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Blessed and grateful to be a Nurse



Julie Bell, RN is the new Nurse Educator at The Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital. She brings plenty of experience and tender loving care with her as she continues her journey of being a nurse.

by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

The Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital offers 24-hour medical care, comprehensive rehabilitative therapies, respiratory care, and special education.

One of the outstanding nurses that you will find here is Julie Bell, RN. Julie has taken over the position of Nurse Educator at the

Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital. "It is a great honor and I feel like I can be a great encouragement to the new graduates," Julie said.

Julie grew up in Oklahoma and New Mexico. Later on, she moved to Weatherford, OK, where she attended Southwestern Oklahoma State University and later went to University of Oklahoma. Julie mentioned several mentors

See BELL Page 3

National MS Society honors OMRF



National MS Society manager Danielle Morrison presents OMRF physician-scientist Gabriel Pardo, M.D., (left) with an award at the National MS Dedication Reception.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society has named the OMRF Multiple Sclerosis Center of Excellence a Center for Comprehensive Care, the highest level within its Partners in MS Care Program.

The award-winning Multiple Sclerosis Center of Excellence at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation is directed by Gabriel Pardo, M.D., and is one of the preeminent MS research and treatment centers in the world.

In MS, immune cells attack the protective covering of nerves in the brain and spinal cord, causing vision problems, tremors, paralysis, painful

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HONORS

Continued from Page 1

spasms, imbalance and cognitive changes. It's often difficult to diagnose and treat, and the cause is unknown.

The MS Society's Partners in MS Care Program recognizes committed providers like Pardo whose practices support the Society's initiative of affordable access to high quality MS healthcare for everyone living with MS—regardless of geography, disease progression and other disparities.

"I am honored to receive this designation, and it serves as welcome recognition for the innovative approach our team has taken," said Pardo. "It will help us in our continued pursuit of providing this service for patients."

Opened in 2011, OMRF's MS Center utilizes a multidisciplinary, comprehensive approach to research and treatment of MS. The Center's team sees more than 3,000 patients suffering from

the autoimmune disease.

"We are so proud to partner with OMRF and the Multiple Sclerosis Center of Excellence to enhance coordinated, comprehensive care for the people who live with MS in Oklahoma City," said Linda Bates, President of the National MS Society, South Central Chapter. "In earning this recognition, Dr. Pardo has demonstrated extraordinary leadership in MS care, making a tremendous impact on people affected by MS in our community."

Last year alone, the National MS Society invested more than \$40 million in MS research with more than 360 active projects globally.



Corban

was a loving little boy with an infectious smile and dazzling blue eyes. He never met a stranger and would melt your heart whenever you saw him. Corban was rambunctious and "all boy".

His name means "A Gift from God," now Corban is with God. Three days after his second birthday, he tragically lost his life in a swimming accident.

In life he gave us joy, in death he gave others joy as his organs and tissues were donated, so others could live. Endless smiles, big blue eyes and giant hugs that gave me the best feeling ever – are just a few things I will miss.

While we miss Corban, we will never forget him, knowing his spirit lives on in the lives of others provides us comfort. I wish you could have met our "little man" because you would have loved him.

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LifeShare We Save Lives



BELL

Continued from Page 1

that had a big influence on her life. "They were both wonderful instructors; Tamra Weimer and Marcie Tanner. I looked up to them with the utmost respect."

When Julie decided to make a career out of nursing, she wasn't sure which direction to go. "I tried all different areas while in clinicals but it was when I went to work in pediatrics, I knew that this was my calling," she said.

Julie explained why she is a nurse and why she enjoys working at the Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital. "I want to be a part of a child's healing process and make a difference in their lives, being a part of their ever changing journey. I love working with the children here. My favorite part of my job is interacting with the children and their parents. Some of the children can't talk or even make facial expressions, yet I know what kind of music they like to listen. I know their likes and dislikes. I see them for who they are and each one has their own little personality. Working with the children is a

most rewarding experience," Julie commented.

