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Compassion, Empathy and Respect



Christie Fontenot, LPN is the Chisholm Trail charge nurse at Grace Living Center in El Reno, OK. Christie has been a nurse for twenty-seven years and continues to serve the residents with compassion, empathy and respect.

by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Grace Living Center, located in El Reno, OK is a long term care facility that is a very special place to eighty-one residents and thirty nurses. These residents are cared for with the utmost dignity. One particular

person working here is Christie Fontenot, LPN who is also the Chisholm Trail charge nurse and has been for the last four years. Christie has been a nurse for a total of twenty-seven years, working in different

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Aging in Place—COVID-19 Important

Seniors either retirement privileged or close to that status face an important question around the world as we now see the importance of aging in place brought on by COVID-19-driven orders to shelter in place.

The question for those trying to add to the quality of life they have built for themselves throughout their decades of hard work and life experience is do they allow themselves to become dependent?

Seniors have grown up in an age of independence, of individual rights for those pulling for the greater good.

We have recently heard many directives from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention during this COVID-19 Global Pandemic. The CDC says during a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible to further reduce your risk of being exposed.

Perhaps for seniors the CDC's definition of aging in place "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level" should define their future.

A member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Kara De La Pena, who owns a metro urgent care mobile practice, is advising her patients to make changes to their home to compensate for their disabilities. This allows

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Kara De La Pena now stress the importance of seniors aging in place.

COVID-19

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them to age in place.

And yet many healthy, disability-free seniors have chosen to amass in retirement communities. With 15 years of delivering medical services, De La Pena has seen a downside to this choice recently while delivering urgent care to her patient's home.

"The higher acuity of patients that I have seen recently during this pandemic is astounding—often times requiring careful consideration of sending them to a higher level of care or leaving them to manage their symptoms," said De La Pena, an advanced practice registered nurse whose practice is based on making house calls.

Her certifications in advanced cardiac life support, basic life support, and pediatric advanced life support allow her to fully evaluate her senior patient's situations. De La Pena has been adding aging in place expertise to her delivery of medical health care as the owner of NP 2 Go.

She says although centers that cater to disability free seniors have a great array of services and amenities, they also come with a serious medical restriction.

Those places are only as medically secure in a pathogen pandemic as the least informed and observant of warnings of social distancing among that population.

While these retirement communities tout wonderful food, convenience, comfortable-bus special excursions to cultural events they fall short in medical privacy. Someone trying to self quarantine cannot prevent other seniors from ignoring the scientifically established demand to stay in their area during a pandemic.

It is not physically possible for self-quarantining seniors to live in a totally private area in a retirement community. Even the milder restriction of shelter in place is impossible when others can insist on inflicting their social visits.

Sharing beautiful common areas can be a minus, just as the pressure to attend a variety of planned activities can short circuit

the best intentions to be safe. Some residents may not be able to resist the temptation to socialize with friends and neighbors every day.

Seniors trying to do the right thing in a pandemic are at the mercy of those people who have the least ability to understand science. Some people do not understand the gravity of the situation, or exercise social inhibitions in a time of emergency.

If a senior remains in their home, aging in place, they are far more likely able to avoid a medical emergency based on the spread of a pathogen.

"Sheltering in place is nearly impossible in communal living, which is why aging in place is of utmost importance-now and in the future," De La Pena said. "Our physical health and mental health often meld together for a balance which creates a homeostasis that directly affects our personal health. Aging in place provides independence, prevents communal illnesses, and promotes self-care."

Aging in place means solving safety and inappropriate accessibility issues. It creates home living that is safe and accessible without sacrificing individuality. With our leaders calling this pandemic a war, why be on the front lines when you can choose to be a non-combatant by sheltering in place?

"For my older patients there are no potentially promising treatments available in this COVID-19 crisis. Sheltering in place is the only course of action that reliably gives seniors the possibility of a treatment benefit," De La Pena said. "If seniors have already given up their right to age in place, they have no confidence that the possibility of a treatment benefit is in the offing."

Now many seniors and retirees can see had everyone been able to truly shelter in place from the outset of the COVID-19 crisis, there would have been far fewer deaths in their demographic.

Instead, because of illness and disability and the choice of leaving their homes, many seniors were extra vulnerable while amassed in facilities other than their homes.

