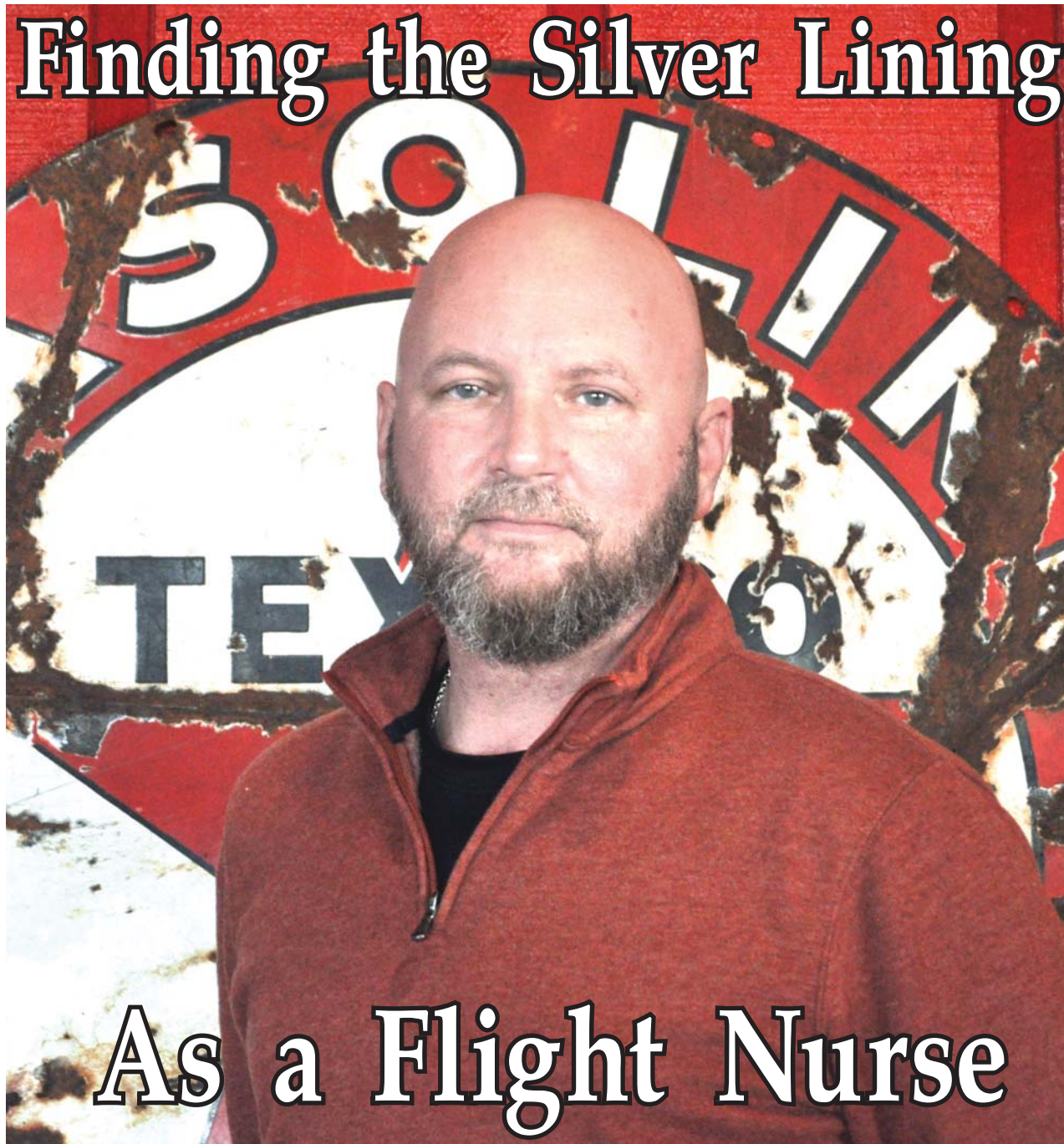




## Finding the Silver Lining



## As a Flight Nurse

Matt George, RN, CEN is the Medi Flight Clinical Base Supervisor at Medi Flight 5. With his positive attitude, no wonder he sees the silver lining to the numerous situations.

by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

You've have heard the expression, every cloud has a silver lining, which means that even the worst events or situations have some positive aspect. The expression certainly can be said of the flight nurses that provide emergency medical services to numerous patients every year.