Asking Julie to describe herself, she replied, "I am an optimistic person and I really love people. I like being there for someone's up and downs and seeing what a joy I can give them. It is nice to be a part of their lives, knowing that I have played a small role in their journey. I am a very compassionate person. Sometimes, I hear the parents say that they never imagined their child would be here. That is when I need to be the most understanding, talking to them and really listening as they share their feelings. It can help tremendously, along with offering them some excellent resources," she added.

When Julie was a little girl, she wanted to grow up and be a veterinarian. "As I got older, I did quite a bit of volunteer work with a vet and soon realized that I was more interested in the pet owners than the pets, especially if they had to put their pet down. I guess you could say that I gravitated from animals to people," she said with a laugh.

What qualities make a good nurse? "I think a nurse has to

"The best advice I can give to someone going into the medical field is to start out shadowing someone. That way, you can see what the job really is, whether you like it or not." Julie Bell, RN

have compassion for others, and of course, empathy is the main one. Also a nurse needs to be a problem solver. We all live through trial and error. A nurse needs to power through the problem and solve it," Julie replied.

"The best advice I can give to someone going into the medical field is to start out shadowing someone," Julie commented. "That way, you can see what the job really is, whether you like it or not. In every career, it is not quite as glamorous as what it seems like on TV," she said with a smile. "When you actually do it yourself, you will also get the real reward in it and that is the best way you can figure out if it the right job for you," Julie replied. "You will KNOW for sure," she added.

One of Julie's most important achievements was when she became a nurse educator at Southwestern. I love it when I see a glimpse of a talent and passion in others and influence them to follow their dream. I love to encourage others, allowing them to see and know just how great they are."

Asking Julie what motivates her, she replied, "I think it is the fact just knowing that each individual is a human just like me. They may look different but I want to treat my patients like I want to be treated."

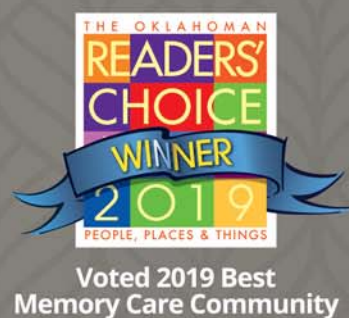
To sum up Julie's life, she said, "I am so blessed and grateful for what nursing has taught me and what opportunities that have come along the way."

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MAKYNLEE CULBERTSON TO CELEBRATES "HOME RUN FOR LIFE" WITH OKC DODGERS

The Oklahoma City Dodgers concluded the 2019 "Home Run For Life" series Friday, Aug. 30 as they partnered with INTEGRIS to recognize Makynlee Culbertson during the Dodgers' game against the New Orleans Baby Cakes at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark.

Culbertson, who was diagnosed at just six weeks old with spinal muscular atrophy, became the first child in Oklahoma to receive a new one-time gene therapy known as Zolgensma® thanks to the help of her child neurologist Jennifer Norman, M.D., at INTEGRIS Pediatric Neurology at Baptist Medical Center.

Spinal muscular atrophy, or SMA, is a severe neuromuscular disease that leads to progressive muscle weakness and paralysis.

On July 19, at 17 months of age, Culbertson received Zolgensma® via an IV over the course of one hour. Now just six weeks later, improvements in Culbertson's health are already evident — and continue to emerge.

"Home Run For Life" recognizes individuals in the Oklahoma City community who have overcome a significant medical event with the help of their families, physicians and health care professionals. To symbolize the end of their battle against adversity, honorees take a home run "lap" around the bases during an in-game ceremony.

"Five times a season we are proud to welcome these extraordinary Oklahomans to take the field at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark," OKC Dodgers President/General Manager Michael Byrnes said. "This is the ninth straight year we have partnered with INTEGRIS to honor these amazing individuals' perseverance and courage to overcome major health challenges."

SMA is characterized by the loss of motor neurons, which are responsible for communicating with muscles and telling them to work properly. This loss of motor neurons, which cannot be brought back, is due to a SMN1 gene that is missing or not

working properly. Without enough SMN protein, motor neuron cells eventually stop working and die leading to difficulty breathing, eating, speaking and lifting the head.