The concept of aging in place is

as new as the agenda of collective living in retirement and yet it is lagging in importance. A major reason the concept is not widely advocated is business cannot make a great profit from sharing this information with the public.

Business can make a profit by building facilities and luring people out of their homes to be a part of a larger collective.

America has just received an enormous wakeup call about how dangerous this collective living can be. Again, if everyone deemed vulnerable who did not require daily medical attention could have self-quarantined our nation's COVID-19 virus stats would look much better.

The government has created a new phrase in the last few years—disability free aging.

With the new pathogen pandemic connectedness apparent in the world it begs the question. Shouldn't those seniors and retirees who are disability free be clinging to the independence and relative safety of living in their own homes.

"Again, while I visit a cross section of ages as patients in their homes, I am very concerned for our senior population with COVID 19 spreading. Aging in place is the safest form of defense for seniors now," De La Pena said. "I plan on highlighting more government initiatives and programs to help seniors stay in their homes as long as possible. By performing aging in place assessments, I hope to empower more seniors to find ways to age in place as long as their home is a viable sanctuary."

She recommends everyone with questions about the aging in place agenda visit this informative section of the federal Web site: www.nia.nih.gov/health/aging-place-growing-older-home

Steve Persa, 77, is staunchly an aging in place advocate in Oklahoma City. He sees this pandemic through the eyes of a retired Oklahoma Blood Institute employee who helped solve Oklahoma's blood supply problems for decades.

"As long as I am healthy and mobile, I will continue to live in my home," Persa said. "This latest COVID-19 shelter in place episode reinforces my resolve to do so."



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GRACE

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areas of several hospitals; "I have worked in the ER, Dialysis, Rehab, Ambulance Service and Home Health. Here at Grace Living Center is by far my favorite job that I have ever had. I enjoy getting to know the residents and their families and hearing all about their career and their lives. We have had all sorts of people here; housewives, nurses and business executives just to name a few. Why, we even had an astronaut here at one time! We have had some very interesting people," Christie commented.

Christie became interested in nursing when her mom worked in the medical field. "My mom worked in respiratory therapy in a small hospital and I got to go to work with her every once in a while. She also worked as a nurse on an ambulance. I loved hearing all of the stories from my mom. Being around all of the nurses that she worked with

was always so interesting to me. I learned at an early age how loved and respected nurses were. As I got older, I knew that I wanted to go to nursing school but there was a problem that was holding me back; I didn't know how to read a thermometer! As silly as it sounded, I knew it would keep me from becoming a nurse. My mom was very understanding and she actually taught me how to read a thermometer. If I could read a thermometer, I knew I could become a nurse," she said with a laugh.

Born and raised in a small town in Caddo County, OK, Christie went to school at Caddo-Kiowa Vo-Tech at Fort Cobb. "This is really going to tell my age but I believe the year that I graduated was the last year that we had class lectures instead of the self-paced and it was also the last year that the test was taken on paper and we had to wait six weeks before we knew if we had passed. It was nice to know that one hundred percent of the class

passed. Between my mom and a wonderful nurse that worked for the doctor that delivered my babies, they both had a big influence on me and my life. This nurse was the sweetest, kindest, nurse that I had ever met. That was thirty years ago and I still think of her often and the impact that she had on my life," Christie said. "One of my mentors in nursing school was one of my instructors, Becky McBride. I actually would babysit her boys when I was in high school and she was always telling me, you should be a nurse. Apparently, she influenced me too."

All of the nurses at Grace Living Center have special qualities about themselves; compassion, empathy and respect. "We all love the residents here and we are like one big family," Christie said. "The biggest reward that I receive from being a nurse is making lasting friendships with residents and their families. Of course, the biggest challenge right now is the Covid-19 virus

and not being able to allow the residents to have visitors. Our main focus is making sure the residents are safe from the virus," she added.

"The residents here have activities to keep them busy, allowing them to have a lot of fun. We even have burger day here for the residents and their families to go along with El Reno's annual burger festival. It's outside, and there is a dance floor, games and petting zoo along with grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for everyone," Christie stated.

Currently, Christie and her husband, Benji live in Hinton, OK and enjoy spending time with their five children and their two grandchildren. They live on a lot of land where they have some cattle, quite a few horses and numerous dogs. They recently started raising mini Australian Shepherds.