One outstanding gentleman is Matt George, RN, CEN, and the Medi Flight

Clinical Base Supervisor at Medi Flight 5. "Medi Flight has been around since 1980. We are based on the helipad on the rooftop of Stillwater Medical Center in Stillwater, OK," Matt said. "We leave from Stillwater and travel throughout central Oklahoma; largely around the Stillwater area, OKC, Tulsa and sometimes, Kansas. Our work also takes us to emergency situations in rural areas where they might not have the

See GEORGE Page 2

## GIFT TO ESTABLISH COMPREHENSIVE NUTRITION CENTER AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

David and Cory LeNorman have a unique perspective on the critical nutritional needs of newborns and a heightened awareness of the demand for extraordinary care. Their daughter, Quincy, was born 24 weeks into pregnancy, much earlier than the 38- to 40-week period considered optimal by neonatology experts. The family's personal experience was the driving force behind their dream, and motivated the \$1.5 million gift made to establish the Quincy LeNorman Nutrition Center at The Children's Hospital at OU Medicine. The gift will significantly advance the care provided at the nationally ranked hospital, adding state-of-the art technologies that further elevate best practices in nutritional science.

"We're both grateful and delighted to accept this generous gift presented by the LeNorman family," said Jon Hayes, president, The Children's Hospital. "It perfectly joins the long-held, shared vision of hospital and physician leaders with the heartfelt desire of the LeNormans. Thanks to this funding, we'll realize a mutual goal to build upon and expand nutrition services that are vital to health and healing of the children we care for at The Children's Hospital."

Born weighing less than two pounds, Quincy LeNorman, the center's namesake, spent the first 88 days of her life in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Children's. Now 17, she thrives as a student who plays high-school soccer, with no evidence of an early struggle for life. Quincy's mother, Cory LeNorman, said her pregnancy was normal in every respect, with no hint of trouble until two days before delivery.

"The reason Quincy is here today is because of the great support we received - skilled and dedicated nurses, doctors and other personnel, and a facility that was equipped to provide the best possible care."

Nearly three months after her birth, Quincy was discharged from the NICU. But the

See GIFT Page 3





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## GEORGE

Continued from Page 1

right emergency equipment."

Matt attended Francis Tuttle for his LPN and Rose State college for his RN. It all began twenty-six years ago. "I always assumed that I would go into the medical field. I spent a lot of my time working in the emergency room, taking care of critically ill patients. My first job as a nurse was working in the medical surgical unit at Logan Medical Center in Guthrie, OK. I continued my education, becoming an RN. I realized I wanted to do more in the medical field and became interested in being a flight nurse," he commented. "That was ten years ago and I will continue to do what I love to do; helping to save lives," Matt added.

Matt explained the importance of a flight nurse. "On every flight, there are three of us; the pilot, a flight nurse and a paramedic. We work two twenty-four hour shifts and we always need to be ready to go! A typical day for me involves, making sure the medication count is correct, checking the medical equipment, talking with the pilot over issues of the day, looking over the aircraft and verifying that the helicopter is sound and ready for flight. We also need to pay close attention to the weather conditions; all three of us have our own little tasks to do but we all check the helicopter thoroughly. This is where teamwork is essential."

What qualities make a good flight nurse? "I think the qualities for a flight nurse are the same for any nurse; they need to really care for others, doing what they like and wanting to continue to learn. Of course, to be a flight nurse, you would need to enjoy flying. Let's face it, flying

isn't for everyone. Personally, I love it!" Matt replied.

Matt feels like his best quality as a nurse is caring for his patients. "I have always been drawn to the critically ill patients and it makes me feel good knowing that I am helping them. It is also some of the most interesting situations that I have even seen plus I am able to test my skills. Most flight nurses are required to have at least three years of experience in critical care and a high volume of life support service. The training for a flight nurse is constant and ongoing, testing once a year, making sure we are up to par," he said. "I want to continue to learn and gain knowledge yet stay humble."

Did you have any mentors in school? "Not so much in school but there were several nurses that I worked with that seemed to shape me into the kind of nurse that I am; helping me get situated and organized. They gave me a desire to learn and better myself," Matt replied.

As far as Matt's personal life goes, he is married to his beautiful wife, Shelly, and will soon be celebrating their twenty eighth wedding anniversary. They have two children, Kylee, 24 and Leah, 9 years old. "I am so proud of both of them," he said with a smile. Their pet is an Alaskan Malamute. "His name is Sam," he added. Matt's hobbies include playing the guitar and singing. "I am an amateur guitar player and I sing a little, only at home and with my friends. Now, I did say amateur" he said with a laugh. "I also like going to the lake and boating. I do some home brewing too. With all of that, it keeps me pretty busy."

