# Oklahoma's Nursing Times

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Debi Sims, RN, BSN, BF-CMT, Memory Care Manager, helps prepare for the Luau that the residents will enjoy at Touchmark at Coffee Creek Retirement Community in Edmond, OK.

#### by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Touchmark is the premier retirement community in north Edmond where they offer elegant independent and assisted living plus memory care. Their mission is to enrich people's lives.

This is where you will meet Debi K. Sims, RN, BSN, BF-CMT, and Touchmark's Memory Care Manager where she has been working for the last four years. Debi has been a nurse for a total of 23 years and loves every minute of it. "I can't imagine doing anything else," she said.

Growing up in the bay area of California, she moved here with her parents in the mid 60's and has lived here ever since. Attending nursing school, she received her BSN at East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma. "My first job as a nurse was at Rolling Hills Psychiatric center in Ada, OK. I worked with adolescent boys. I still have a lot of friends from those days and it remains one of my favorite jobs. I never would have seen myself as a nurse manager if Brian McCoun hadn't pushed Integris hiring goes Fast Track June 3rd INTEGRIS Health.

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**SEMINOLE** 

#### by Bobby Anderson, RN, Staff Writer

Today's health care environment moves at a fast pace. So why can't the hiring process?

That is a question Integris Southwest Medical Center Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer Jackie Lockett hopes to answer with her hospital's new hiring event.

Integris Southwest Medical Center will host its first Fast Track Hiring Event June 3, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the Integris Cancer Institute conference room on the hospital's campus.

"What we're hearing from some of our new hires, when they're looking for a job they want a job now," Lockett said.

The typical process involves potential hires looking online for a list of available positions. Once they've submitted an application online then they're called for an interview.

After the interview they go home to wait for a phone call. Then another trip to Human Resources is required. Then there's another appointment with employee health for checkoffs.

It's a process that could use some simplifying.

That's why ISMC directors will be on-hand the entire day. Interviews will be done on the spot.

#### **EVENT Continued from Page 1**

If both parties are interested the opportunity to shadow the unit for a period of time immediately may be available.

From there, applicants can come back downstairs for a potential job offer pending background check.

That paperwork is done on the spot and employees can knock out requirements at employee health after that.

"It gets the majority of the hiring stuff done all in one day," Lockett said. "They can have Lockett said. "I love how that discussion with the hiring manager for a start date."

The idea originated from one of the hospital's board members who saw an article on a similar process used by Chick- to making sure we're doing fil-A restaurants.

Lockett said the event will focus on registered nurses, nursing assistants emergency and department techs.

the bulk of the needs at

Southwest.

"They're very excited about the event," Lockett said of her directors. "Now they're doing an interview here and an interview there. If I could get 10 people to come in for my positions it's just easier to knock it out in one day."

A booth will also be onsite answer questions to about benefits employee including nursing education reimbursement and advancement programs.

Lockett is finishing up her first year in her new position.

"(I've enjoyed) the people," everybody is engaged in making this the best place to work and the best place for our patients to receive care.

Everyone wants to contribute the right thing and making it an environment where everybody wants to work and just be a community."

has focused on Lockett Those three positions represent improving recognition of staff. "We want this to be the place



Integris Southwest Medical Center VP CNO Jackie Lockett, RN, is excited about her hospital's one-day Fast Track hiring event June 3.

where everybody wants to come care that they get the best care and if they're here to receive possible," she said.



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#### SIMS Continued from Page 1

me in that direction. Now, I can't image doing anything else," she commented. Unless, I had followed my childhood dream of being an artist," she said with a laugh. "Doesn't everyone want to grow up and be an artist?" she asked.

There are several special people from Debi's life that influenced her to be a nurse. "That would be my mother, Patsy Marie Penrod, and her patient-my sister, Kellie Marie and my friend, Tom Hunt, RN at Bellevue."