What one word would you use to sum up your life? I asked Christie. "I would say the word would definitely be blessed."

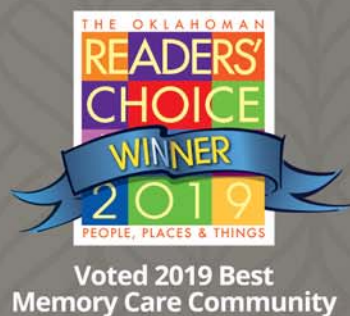


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CAREERS IN NURSING

FROM ER NURSE TO SCHOOL NURSE: MID-DEL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by Vickie Jenkins - Writer/Photographer

When children are at the tender age of seven or eight, some of them are sure they know exactly what they will do when they grow up. That is the case for Natalie Tapley, MS, RN school nurse for three Mid-Del public schools; Tinker Elementary, Ridgecrest Elementary and Kerr Middle school. Born in Stillwater, OK and several moves in her early years, Natalie ended up in Holdenville, OK, her parents' hometown. "I always wanted to be a teacher; I have always been a nurturer. As I got older, I knew the medical profession was for me because I could care for others and teach others at the same time," Natalie commented.

Natalie has been a nurse since 2003. "I attended OU for my bachelors, graduated in 2003, went back for my masters in nursing education at OU and graduated with my MS in 2010. My first job as an RN was at the Children's Hospital at

OU Medical Center, working in the ER. My first job as a school nurse was when I worked as a contract nurse for Shawnee Public schools one day a week for a semester. I assisted getting files and individual health service plans up to date at Shawnee High School for one semester several years ago. I adjuncted for UCO and took nursing students to Mid-Del for their community clinical for two years. I knew that one day, I wanted to be a full-time school nurse. It was last spring, which the timing seemed to be just right. I got the job and I couldn't be happier. I absolutely love what I do!"

Are the requirements for a school nurse different than a nurse in a hospital? "Yes, you must have a school nurse certification. Only an RN can get this certification that is obtained from the Board of Education. A school nurse must also have their BLS," Natalie replied.

Asking Natalie if she enjoyed being a nurse at a hospital or a school better, she replied, "At this point in my life, I prefer a school setting. It allows me more time to be with my family but still challenges me and allows me to be with all sorts of kids. It's completely different than the hospital. There are no resources readily available like nurses at hospitals have. A school nurse must have strong assessment skills and strong critical thinking skills. Although we have other school nurses we can call for advice, we are ultimately the one making decisions for our kids in the school setting based on protocol from the state Department of Education and policies and procedures from the district. We fall under guidelines from the department of education and the Board of Nursing."

"I think a nurse needs to have some specific qualities. A nurse needs to understand empathy and

practice it. They need to show compassion and genuine caring. They need a true feeling of wanting to help others, making the best decisions for his or her patients. A good nurse will treat their patient as if they were their own family member. If a nurse continues to think like this, they will always provide quality care. Last but not least, nurses should treat others as a person rather than a room number."

"Being a nurse is very rewarding. I have worked from the bedside as a nursing instructor and professor and as a school nurse. I can honestly say with all three, the biggest reward is when I can be an advocate for them and show them how much I really care," Natalie said. "On the other hand, the biggest challenge would be the lack of funding for school nurses in general and it is not mandated by

See TAPLEY Page 5



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It was seventeen years ago that Natalie Tapley, MS, RN was an ER nurse at Children's Hospital. With a real passion for others, she currently serves children as a school nurse for three Mid-Del schools.

TAPLEY

Continued from Page 4

the state for each school to have a school nurse. With the growing number of medical needs in youth, it would be wonderful to have a school nurse in each school, every day of the school year and to have the support from the state. It would make the parents, teachers, principals and support staffs feel

safer," she added.

Describing herself, Natalie said, "I am a wife and mom first. I like caring for others, having a little control and fun along the way. I like to learn and like to have a voice for those that can't. I am outspoken and passionate about what I believe in." If you were to sum up your life in one word, what would it be? "Blessed," Natalie replied.