If you were going to sum up your life in one word, what would it be? Without a pause, Matt said, "Fortunate."



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## GIFT

Continued from Page 1

LeNormans never forgot the labor of love that gave Quincy a chance at life. In years that followed, David and Cory began to consider ways to give back that would match their keen interest and address identified needs at The Children's Hospital.

At the same time, NICU personnel and hospital leaders envisioned better ways to meet their patients' diverse nutritional demands. Laying the groundwork to bring the vision to reality, leaders toured several NICU centers in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, observing best practices in neonatal nutrition handling, touring thoughtfully planned facilities, and identifying a model to emulate at Children's.

Trent Tipple, M.D., neonatology specialist and chief of Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine, The Children's Hospital, said, "The Children's Hospital is where the state's tiniest and most vulnerable patients come for the level of care their complex conditions require. The future center represents another major step forward in neonatal nutrition.

Thanks to the LeNorman family, we will have greater capacity to deliver life-saving technologies and redefine excellence in neonatal care." One of the significant components that will distinguish the new nutrition center will be its use of sophisticated software that will track and analyze detailed metrics information. A human milk analyzer will determine how and to what extent milk must be fortified to meet specific nutritional needs. It will also identify babies whose growth is not progressing adequately.

Jamie Kilpatrick, M.S., R.N., CENP, director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Children's, said, "Currently, formula and human milk preparation for neonates is done in a small human milk lab, which we have already outgrown. Feeding preparation for other hospitalized children occurs in a separate area. All services are performed by excellent and expert hospital team members who follow best practices to meet high-reliability nutrition demands. However, a more seamless operation - more centralized and expanded for greater efficiency - will support



From left: Cory, David and Quincy LeNorman with Jamie Kilpatrick, director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at The Children's Hospital at OU Medicine.

our capacity to supply the best nutritional services possible on a broader scale."

The proposed nutrition center will benefit not only babies receiving care as NICU patients, but other infants and pediatric

patients who face a range of complex feeding needs. These special needs may be related to specific treatment, care or rehab related to surgery, or due to other unique nutritional deficits or sensitivities.

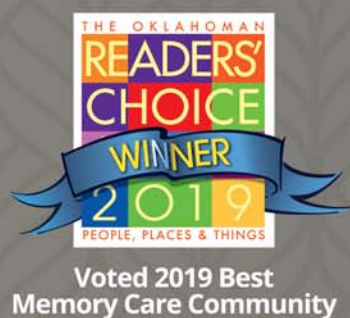


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# CAREERS IN NURSING

## A DESIRE TO BE A NURSE - ACCENTRA HOME HEALTHCARE

by Vickie Jenkins - Writer/Photographer

Growing up in Verden, OK, western Grady County, Stevie McMillan, LPN, had her advantages of being raised on a farm. With a lot of animals, even when Stevie was little, she had the signs and desires of a nurse; taking care of all of the animals that surrounded her. She would make them feel better, even if she was just pretending that they were sick, or so the story goes. "I even had the little nurse's bag and all of the medical supplies that any nurse would surely need to heal an animal. I never wanted to be a vet but you would think so since I was so crazy about my animals," she commented.

Not far from Verden, OK, there is a small town called, Burns Flat, OK. This is the home of the Western Technology Center where Stevie went to school, received her nursing license and began her journey as a nurse.

Stevie McMillan, LPN is the

Clinical Operational Specialist at Accentra Home Healthcare, located at 300 N. Meridian. Accentra's goal is to provide the best outcome for the patients. They provide nursing services, therapeutic services and medical social services.

Stevie has been a nurse for five years with her first job working for a skilled unit facility in Chickasha, OK. "I have been with Accentra for two years and I love my job here. It is nice to wake up, wanting to come to work because I enjoy seeing the patients and the co-workers so much," she commented.

"My favorite part of my job is interacting with the patients. It is nice to have one-on-one time with them. That is why I prefer working in home healthcare over a hospital. I feel like the patients like the fact that they can stay in their home while the nurse comes to them. They like being able to watch their own T.V. shows from their own chair

and be able to sleep in their own bed. I think just about anybody would prefer that," she said. "We usually see about twenty patients a week and there are five nurses here. We travel a fifty-mile radius in some of the surrounding areas," Stevie added. Asked Stevie why she thought this specific job was so special to her. Stevie replied, "Oh, this job is very special to me. When I was little, my mom was handicapped and I saw how much she struggled, realizing how the nurses took care of her and how my mom depended on them. At the time, I also saw some of the negative things; like when the caregivers weren't that great with my mom. I think it was at that point, I knew that I wanted to be a nurse so I could care for patients the way like they should be taken care of. A nurse needs to have a compassion for others and want to be a nurse," Stevie explained.