Zolgensma was recently approved for the treatment of pediatric patients younger than two years of age with SMA. The one-time intravenous infusion is designed to address the genetic root cause of SMA by providing a functional copy of the SMN gene to halt disease progression. It is intended to replace a lifetime of chronic therapy for pediatric patients with SMA.

"This treatment has truly created a paradigm shift for what was previously a uniformly devastating and fatal disease," Norman said. "SMA is essentially the 'Lou Gehrig's Disease'



Makynlee Culbertson was diagnosed at just six weeks old with spinal muscular atrophy.

of childhood. With early treatment, we can now give these kids a normal

See MAKYNLEE Page 5

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MAKYNLEE

Continued from Page 4

life. That was essentially unthinkable even just three years ago. It has truly revolutionized the practice of neuromuscular medicine."

Advances in Makynlee's health have already arisen in August, which is fittingly SMA Awareness Month.

"She's significantly louder already, where before she had a really weak cry and couldn't really cough like you or I can. Now she can," Shanna Culbertson, Makynlee's mom, said. "Her grip and strength in her arms; her head control has gotten significantly better; her core strength; she can hold herself up for longer. We see little things every day. We just hope to keep gaining off of it."

Shanna Culbertson noted that while the treatment is not a cure for SMA, it will continue to help improve her daughter's quality of life. "She's

still going to have a lot of therapy and rehab and stuff to gain back what she's lost, but it stops the progression of it," she said.

The Culbertson family feels very fortunate that their primary and secondary insurance plans covered 100 percent of the therapy that comes with a hefty \$2 million price tag.

"It is definitely crazy expensive," Norman said. "But ultimately, over the course of a child's life, the one-time cost is actually a substantial savings compared to what insurance companies and families would spend for the intensive medical needs children with this disease would otherwise require."

"In addition to overall cost savings, there is also a huge quality of life benefit to the drug, which really can't be described with a dollar amount."

To read Culbertson's full story, visit the Dodgers' "Beyond the Bricks" website at: medium.com/beyond-the-bricks.

TULSA PHYSICIANS PROMOTE MEDICAL INFORMATICS

David Kendrick, M.D., MPH, chair of the Department of Informatics, OU-TU School of Community Medicine, has a vision and a goal to use medical informatics to enhance population health and patient care. Success lies in shaping medical education to include greater emphasis on medical informatics as it relates to the patient experience.

Kendrick, along with colleagues, vice chair Blake Lesselroth, M.D.,

MBI, and Juell Homco, Ph.D., MPH, instructor and director of Research and Community Analytics, has worked to incorporate informatics content at the undergraduate and graduate medical education levels. Their collective vision is to teach how population analytics, systems-based improvement, computerized decision support and health information exchange are quickly becoming crucial clinical tools in the future healthcare landscape.

Lesselroth, who is also an associate professor of Internal Medicine at the OU-TU School of Community Medicine, recently returned from Lille, France, where he was a presenter at the highly regarded Context Sensitive Health Informatics Conference. His presentation, "Narratives and Stories: Novel Approaches to Improving Patient-Facing Information Resources and Patient Engagement," focused on the role of consumer health informatics in achieving high-quality healthcare. He has delivered similar presentations at conferences in Victoria, Canada, and in Chicago. Lesselroth and Homco also presented a talk on the topic of informatics in undergraduate medical education at the American Informatics Association Educators' Forum in St. Louis.

"Medical informatics, or MI - the science of information management - is the point where many sciences intersect - computer science and technology, health sciences, public health, social

sciences, anthropology, sociology, engineering science and more," he explained.

Studies have demonstrated that not all forms of patient care occur in a traditional clinical setting or are delivered directly by healthcare professionals. Outcomes have been shown to improve or decline in



response to systems performance. Lesselroth said MI can help us understand how these operational factors influence outcomes.

"MI helps answer questions related to the efficiency of our electronic health records," he said. "It can show where clinical processes enhance or detract from positive patient experience. We also glean insight from the tracking of health practices and patterns around the world."