OMRF donates 25,000 gloves to Integris



Lijun Xia, M.D., Ph.D., and Hendra Setiadi, Ph.D., with the laboratory gloves the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation donated to Integris Baptist Medical Center for use during the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. March 2020

The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation has donated more than 25,000 protective gloves to the Integris Baptist Medical Center. The donation came after Integris officials put out a call for personal protective equipment, or PPE.

Across the state and nation, shortages of PPE have heightened concerns that first responders and medical workers might be at higher risk of contracting the COVID-19 coronavirus and passing it on to patients.

OMRF has suspended most biomedical research during the pandemic. So, researchers joined together to gather spare laboratory supplies, which also included masks and other PPE desperately needed in hospitals, clinics and testing facilities.

"Our scientists reacted immediately to the request," said OMRF's Lijun Xia, M.D., Ph.D., who helped spearhead the effort.

"As a medical scientist, I knew that it was essential to get Integris staff sufficiently equipped so they could help patients in Oklahoma," said Xia. "When I heard their supplies were running low, I was really concerned and wanted to contribute as quickly and as much as possible."

OMRF healthcare providers continue to treat patients in the foundation's rheumatology and multiple sclerosis centers. "So, it's vital that we still retain adequate supplies to protect caregivers and patients when they visit," said OMRF President Stephen Prescott, M.D. "But this is a crisis, and if we can help other medical professionals who are risking their lives by sharing part of our inventory, we will."

In addition to the PPE donation, OMRF scientists are teaming with the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in an emergency effort to process COVID-19 tests. Led by Joel Guthridge, Ph.D., a team of OMRF scientists is temporarily relocating to OU Medicine, where they will operate a high-speed polymerase chain reaction system OMRF has moved there temporarily, as well as a new robot OMRF has purchased to help accelerate testing.

The goal of the effort is to increase the state's testing capacity. When fully operational, OMRF and OUHSC scientists hope the facility will be able to process up to several thousand tests a day.

"Experts say Oklahoma's numbers will increase dramatically when more testing becomes available," said Prescott, a physician and medical researcher. "The sooner we can get our arms around the true magnitude of this health crisis, the better we'll be able to fight it."

Testing will also help those worrying about whether they've contracted COVID-19. "Knowing whether you have the virus could improve your chances of recovery," said Prescott, "and aggressive quarantine measures can save others from contracting it."

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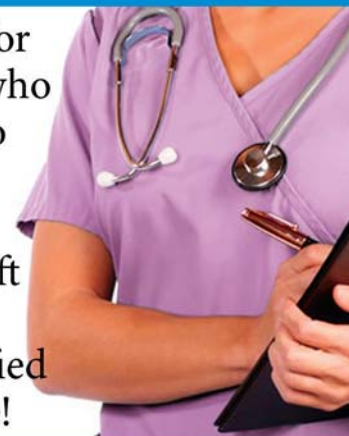
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Family Nurse Practitioner service-learning project brings care into the community

At The University of Tulsa, students in the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) program receive individual attention and the tools necessary to help them elevate nursing core values to the advanced practice, primary care level. These students are challenged to pay forward their advanced practice knowledge and skills in assessment, diagnosis and prescribing through ongoing opportunities to make their communities a better place for all. One recent example of FNP service learning involved students providing sports physicals free of charge to students at Will Rogers College High School, a Title 1 institution.

This initiative began two years ago, when the FNP program's director, Sheryl Stansifer, learned that many students at Will Rogers were returning to school in August without a completed sports physical. The lack of such a physical, which typically costs \$20 or more, means a young person cannot participate in school sports.

The first year Stansifer and her FNP students went to Will Rogers, they completed 160 physicals. The next year, that figure climbed to 200. The school's athletic director, Krystel Markwardt, enthused about the impact of "this wonderful program," noting that "our students come from diverse economic backgrounds, and their families couldn't afford to pay for physicals. The FNP students work quickly and efficiently, and their efforts mean our athletes are able to compete in the summer and be prepared for early fall sports." As Stansifer pointed out, the issue is "bigger than playing basketball or joining the swim team. For many kids, getting involved in sports means they will stay in school and graduate."

