.

To sum up Marva's life in a few words, she said, "My life is making a full circle. I see the purpose in life and I am the happiest I have ever been."

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## INTEGRIS HEALTH EDMOND RECOGNIZED



INTEGRIS Health Edmond was recently recognized by the National Safe Sleep Hospital Certification Program as a "National Certified Bronze Safe Sleep Hospital" for their commitment to best practices and education on infant safe sleep.

They are one of the first hospitals in Oklahoma to receive this title.

The National Safe Sleep Hospital Certification Program was created by Cribs for Kids®, a Pittsburgh-based organization dedicated to preventing infant, sleep-related deaths due to accidental suffocation. In addition to being Cribs for Kids® partners, INTEGRIS Health Edmond was recognized for following the safe sleep guidelines recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and providing training programs for parents, staff and the community.

"Sleep-Related Death (SRD) results in the loss of more than 3,500 infants every year in the U.S.," said Michael H. Goodstein, M.D., neonatologist and medical director of research at Cribs for Kids®. "We know that consistent education can have a profound effect on infant mortality, and this program is designed to encourage safe sleep education and to recognize those hospitals that are taking an active role in reducing these preventable deaths."

This program is well-aligned with the Maternal Child Health Bureau's vision of reducing infant mortality through the promotion of infant sleep safety as outlined in Infant Mortality CoIIN Initiative. Forty states have designated SIDS/SUID/SRD as their emphasis to reduce infant mortality.

Oklahoma has one of the highest rates of infant mortality in the nation.

Infant mortality is often used as a measure of the overall health of a population. Nearly 21% of all infant deaths in Oklahoma for 2013-2015 were attributed to SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) and other sleep-related conditions.

"Our labor and delivery nurses, obstetricians and pediatric physicians are committed to educating parents on safe sleep practices with the goal of decreasing the number of preventable infant deaths related to unsafe sleep habits," said Evelyn Radichel, RN, administrative director of the INTEGRIS Health Edmond Women's Center. "We are seeing it in the news right now with the recall of the Fisher-Price Rock 'n Play Sleeper. Well-meaning parents simply don't have all the facts necessary to make an informed decision. We are hoping to change that."

The National Safe Sleep Hospital Certification Program was created in partnership with leading infant health and safety organizations such as All Baby & Child, The National Center for the Review & Prevention of Child Deaths, Association of SIDS and Infant Mortality Programs, Kids in Danger, Children's Safety Network, American SIDS Institute, Charlie's Kids, CJ Foundation for SIDS, and numerous state American Academy of Pediatric chapters and health departments.



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7pm-7am.

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## We are accepting applications for Certified Nurse Aide for 9-5 shift,

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#### 140 GENERAL NURSING

#### We are looking for full time Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Nurses to work Monday-Friday

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#### 140 GENERAL NURSING

#### We Are Seeking Nurse Aides, Cooks And Licensed Practical Nurses

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## HIGHLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERING

## Volunteerism Opens Doors

By Valerie Pautsch, OU Medicine

It was 1981, and Betty Lausen, having raised a family, found herself with an "empty nest" and a little time and energy to spare. So when a friend began a persistent recruitment effort urging Lausen to join the volunteer auxiliary at OU Medical Center Edmond, she finally said yes.

"She literally begged me to sign up," Lausen said.

Just a month later, the persistent recruiter-friend quit the auxiliary. Nearly 37 years later, Lausen, 88, continues to help patients and their families, and loves the adventure she finds in every day.

In recognition of last week's National Volunteer Week, the staff of OU Medical Center Edmond thanks all their dedicated volunteers who are an important part of the team that keeps the hospital running smoothly.

Lausen's fellow volunteer-adventurer, Nina Ingram, 93, has been with the auxiliary for more than 30 years. Ingram, a former secretary, came to the auxiliary after her husband retired and became an avid golfer. Her vision of the "Golden years" didn't include hours spent daily on the golf course. The prospect of volunteering at the hospital gained new appeal, enhanced by the fact that Ingram had friends already active in the auxiliary.

"The gift shop had a spot for a volunteer, but the front reception desk was more what I had in mind," Ingram said.

Leslie Buford, assistant vice president of operations for OU Medical Center Edmond, said the contributions made by volunteers may not be great in terms of labor, but they are nonetheless significant. "Front desk volunteers help direct traffic and provide discharge assistance," she said. "They may courier lab samples and other items between various hospital departments. Small things, like assembling welcome kits and delivering newspapers and magazines, make a positive difference for patients and their families. It is not always about the particular task or errand being done. It's always about the kindness and encouragement offered in circumstances that can be challenging."

Why OU Medical Center Edmond? The answer is simple and transparent: at the time, it was the only hospital in town, and being close to home made it a good fit. Both Lausen and Ingram come to the hospital each week, typically working a four-hour shift.