Leaders at the School of Community Medicine are interested in the impact of MI on population health and are convinced that appropriate integration of MI will advance the school's mission of education, research and service.

"MI can improve the health and well-being of patients and providers," Lesselroth said. "We think of data as being detached and impersonal. Integration gives it a place to live, breathe and influence outcomes."

"Computers are just one tool that guides interaction between MI and social systems, such as belief, culture, workflow and physical structures. The interaction is the actual science."

The OU-TU School of Community Medicine currently offers MI as a course year round, in two-week and four-week rotations for third- and fourth-year medical students. Lesselroth and his team envision integration of this learning into the core curriculum of a four-year medical education.

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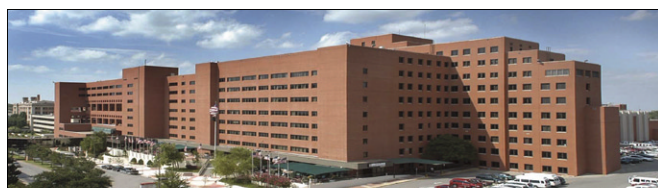
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Oklahoma's
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Genes, Epstein-Barr virus may trigger lupus in some

Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientists have discovered that the Epstein-Barr virus may be a possible trigger for the development of lupus in at-risk individuals.

Lupus is an autoimmune disease that leads to the development of autoantibodies and chronic inflammation that damage the body's tissues and organs. Scientists have long known lupus has a strong genetic component, but there also must be environmental triggers to activate the disease.

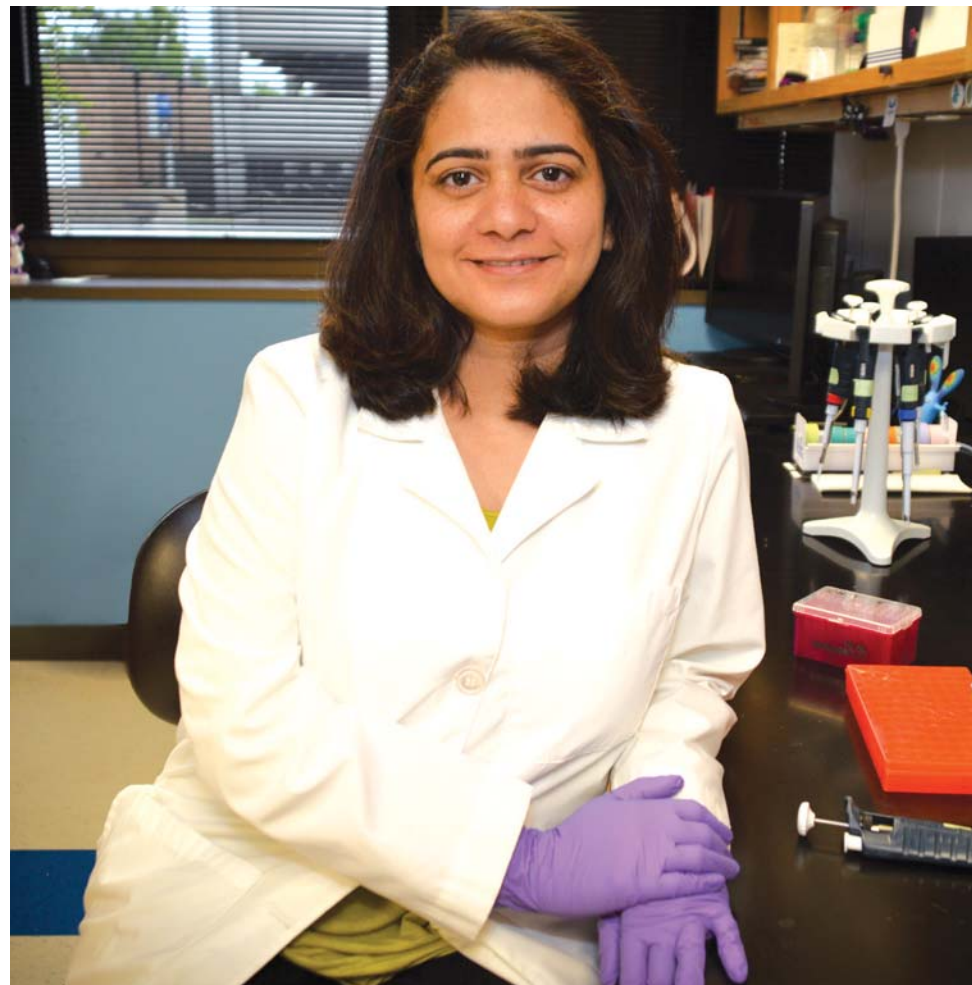
A team of OMRF scientists led by Neelakshi Jog, Ph.D., and Judith James, M.D., Ph.D., is looking at the role of Epstein-Barr virus, or EBV, as a potential environmental trigger.