What qualities make a good nurse? "I think a good nurse definitely needs to have the compassion and desire to care for others. Above anything else, that compassion needs to be there. They need to know if they want to be a nurse, choose wisely; there are so many different areas a nurse can go into. They will know it when it happens," Stevie said.

A typical day for Stevie begins early in the morning. "I communicate with the patients; find out what they need, take care of phone calls and anything else that needs to be done in the office. I also go out to the patient's house whenever they need to be seen. Sometimes, we are at their home about forty-five minutes, but we stay longer if we need to. I'm in triage so one disadvantage is not being able to see the patient and only talk to them or leave messages through a telephone

See McMILLAN Page 5



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## McMILLAN

Continued from Page 4

conversation. We miss out on so much if that is the case," Stevie explained.

Stevie is married to her wonderful husband, Chez and they have two daughters, Rylee, fifteen years old and Gracee, fourteen years old. The girls are involved in

basketball and golf. "Having two teenage daughters keeps my husband and me pretty busy," she said. "I like to hunt and fish and do pretty much anything outdoors," she said with a smile. As far as owning pets, we have one dog; a loving mutt, Hammer. We also have a herd of cattle," she added.

To sum up her life in one word, Stevie said, "Amazing."

# Nonprofits hold STEM career event for girls



On Sunday at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, the American Heart Association held a special STEM education program for a group of girls from area high schools.

Women representing a variety of science, technology, engineering and math fields met face-to-face with the girls in small groups. They then came together for a general session, where the panelists described their educational and career paths and fielded questions.

"I have teenage girls myself, and they are very receptive to hearing about career options and what the future looks like," said OMRF scientist Courtney Griffin, Ph.D., who served as host and also a panelist for the event. "Putting role models of successful women in front of them can be really inspiring and transformative."

A cardiovascular biologist who studies blood vessel development, Griffin has received research funding from the AHA for more than two decades. Among the topics, she and five other STEM professionals talked about was what advice they might give their 16-year-old selves.

"I probably wouldn't be where I am today without the guidance and encouragement I received from strong female role models," said Griffin. "We need to do what we can to foster these brilliant, vibrant girls and help them grow and receive the encouragement they need to go reshape the future of our community and public health."

The high schoolers are part of AHA's Sweetheart Program, which provides educational and social programs for approximately 50 Oklahoma City girls throughout the school year. Activities are designed to prepare participants to be future heart health advocates.

"Cardiovascular disease continues to be the No. 1 killer of women; it's important for us to close the gender gap in STEM fields because science, technology and math, those are going to bring the solutions we need for cardiovascular disease," said Brigitte Zorn, executive director of the American Heart Association's Oklahoma City office. "We want women to be at the forefront of finding those solutions for the health of everyone."



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# STEPHENSON CANCER CENTER AT OU MEDICINE HOSTS WORLD CANCER DAY

Stephenson Cancer Center at OU Medicine will host its second annual community World Cancer Day event, Tuesday, February 4.

World Cancer Day is an annual, international observance. The Stephenson event will feature health screenings, a lunch and learn, browsing tables and guest speakers including experts in oncology and related fields.

"At Stephenson Cancer Center, our work is perpetually focused on the vision of a world where cancer is preventable and access to life-saving treatment is accessible to all, regardless of who they are or where they live," said Robert Mannel, M.D., director of Stephenson Cancer Center. "World Cancer Day unifies us with people across the globe to raise awareness, improve education and spur action at every level of personal or governmental involvement. In collaboration with community partners, we reimagine our state and its people - no longer fearful of a potentially deadly cancer diagnosis." Stephenson Cancer Center World Cancer Day activities will be

held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., February 4, on the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center campus at Presbyterian Health Foundation Conference Center, 655 Research Parkway.

Among activities of the day, OU Medicine Breast Health Network will offer screening mammograms onsite. Appointments are preferred; schedule a mammogram by calling toll-free (800) 422-4626, ext. 49760. Additionally, Stephenson Cancer Center staff will offer head and neck cancer checks and OU Physicians Health and Wellness personnel will conduct biometric health screenings, which include checks for blood pressure, blood glucose testing and other basic screening checks.