Debi explains how she became a nurse a little later in life. "My decision to be a nurse came because of a divorce. I had three children to raise and nursing was a way of life for me. I watched my mother take care of my dying sister for years. My mother is my nursing inspiration. My gifts have always been encouragement and teaching and both of those worked out well in the field of nursing," Debi commented. Asking Debi what qualities make a good nurse, she replied, "Compassion is good, but a nurse has to be tough, gritty and stand in the gap for the patients or residents that they serve. Many times, you will be the one voice."

What is your biggest reward as a nurse? "Being a nurse is a daily blessing. I have peace knowing that my hands have worthy work to do and that my life is invested in something that makes a difference in people's lives; in the patients, families, coworkers and my immediate family," Debi replied.

What is your biggest challenge? "Protecting my time. I have to balance a demanding schedule and obligations with my chief priorities in life; God, family and career," she said.

Asking Debi if she had any mentors while she was in school, she said, "Dr. G. Black was my greatest mentor. The first day of class at 34 years old, I sat on the front row of his Zoology class and tears silently streamed down my face as I listened to him discuss the building blocks of all living things. I slowly gathered my books and walked out of the science hall and sat under a tree in absolute shock. I couldn't do this, I was in over my head, I heard a voice above and looked up and it was Dr. Black."

"Here, read this chapter that I copied from an old text book, know the material and you will be fine, he said. Then he slowly walked away. I read it and after a few weeks with a big grin on his face he let me know that I had been setting the curve in his class. Sometimes, your whole life can be traced back to one person who encouraged you."

Debi's hobbies include her first love of traveling. I also enjoy writing, poetry and scrapbooking. "I love spending time with my greatest blessings of all; my three children: Jillian, April and Hunter, and my two grandsons, Luke and John. Not to forget my faithful dog, Lexi, my long haired mini dachshund." As far as encouraging words go, Debi has a poster in her office that has traveled with her from her DON days at Epworth Villa, "The poster is Rosie the Riveter. 'We can do it!' Cause we can! As a nurse manager, we are just a part of the team. We never lose sight of the team. No one is more important from the other."

Summing up her life in one word: "That word is: CHALLENGING.

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# **PASSION IN NURSING** THE BEST TOOL FOR A NURSE : BETHANY BEHAVIORAL

#### by Vickie Jenkins - Writer/Photographer

Bethany Behavioral Health is where you will find specialized care for adults over the age of 55. Here, they will receive specialized intervention and stabilization services in a safe and secure setting with 24-hour supervision.

This is an acute facility. The staff includes psychiatrists, psychologists, registered nurses and master's-level health professionals dedicated to helping patients recover.

An outstanding individual in the medical field is Mike Rackley, RN. "We deal with different types of problems here. It could be mental, behavioral, alcohol or an EOD, an emergency order from a doctor or a hospital dealing with suicide or homicide. The patients usually stay for 5-12 days, until we feel like they have recovered in a healthy way," Mike commented.

Mike deals with adults and geriatrics at Bethany Behavioral

Health, along with traveling to Cedar Ridge Hospital, acute and residential, dealing with adolescents and children, ages 5-17. "I like working at both health facilities. Of course, there is such diversity between the ages; different problems and different attitudes. Either place, it is very rewarding knowing that I am helping someone get better," Mike said.

Born and raised in Oklahoma, Mike went to OU where he received a degree in microbiology. He was a teacher at N.E. Academy for twelve "I enjoyed teaching but years. decided I wanted to go into the medical field. I went to nursing school and have been a nurse for five years now. My first job as a nurse was working in Cardiac ICU at a hospital. I have been here at Bethany Behavioral Health for two years and I am currently going to school to be a nurse practitioner. Only one and half years to go," he

said with a smile. "I just want to further my education and continue to learn," he added.

Asking Mike how he became interested in working in Psychiatrics, he said he knew someone that had gotten their medications mixed up and went to a behavioral center to straighten him out. "I was so impressed with the doctors and nurses there; I knew that was what I wanted to do. I have always had a desire to be in the medical profession, even when I was a little boy. I even had the nickname DOC for the longest time."

What is the favorite part of your job? "Oh, it is definitely the education and the teaching. The patients are at a critical time in their lives and they need help. This is also the time I have to be a good listener, really listening to them and teaching! Beyond the shadow of a doubt, teaching the patient is

my favorite part of my job!" Mike replied.