EBV is one of the most common human viruses and can cause mononucleosis. Most people become

infected during childhood, but many don't experience symptoms. Once a person is infected with EBV, it remains in the body for life in a dormant state. The virus can occasionally reactivate, mostly without any symptoms.

"We wanted to determine whether blood relatives of lupus patients with specific genetics and with increased reactivation of EBV were more likely to develop lupus over time," said James, OMRF's Vice President of Clinical Affairs.

The team carried out a study where they evaluated family members of lupus patients who had not yet developed lupus themselves. They followed up with these family members about seven years later to see how many became lupus patients during that period. Nearly 13 percent went on to develop lupus.



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Neelakshi Jog, Ph.D.

"This follow-up gives us a great group to follow to help us understand why some at-risk people develop lupus while others do not," said Jog. "We looked at the antibodies to EBV in people who became lupus patients, as well as those who didn't. We saw that the people who went on to develop lupus already had high levels of these EBV antibodies at their first visit."

Jog said this means those who go on to become lupus patients experience more reactivation of EBV before developing the disease.

"These findings will help us

define those at high risk so we can monitor these people more closely to prevent damage and to identify participants for lupus prevention studies," said James. "It will also allow us to follow up on what EBV is doing to the immune system and, hopefully, to understand what is causing lupus."

Funding for the research was provided by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and the National Institute of General Medical Science, all parts of the National Institutes of Health.



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OSU RN to BSN:

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Lacy Smith, a Texas native, considers herself a Cowboy for life. For her, choosing to complete her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at Oklahoma State University was an easy decision.

The online program, which launched in Fall 2017 and is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), provides students with a convenient and flexible option to complete their bachelor's degree in as little as one year. With this degree, graduates are qualified for leadership roles in a variety of healthcare environments.

Advancing and enriching her career is exactly what Smith plans to do after she walks across the stage with her diploma next fall. She currently works as a delivery/charge registered nurse (RN) for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at OU Children's Hospital as well as a staff nurse at SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital. After obtaining her BSN, Smith plans to apply for a master's or doctoral program so she can become a pediatric nurse practitioner.

"My dream job is to be a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner-Acute Care (CPNP-AC) as a cardiac intensivist, which means I'd care for infants and children following cardiac surgery," Smith said.

"I've always loved medicine. With nursing, I get to do it all. I never have the exact same day, and I love the challenge. I'm a caregiver at heart. I've always been most passionate about my patients and their families. I see them on their best and worst days, and I always want them to remember the care they received in a positive light, even in a bad situation."

When Smith decided she wanted to complete her nursing degree so she could achieve her professional goals, it was important to find a program that accommodated her busy schedule. The full-time or part-time curriculum option offered at OSU was a huge selling point.

"The program is extremely flexible, which is necessary for someone like myself who has a husband, two jobs and no extra time," Smith said.

In addition to flexibility, Smith sought an online learning experience that would be enhanced by personalized attention from qualified and invested faculty. That's what she found in the OSU College of Education, Health and Aviation.

"The nursing faculty truly



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& Aviation

want to see students succeed, and they make themselves readily available to help," Smith said. "This makes the whole experience."

As most would attest, communication in an online program significantly impacts student satisfaction.