Presentations will begin at 11:30 a.m., and will feature: Mark Doescher, M.D., MSPH; Jennifer Witherspoon, M.S., R.D./L.D.; and Susanna V. Ulahannan, M.D., MMed. There is no cost to participate in these activities, but reservations are required by calling (405) 271-1112. Validated parking is available in the attached parking garage for event attendees. Stephenson Cancer

Center at OU Medicine ranks in the Top 50 in the nation for cancer care in the 2019-2020 U.S. News & World Report rankings. As Oklahoma's only National Cancer Institute-Designated Cancer Center, Stephenson Cancer Center is one of the nation's elite centers, representing the top 2% of cancer centers in the country. It is the largest and most comprehensive oncology practice in the state, delivering patient-centered, multidisciplinary care for every type of cancer. As one of the nation's leading research organizations, Stephenson Cancer Center uses the latest innovations to fight and eliminate cancer, and is currently ranked No. 1 among all cancer centers in the nation for the number of patients participating in clinical trials sponsored by the NCI's National Clinical Trials Network. For more information, visit [stephensoncancercenter.org](http://stephensoncancercenter.org). OU Medicine — along with its academic partner, the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center — is the state's only comprehensive academic health system of hospitals, clinics and centers

of excellence. With 11,000 employees and more than 1,300 physicians and advanced practice providers, OU Medicine is home to Oklahoma's largest physician network with a complete range of specialty care. OU Medicine serves Oklahoma and the region with the state's only freestanding children's hospital, the only National Cancer Institute-Designated Stephenson Cancer Center and Oklahoma's flagship hospital, which serves as the state's only Level 1 trauma center. OU Medicine is the No. 1 ranked hospital system in Oklahoma, and its oncology program at Stephenson Cancer Center and OU Medical Center ranked in the Top 50 in the nation, in the 2019-2020 rankings released by U.S. News & World Report. OU Medicine was also ranked by U.S. News & World Report as high performing in four specialties: Ophthalmology in partnership with Dean McGee Eye Institute, Colon Surgery, COPD and Congestive Heart Failure. OU Medicine's mission is to lead healthcare in patient care, education and research. To learn more, visit [oumedicine.com](http://oumedicine.com).

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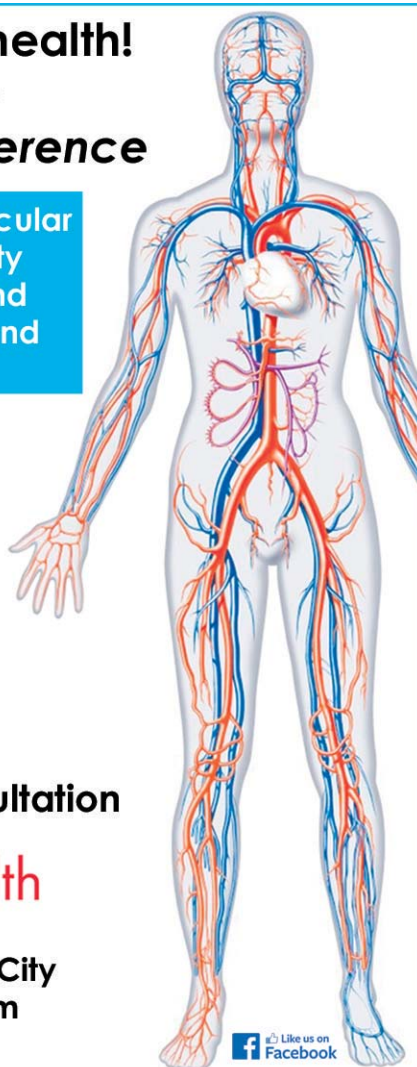
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# Kirkpatrick Named Director of Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority



## Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority

Oklahoma native Travis Kirkpatrick is the new director of the Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority. Kirkpatrick has served as interim director for the last 90 days. Health Commissioner Gary Cox said he made the decision based on Kirkpatrick's leadership at the authority over the last few months.

"We are excited about the leadership of Travis and his focus on being an efficient and effective organization that serves the citizens of the state," said Cox. "During his three months, Kirkpatrick has reopened the call center, which is now handling approximately 300 calls a day, hired a compliance manager to ensure the dispensaries across the state are in compliance with state laws, and worked to open the lines of communication with the business community and the patients."

Kirkpatrick praised the staff for its passion and dedication saying "that is something that drives me every day as I seek to innovate and lead us toward the goals we have been provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Health leadership and the Governor. My goal is to continue to work with the patients, dispensary owners and growers as this authority meets the

guidelines set out by the voters and by the Legislature."