The benefits of this service-learning project are tangible for both the young athletes and the FNP students. Sports physicals are a common component of primary care, and all of TU's FNP students must complete pediatric assessments and be checked off on sports physicals. Providing sports physicals to the Will Rogers students enables the future FNP's to satisfy that requirement. In addition, Stansifer commented, delivering these physicals "enables faculty members to assess FNP students' interactions with the patients/athletes and their ability to complete the forms accurately. Because so many health care teams comprise a variety of professionals, having an opportunity to collaborate with the school's athletic trainer adds a critical interdisciplinary component to their development."

Two of the FNP students who participated in service learning are Alejandra Paredes and Vicky Cha. Originally from Peru (she moved to the United States when she was 13), Paredes has been a registered nurse (RN) since 2014. Cha is a first-generation Hmong-American who grew up in California. She has been an RN since 2015.

"I always knew my career end-goal was to become a nurse practitioner (NP)," Paredes said. "But I wanted to gain



Family nurse practitioner students Alejandra Paredes and Vicky Cha demonstrate skill and compassion during a pediatric exam.

experience as an RN so I could become a better NP. I am looking forward to having more autonomy in the care that I deliver to my patients, and it's important to me to be able to help them focus on health maintenance and disease prevention, while being mindful of individuals' emotional, physical and spiritual health." Cha has her gaze set on working as an FNP in urgent care. "Seeing NPs' selflessness, commitment and integral role in patient care both inspired me and solidified my determination to pursue an advanced practice degree."

For Paredes, one of the benefits of TU's FNP program is the "huge relief" of not having to find a preceptor. She also cited the diverse network of clinical sites, which "serve as a great way for students to learn and implement their knowledge." Paredes recently spent a semester at a clinic caring for a largely underserved population where most of the patients spoke Spanish, which is her native language. Cha has a similar interest in bringing health care to people who are often on the margins. "I admire the TU School of Nursing's mission to not only cultivate students to become leaders in health care, but also to give back to their communities."

This is something Cha experienced first hand with the Will Rogers service-learning initiative, and which resonated on a personal level. "My parents were Hmong refugees and I grew up with minimal resources. One of the biggest struggles was not being able to take part in sports because my parents couldn't afford the fees and transportation. Providing free sports physicals for Will Rogers students, many of whom have a background similar to mine, exemplifies one of the most rewarding aspects of nursing: making a positive impact on another person's life." Reflecting on her experience providing physicals for these youth, Paredes arrived at a similar conclusion: "I believe that caring for others, regardless of social, racial or economic background, is a core value of nursing."

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SITUATION UPDATE:

COVID-19

AS OF 04/01/2020

Editors Note: This version has amended changes to drive-thru testing sites.

•As of this advisory, there are 719 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma. Greer County has been added to the list of counties now required to come into compliance with Governor Kevin Stitt's "Safer at Home" executive order that calls for non-essential businesses in counties with COVID-19 cases to temporarily suspend services until April 16.

•There are an additional seven deaths:

COVID-19

Oklahoma Test
Results

Positive (In-State)	719
Positive (Out-of-State)	2
Negative*	1,248
Hospitalizations	219
Deaths	30

*Three in Oklahoma County, a female in the 50-64 age group and a male and female older than 65.

* One in Greer County, a female older than 65.

* One in Kay County, a male older than 65.

* One in Mayes County, a male in the 50-64 age group.

* One in Osage County, a male older than 65.

•There are 30 total deaths in the state.

•Drive-thru testing sites (no appointment necessary) open today, Thursday and Friday:

* Woodward from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Woodward County Event Center.

* Altus from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Western Oklahoma State College.

* Lawton from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Urgent Care Clinic, 3811 W. Gore.

•Criteria for testing at drive-thru testing sites:

* Must be 18 or older

* Only one specimen per household

* Have not had close contact (within 6 ft.) of someone who has tested positive in past 14 days

* Currently experiencing fever (>100.4 degrees F) AND cough or shortness of breath.

•Testing is also available at the Oklahoma State Fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with a physician referral and by appointment only.

•REMINDER: Governor Stitt's "Safer at Home" order includes the following guidelines for all 77 counties until April 30:

* No gatherings in groups larger than 10 people.

* People age 65 or older or those with a compromised immune system must shelter at home.

* On both statewide and municipal levels, individuals can still leave for essential errands such as to grocery stores or pharmacies. Please call 2-1-1 or visit covidresources.ok.gov for resources and information.

•For more information, visit coronavirus.health.ok.gov.