"Our faculty communicate extremely well, especially considering it's an online program," Smith said. "They offer a variety of ways to share information and foster relationships with our peers, which allows us to be successful. It's easy to have a positive experience when you feel your efforts are not only noticed, but also celebrated."

Ultimately, the mission of the RN to BSN program is to prepare nurses to practice professional nursing that meets the dynamic health care needs of individuals, families, groups, communities and global populations. Faculty facilitate the education of students in the art and science

of nursing to provide leadership with an emphasis on ethics, wellness, cultural competency and population-based and professional inter-collaborative practice.

The OSU College of Education, Health and Aviation is proudly preparing leaders who power a better educated, healthier and more accessible world. Oklahoma State nursing graduates truly embody this through their passion, dedication and investment in providing the best possible care to patients and their families.

"There isn't another profession like nursing," Smith said. "My favorite nurses are caring and compassionate. We will do whatever it takes to help our patients be successful."

Applications for the BSN program for Summer or Fall 2019 are now open. Interested students can review admission and pre-requisite requirements and apply online at nursing.okstate.edu.

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TULSA

Continued from Page 5

Consumer health information systems are becoming increasingly prevalent and accessible. However, Lesselroth said these systems fail to capitalize on what we know about human understanding. Health and technology literacy issues continue to challenge effective communication.

"Confusion may lead to non-compliance, which often is a contributing factor in poor outcomes," Lesselroth said. "The most effective way to reinforce learning and remembering is to tie information to stories and narratives. Consumer health

information is most meaningful, and holds greater potential benefits, when integrated into narrative. This provides context for what otherwise might be disconnected bits of information."

He said research will help developers understand and capitalize upon the potential benefits of integrating narratives into consumer health information.

"It's a huge goal, but we believe the effective use of MI holds great promise. Our research to date suggests significant impact toward improving health in Oklahoma and beyond. It merits more than just a side-bar in developing competent, well-trained physicians."

More Oklahoma Babies Surviving to Celebrate Their First Birthday

Oklahoma continues to take positive steps to reduce infant deaths. Through the work of many dedicated partners and individuals, the Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) announced the state's infant mortality rate (IMR) has decreased by 17% since 2007, equating to 183 more babies able to spend their first birthday with their families.

"As we experience progress in eight of nine primary measures, including breastfeeding rates, infant safe sleep practices and prenatal care, we are encouraged by the reduction in infant mortality," said Joyce Marshall, director of the OSDH Maternal and Child Health Service. "We acknowledge that there is still work to be done to achieve the national IMR of 5.9."

This accomplishment is the result of a number of programs including The Preparing for a Lifetime, It's Everyone's Responsibility statewide initiative, which includes numerous strategies designed to improve birth outcomes for Oklahoma's mothers and babies. Key messages of the initiative are:

- Being healthy before and between pregnancies greatly improves the chances of having a healthy pregnancy and baby.
- Having a full-term pregnancy and breastfeeding offers a baby the best start in life.
- Recognizing the signs and getting help for maternal mood disorders can improve health for both mother and baby.
- Placing baby on his/her back to sleep alone in a crib and avoiding exposure to secondhand smoke decreases the risk of SIDS.
- Knowing how to prevent leading causes of injury, such as correctly installing infant car seats, helps keep baby safe and secure.
- Learning what to do if the baby will not stop crying may help prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Improvements in priorities, including a dramatic decrease in the rate of teen births and a significant reduction in smoking rates among pregnant women also has contributed to fewer infant deaths.

During September, which is Infant Mortality Awareness Month, the Preparing for a Lifetime initiative will celebrate its 10th anniversary by moving forward together and remaining committed to the health and wellness of Oklahoma's moms, babies and families. To learn more, visit <http://iio.health.ok.gov>.

NURSE TALK



I would be an octopus because I would be very intelligent and adaptable.



Teresa Zachary, RN

A jaguar... Beautiful and strong!



Donetta Johnson, LPN

If you were an animal, what kind of animal would you be and why?



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I would be a cat so I could lie around when I wanted to and have everyone wait on me.



Stephanie Scott

A bear...I would eat all I wanted, sleep all winter and protect my babies!



Becky Sherrill, RN



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