"We love to meet people, and the social connection is very important. But we also try to help people with their problems," said Ingram.

The two friends say the volunteer auxiliary has opened the door to many lasting friendships. Both women, now widows, value those relationships as well as the opportunities they have to serve others.

"Our families haven't grown smaller - they are bigger now," Lausen said, citing their connection to hospital employees as well as friends in the auxiliary.

The facility is a hub of activity for Ingram and Lausen. Nearly every week, Lausen's son, daughter and grandson arrive at the end of her shift to enjoy lunch together. They look



Pictured from left OU Medical Center Edmond Volunteers Betty Lausen, 88, and Nina Ingram, 93.

forward to these weekly gatherings that have become something of a tradition.

In addition to their dedicated volunteerism, Lausen and Ingram are regular participants at the hospital's Senior Class events, a series of monthly lunch and learns where topics of particular interest to older adults are presented. Both are active members in Senior Connection, an organization that provides a range of social opportunities. Lausen teaches line dancing at the Senior Center and previously taught tap dancing as well.

The close friendship Lausen and Ingram share today took root, grew and blossomed in the heart of the auxiliary community, and has included many adventures through the years. It all started, they say, when Lausen expressed a desire to visit her daughter, then stationed in Germany. She was hesitant to go alone, and although practically strangers to each other at the time, Ingram offered to accompany Lausen on the trip. Lausen still remembers the unspoken thought, "Gee I hope this goes well. I'll be stuck with this lady for a month!" A lasting bond was forged during those in-flight hours.

Remembering another adventure, the pair collapsed into giggles, recounting their visit to Amsterdam's "red light" district. As traveling companions, Lausen and Ingram have taken to the road, often in Ingram's full-size RV, from the west coast to Las Vegas, to wintering in south Texas. Just last year, they ended a 15-year tradition volunteering together at the annual Guthrie Bluegrass Festival.

"We had a great time setting up the RV for a weekend of bluegrass and fun," Ingram said.

Each woman's husband received care at the hospital prior to their deaths, strengthening their sense of connection. Lausen was actually working her volunteer shift the day her husband was brought to the emergency department. She remembers the kindness shown to her by the staff and how much it meant in those difficult hours.

"Volunteer support is crucial to the caring mission of OU Medical Center Edmond and the volunteer auxiliary welcomes more enthusiastic participants like Betty and Nina," Buford said. "We need many more men, women and young people, 18 and older, who are willing to share a little time with others. While volunteers are not compensated financially for their work, the rewards are priceless."

For information about volunteer opportunities at OU Medical Center Edmond, contact Leslie Buford, assistant vice president of operations, at 405-359-5580 (office) or 405-834-3111 (cell).



## Equipping leaders in a professional community

Since 1975, the mission of Harding University Carr College of Nursing has been to develop nurses as Christian servants. Faculty and staff are eager to get to know new students and nurture their journey through the program. The University's mission permeates classroom and clinical instruction taught by highly trained professionals from a Christ-centered worldview. Close faculty-student relationships and mentorships foster personal, academic and professional growth. Offering undergraduate and graduate programs prepares students to perform well in any health care setting. Read more to see why you belong at Harding.

#### What sets Harding trained nurses apart from other nursing schools?

Harding's nursing graduates are well-equipped to enter the field, with high job placement rates and a 100 percent first-time Family Nurse Practitioner National Certification pass rate since the program's first graduates in 2017. The undergraduate nursing program has a 100 percent first-time NCLEX-RN pass rate since 2015 and has been ranked the No. 1 Nursing Program in Arkansas by RegisteredNursing.org for two years in a row. This ranking is based on how well a program supports students toward licensure and beyond.

What undergraduate nursing tracks does Harding

The undergraduate tracks are designed to meet the individualized needs of students, all leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

#### These include:

- Four-year, full-time/part-time traditional track
- 18-month accelerated second-degree program
- Individualized track for students who hold a current unencumbered nursing license without a bachelor's degree. An individualized degree completion plan is collaboratively designed with the student (full-time/part-time available)
- Honors classes

What if I have a degree in another field but have decided health care is my passion? Harding University has launched an Accelerated Second Degree BSN option and it is a great path for students who already have a bachelor's in another area of study.

What graduate programs are available? For our fast paced, online world, Harding offers a Master of Science in Nursing (FNP) Family Nurse Practitioner program in a hybrid format. Students gain the required knowledge via weekly online lectures plus on-campus intensives three to five days per semester. Upon completion, students have the opportunity to sit for the national certification exam.

How does the program interact with the community? Students assist in a local Christian clinic that serves the medically and economically disadvantaged. They also provide



health screenings at area churches and various university sponsored events.

Does Harding offer a study abroad program? For more than 40 years, Harding has been training nurses not only for a career in traditional health care settings but also to work in in health missions. Medical mission opportunities exist locally and abroad in short-term and long-term options. Opportunities are open to graduate and undergraduate students.