What is your biggest challenge? "That would be when I see a patient and they don't want to listen. I have a plan of recovery for them and they don't want to take that path. They are at a crossroad and they are the one that has to make the decision. I can't make it for them," Mike said.

What qualities make a good nurse to work in the Psychiatrics? "First of all, there needs to be a lot of empathy. Empathy is the best tool a nurse can have along with looking at the patient overall and setting a goal for them. A nurse has to be a good listener. There is so much you can learn from listening to your patient and their families. Also, I think a nurse needs to have a desire to continue to learn. I would also tell them to be prepared for anything. A nurse never knows what is going See RACKLEY Page 5

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Mike Rackley, RN enjoys his job at Bethany Behavioral Health and Cedar Ridge Hospital.

#### RACKLEY **Continued from Page 4**

to happen next; there is a new challenge every day," he answered.

Mike is married to his wonderful wife Melanie and they have three daughters, Cheyenne, (married) Zion, 3, and Shiloh who is almost 2 years old. Mike enjoys attending church and spending time with his family. "I am also an auctioneer. I can really get loud when I am out on the floor, Mike had a quick answer, "GOD."

I have a gift of gab," he said with a laugh. "I also like fishing, hunting and golf," he added.

Describing himself, Mike said, "I am caring and I like to help others. I am open minded about things and like learning about new techniques and new strategies. I love teaching. By the end of the day, I feel like my life is fulfilled.

"If you were summing up your life in one word, what would it be?



## **OBU Honors 31 Nursing Graduates** During Pinning Ceremony May 16



Macy Tener (left) receives her pin from Dean McHenry during OBU's nursing pinning and lamp lighting ceremony May 16.

OBU honored 31 graduating nurses during the College of Nursing's Pinning and Lamp Lighting Ceremony held Thursday, May 16. The ceremony took place in Raley Chapel's Potter Auditorium on OBU's campus in Shawnee.

Jennifer Sharma, assistant professor of nursing, led the invocation. OBU Interim President Dr. Pat Taylor welcomed the graduates and their guests.

Dawn Westbrook, assistant professor of nursing, then discussed the significance of the ceremony. Dr. Lepaine Sharp-McHenry, dean of the OBU College of Nursing, made introductions and greeted the graduates as well as their guests.

Dr. Carla Sanderson, provost at Chamberlain University, delivered the address to graduates.

Graduating nurses then received their pins from McHenry, including Alex Akers, Katy, Texas; Chinonso Alinnor, Owerri, Nigeria; Sydney Bowman, Fort Worth, Texas; Blythe Bullard, Edmond, Oklahoma; Madeline Cravens, Newcastle, Oklahoma; Sarah Evans, Juneau, Alaska; Destiny Everett, Durant, Oklahoma; Jaimie Hartley, Yukon, Oklahoma; Abigail Hicks, Tulsa, Oklahoma; Adriana Holder, Meeker, Oklahoma; Kristin Holle, Ponca City, Oklahoma; Hannah Hopkins, Bartlesville, Oklahoma; Esther Kim, with art minor, Torrance, California; Moriah Lamb, North Pole, Alaska; Kali Lowery, Tecumseh, Oklahoma; Garrett Luster, Bethel Acres, Oklahoma; Laura Nettleton, Bartlesville; Anna Oliveira, Shawnee, Oklahoma; Baylee Owen, Moore, Oklahoma; Lauren Preston, McKinney, Texas; Alexa Richards, Durant, Oklahoma; Sarah Robbins, Prague, Oklahoma; Tanner Robertson, Mustang, Oklahoma; Hannah Rodriguez, Mulvane, Kansas; Ashlynn Salyer, Moore; Juliana Sinclair, Hillsboro, Kansas; Macy Tener, Oklahoma City; Bethany VanGoethem, Dallas; Kimberly Walker, Shawnee; Blaine Whitson, Enid, Oklahoma; and Samantha Willoughby, Shawnee.

Jamie Brantley, assistant professor of nursing, delivered the charge to the graduates while Megan Smith, assistant professor of nursing, led the benediction.