The Oklahoma Medical Marijuana Authority was created by a vote of the people, July 26, 2018. The state question allowed for both licenses to sell and to purchase medical marijuana with a physician's prescription. Additional regulatory authority was written into the "unity bill" passed by the legislature just months before Kirkpatrick's arrival. There are currently more than 246,000 patient, caregiver, grower, processor, dispensary, and transportation licenses for marijuana in Oklahoma, all handled by OMMA.

Travis Kirkpatrick is a Public Administration professional with more than 15 years of service to the State of Oklahoma. He brings a multitude of experience in bureaucratic process gained via his roles in several state agencies.

A native Oklahoman, Kirkpatrick holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Oklahoma and a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Oklahoma. In his spare time, he volunteers on several community non-profit boards and enjoys watching his children play soccer.

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# NURSE TALK



My favorite dog was a half chow, half pit mix. Her name was Lady Bear.



Amanda Mae Rowell, LPN, ADON

My favorite pet was a dog when I was growing up.



Janeth Mesta, CNA

*Did you have a favorite pet when you were growing up?*



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I had a dog named Angel.



Sheradyn Weathers, LPN

My favorite was my horse, Maggie.



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We tragically lost him too soon, but the choice he selflessly made to be a donor continues to be a humbling testament of Brock's love and passion for others. We were given the most amazing gift when God gave us Brock, for which we will forever be grateful.

*'Children are a gift from the Lord, they are a reward from Him' Psalm 127:3*

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# OMRF findings pave way for better treatment options for Sjogren's patients



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation Vice President of Clinical Affairs  
Judith James, M.D., Ph.D.

Recent findings from the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation have revealed molecular clues that will allow doctors to separate Sjogren's syndrome patients into three distinct categories, allowing for more targeted treatment approaches.

OMRF Vice President of Clinical Affairs Judith James, M.D., Ph.D., said this ability to profile Sjogren's patients for the first time will lead to improved patient selection for clinical trials and guide personalized treatment plans.

In Sjogren's syndrome, immune cells attack moisture-producing glands, leading to painful dryness and decreased ability to produce tears or saliva. Common symptoms include severe dry eyes and dry mouth, as well as fatigue, arthritis and memory problems.

"A huge challenge with

Sjogren's is that there are no FDA-approved treatments to modify the disease process, only symptom treatments," said James, who also holds the Lou C. Kerr Chair in Biomedical Research at OMRF. "This kind of molecular information can help us choose the right medications for the right patients. It can also help us design clinical trials that succeed in getting disease-modifying treatments on the market for patients in need."

Sjogren's may affect up to 4 million Americans, according to the Sjogren's Syndrome Foundation. While its causes are not fully understood, environmental triggers, such as viral infections, are believed to contribute to the development of Sjogren's in individuals who carry certain genetic risk factors for the disease.

James said their recent study aimed to better understand just

how similar patients are or if certain molecules alter disease activity. What they discovered by investigating blood biomarkers and gene-expression profiles was that they can actually separate patients into three distinct categories, based on which parts of the immune system were affected.

"Before this study, everyone pretty much thought Sjogren's patients have dry eyes, dry mouth, some joint pain and that they should all be treated the same way," she said. "Now we know that isn't the case."

The findings were published in *Rheumatology* and were funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, all part of the National Institutes of Health.

Other OMRF researchers who contributed to the work were Joel Guthridge, Ph.D., Hua Chen, Ph.D., Rufe Lu, M.D., Ph.D., Rebecka Bourn, Ph.D., Melissa Munroe, M.D., Ph.D., Miles Smith, Ph.D., Eliza Chakravarty, M.D., Kathy Sivils, Ph.D., and Teresa Aberle.

This study was completed on behalf of the Autoimmunity Centers of Excellence (ACE) consortium. OMRF is one of only 10 ACE centers in the U.S.

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Meet the Maddox family. Their thirteen-year-old daughter, SaNiyah, has cerebral palsy and is confined to a wheelchair. SaNiyah's entire life – her happiness, her health, her every need – all depends on her family and help from the team at Special Care. But they also have two adorable young sons, demanding jobs and – on top of everything else – they foster an infant who needed a home, too. It's more than most of us could handle.

But here's the big surprise. The Maddoxes not only receive help from United Way agencies, they find room in a budget stretched to its limit and they give to the United Way. **Can you?**

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