## Special to the Nursing Times

## Giving Back

When I think back through my years as a nurse, I have given much, but at the same time, given to others at the bedside as well. Reflecting on how much we give of ourselves, which includes our time away from our families at the holidays, weekends, nights, and birthdays. As nurses, we are continually giving, never asking for gratitude.

Do we have anything left to give at the end of the day? The answer is personal of course, but I like to think we can still keep giving. Giving to our profession in diverse and various ways can help others in ways you may not have thought Angela Archer, BSN possible.



The nursing profession is as diverse as the patients we have in our care. Volunteering our time and (sometimes undiscovered) talents, can not only help those in need, but can as well help us to grow inside, connect us with each other, as we all know, we are human beings helping human beings. Many times we need only to look in our own backyard, so to speak. How about our state nurse association? Do you think the organization can run without volunteers or the annual state nurse convention just appears out of nowhere? No, it functions from the hard work, talents and minds from all different types of nurses across the state. Talents, what talents do I have to give?

Plenty. Many nursing organizations need your experience, your point of view, your input. All of us have something to offer the wide wonderful world of nursing. If a shy, socially awkward person like myself, can be president of a specialty (INS) state organization, then I know anyone can become whatever they desire or want to become. You are more than you think you are, and know more than you think you do, and can give more than you think you can. Look around you, there are always people and nursing organizations in need. If you need help in finding ways to contribute to our nursing profession, ONA is a good start, the specialties where you are currently employed. Even med-surg nursing has it's own organization. There are organizations who are in need of leadership skills, advice, and skills you are possessing, so go out and give. I promise you, you will not go away empty handed or unfulfilled. I wish there were more days or hours in the week to do all I would like to do and give to my community and profession.

One of my ambitions, after finishing my long awaited goal of a BSN, was to adjunct at one of the tech or community colleges. It happened! I wanted to give what I had been given over the past several decades of my career. My preceptor is giving herself to me. Her knowledge and her experience and her time. The future of nursing is staring us in the face, and we have the power to help grow our future. Nursing schools are desperate for professors and adjuncts, as the demand for nurses is growing. This is also one way to give back to our profession, perhaps in a way you may never know. Perhaps there is that struggling student(s), who need your guidance, time and experience to direct their path as an emerging nurse.

The point is you are never too old, too young, too this or too that to give. Never underestimate the power of you.

Angela Archer has been a nurse for over 28 years and graduated in 1990 from TJC, now known as TCC in Tulsa Oklahoma. She has worked in the Medical-Surgical Float Pool at St. Francis Hospital in Tulsa recently returning to school and fulfilling her goal of completing a BSN. She is also planning to continue her education in a Master's program in Nursing Informatics.



Vicki L Mayfield, M.Ed., R.N., LMFT Marriage and Family Therapy Oklahoma City If you would like to send a question to Vicki, email us at news@okcnursingtimes.com

My PCP said all my tests came back negative even though I had specific symptoms. She suggested I talk to a therapist. What?? So my doctor thinks I am crazy! Why would she want me to see a therapist? -- Jenny

A. Jenny you actually have a very wise doctor. Just because your medical tests were negative it doesn't mean that she was discounting your symptoms. She could have prescribed medication to treat your symptoms but her wisdom in referring you to a therapist was the best medication.

Linda's doctor also referred her to a therapist after treating her for headaches and stomach pain. She had tests, many tests and blood work but the results were negative. Instead of being relieved that she did not have a serious illness she became more determined to convince the doctor she wasn't crazy. She really had pain.

At this point Linda's doctor suggested that something else might be causing her pain and talking to a therapist might help. She was extremely resistive but she eventually called to make an appointment. After many sessions with her therapist Linda was able to see how her long term marriage was very empty and she was very lonely. She had never talked to anyone about her marriage.

She began to realize that maybe her depression and extreme sadness might be causing some of her physical symptoms. She felt trapped, unable to leave the marriage due to finances, insurance benefits and her lack of job skills.

Therapy helped her find new outlets for her loneliness. She realized she had isolated from social contact so she began to fill some of her time with old friends. She could not expect her husband to complete her and met her needs if he showed no interest. She was beginning a journey for life to have more meaning.

Linda would not have gone to therapy if her doctor had not suggested it. She was not crazy. Her doctor never thought she was crazy. It was the best medication for Linda.

So Jenny, take this moment to think about a different approach to your health problems. Your tests were negative, your blood work normal but your symptoms persist. You are not crazy.

Call and make an appointment.

# NURSE

I wish my life was the Great British Baking Show. Can you imagine being able to bake all those delicious treats?



Jessie Motsinger, Administrative Director

Law and Order: Special Victims Unit



Billi Jones, Housekeeping

What T.V. show best describes your life?



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