For more information about the College of Nursing at OBU, visit www.okbu.edu/nursing.

With its campus located in Shawnee, OBU offers 10 bachelor's degrees with 88 fields of study and five master's degree programs. The Christian liberal arts university has an overall enrollment of 2.011, with students from 37 states and 40 other countries.

(VIEW MORE PICTURES ON PAGE 8)

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protected veteran or disability status. AA/EOE Linuthodd A Leener RIGHT: OBU honored 31 graduating nurses during the College of Nursing's Pinning and Lamp Lighting Ceremony May 16.

BELOW: Jaime Brantley, assistant professor of nursing, delivers the charge to the OBU graduates.

photos by Heather Hamilton







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### SSM Health Dermatology welcomes Amy Hughes, PA-C Hughes will join dermatology practice in Mustang, Okla.

SSM Health is pleased to welcome Amy Hughes, PA-C to SSM Health Dermatology in its Mustang location. She joins Tiffany Brazeal, MD, and Christy Niehues, PA-C to provide dermatological care to the residents of Mustang and surrounding communities.

Hughes graduated from the University of Oklahoma physician associate program in 1994. After graduating, she worked in family medicine for a decade; thereafter, she has spent the last thirteen years in dermatology. She served the last two years as clinical associate professor for the physician assistant program at Oklahoma City University.

Hughes is trained in medical, surgical and cosmetic dermatology and performs procedures such as biopsies, Botox injections, removal of age spots and moles and other medical

treatments of skin conditions. She is accepting new patients, and appointments can be scheduled by calling 405-280-7546. Her office is located at 1440 N. Mustang Road.



Amy Hughes, PA-C

#### (AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2019 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING) Exciting Times at SNU Excellent Career Starts With **Excellence** in Education School of Nursing

The Southern Nazarene University (SNU) School of Nursing has graduated nurses since 1982. SNU graduates have established a reputation for not only being well educated but having those most important qualities of caring, empathy, and sympathy towards their clients. SNU graduates are known for their ability to address the spiritual or holistic aspect of patient care.

Over the 37 years of the SNU School of Nursing, many great faculty have contributed to the education of these students. Many have dedicated their professional life with passion and in-depth understanding of the profession and the healthcare system within which most nurses work.

SNU faculty recently reviewed and refreshed our curriculum to meet the current advanced state of education expected from the regional employers. In addition, the importance of recognizing the global health environment has come to the forefront. Nursing students at SNU have a

number of outreach opportunities, both local and international. These opportunities will expand in the upcoming years.

As far as the SNU campus, one of the most well-known "faculty" is housed in the School of Nursing. Tillie Mae, the Mini Australian Shepherd who has now worked for 8 years, continues her H.A.L.O Therapy Dog work with students on an almost daily basis. She can be found in the lobby of the Don Beavers Science Building greeting students, in the classroom prior to exams to bring a sense of calm, or waiting at the door to greet the next visitor to the office.

SNU currently meets state and national standards for Board Pass Rate and Accreditation.

Learn more about the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program and the value the of an SNU education at snu.edu/nursing. Schedule a campus visit at snu.edu/campus-visit.



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Heartland CPR offers American couple of days. Heart Association (AHA) certified BLS, ACLS, PALS as well as layrescuer training (known as Heartsaver CPR/AED/First Aid) in the state of Oklahoma. A small, woman-owned, family-operated local business that offers more than just certification training, but unparalleled service every step of the way, taking training to the customer throughout Oklahoma and welcoming individuals that don't get training at their workplace to regularly scheduled classes at their OKC location.

By limiting class sizes and offering more class choices than anyone in the state, retaining instructors whose styles minimize anxiety while encouraging a genuine understanding of the material, an all-inclusive pricing structure, and taking every opportunity to exceed expectations, Heartland CPR engages participants with a fresh approach to training. It's why the business has such a huge following of medical professionals and an unmatched return rate of repeat customers and referrals.

Flexibility and customer responsiveness have always been the cornerstone of Heartland CPR's business One popular offering is model. the S.T.A.T. program, or "Sequentially Timed Accelerated Training" which offers discounts for customers that take multiple classes as well as stacked scheduling to best use precious time. Nurses and other medical professionals can renew the entire BLS, ACLS and PALS certification suite in a weekend or complete first-time 2-day ACLS or PALS along with pre-requisite BLS in a Heartland CPR difference!

Heartland CPR was an early adopter of the new feedback manikin technology that becomes mandatory in all AHA classes in 2019; additionally they opted to begin issuing AHA nearimmediate digital e-cards well ahead of the mandate to eliminate the issue of lost, destroyed or stolen cards and provide 24/7 access to training records for its customers. Customer requests led to the company expanding into AED equipment sales; a variety of quality AEDs from trusted manufacturers can be offered at pricing that can't be touched even by online distributors.

Among the contracted instructors, Heartland CPR has former lifeguards, professors, a military veteran, four firefighters, two EMTs pursuing paramedic educations, four paramedics, two firefighter/paramedics, a Level III paramedic, two first responders to the OKC bombing, an EMS Sergeant, an EMS Chief, a "Dinosaur of EMS" with a 30+ year (and counting) career in EMS, and a combined total of AHA instruction experience of over half a decade! A minimum class size of six participants applies to training at customer locations in the OKC metro area; other minimums apply to customer locations statewide. Don't Join one of the public have 6? classes offered at Heartland CPR's OKC Emergency & individual location. classes are available as well.

Continually leading the way while striving to be the single solution for lifesaving skills training and equipment, you are invited to experience the

# **Discovery casts light** on workings of the immune system

Research from the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation has Ph.D., and her lab discovered that revealed a new role for an organ instrumental in immune system function. The discovery could lead to new therapeutic approaches to a wide range of illnesses, including asthma, inflammatory bowel disease and psoriasis.

The thymus is a small organ that sits on top of the heart and generates a lifetime supply of T cells, a type of specialized white blood cell that plays a central role in immunity during childhood and puberty. The thymus exists specifically to train the immune system to recognize what is normal and what is not. When the number of T cells in the body is adequate, the thymus shrinks and all but disappears by adulthood.

OMRF scientist Xiao-Hong Sun, the thymus can stop the production of T cells midway and make an entirely different kind of cell in their place called innate lymphoid cells.

"This ability to stop T cell production and change to something else had never been shown," said Sun. "This is a very basic finding, and we have much to learn about the implications, but it could point to the origin of a number of diseases."

Innate lymphoid cells play a part in immunity, specifically to protect the body from parasitic infection. Sun said while they serve an important function, they lack the sophistication of T cells, and this could lead to negative health



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Xiao-Hong Sun, Ph.D.

they arrive in too large a number.

"Innate lymphoid cells are like the paramedics of the immune system. They respond to tissue damage or infections very quickly," said Sun, who holds the Lew and Myra Ward Chair in Biomedical Research at OMRF. "They are first responders, but you still need a specialist or surgeon later on to treat the problem fully, and that's what T cells do."

"Dr. Sun has clearly evolved into one of the leaders in the field of studying these types of lymphocytes and is continuing to show their importance in different disease states," said OMRF Vice President of Clinical Affairs Judith James, M.D., Ph.D. "These are important findings that will push her work and her field forward."

Sun said this discovery could lead to a better understanding of the underlying mechanisms of multiple diseases, including asthma, inflammatory bowel disease and psoriasis. The findings, which

consequences in situations where could ultimately open doors to new treatment approaches to these conditions, were published in the Journal of Experimental Medicine.

"Many people downplay the importance of the thymus-it's even removed in many childhood procedures, but this may lead to a shift in how medical professionals think about the organ," Sun said. "Innate lymphoid cells are still new in scientific terms, and we have much to learn about them. Now that we know they have a significant role in an important immune organ will give us entirely new ideas to pursue."

OMRF researchers Miranda Liangyue Qian, Ph.D., Sandra Bajana, M.D., Ph.D., Constantin Georgescu, Ph.D., Jose Alberola-Ila, M.D., Ph.D., and Jonathan Wren, Ph.D., contributed to the findings.

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