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. *As of 2020-04-01 at 7:00 a.m.

NURSE TALK

I would be a parrot because I like to talk!



Emma Heinen, RN

I would choose a blue jay because I am very protective.



Heather Warfel, RN

If you were a bird, what kind of bird would you be and why?



Stephenson
Cancer
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I would be a canary because I like to sing!



Victoria Saunders,
RN

I would like to be an eagle. I would soar high.



Janna Weatner, RN

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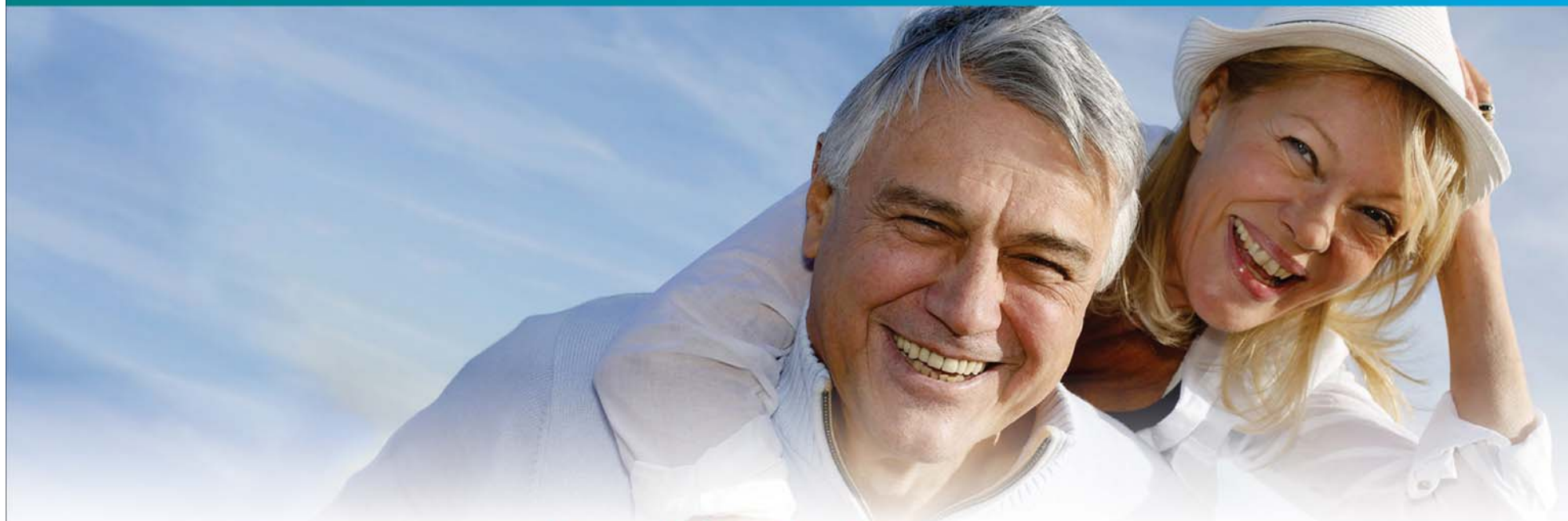
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First Lady, Girl Scouts, OSMA Team Up to Provide Cookies for Courage

Oklahomans Urged to Send Cookies to Frontline Health Care Workers

First Lady Sarah Stitt, Girl Scouts Western Oklahoma (GSWESTOK), and the Oklahoma State Medical Association have launched Cookies for Courage, a program that allows Oklahomans to purchase a box of Girl Scout Cookies for medical professionals fighting COVID-19.

"Cookies for Courage is a great way for Oklahomans to let our health care workers know we are thinking of them during this very difficult time," Stitt said. "Oklahomans always pull together in tough times, and this is a very sweet, very simple way to support our medical community as they work to protect us all."

Cookies can be purchased online for \$5 per box or \$60 for a case at www.gswestok.org/

cookiesforcourage. The cookies will be distributed to health care workers and others on the frontline. Proceeds from the program will support leadership opportunities for young girls through the Girl Scouts.

"Oklahoma's physicians, nurses and other providers are working extended hours to keep our community safe during this health crisis. We are grateful to the Girl Scouts of Western Oklahoma and its members for providing this opportunity to say 'thank you' to those on the front lines of patient care," said Oklahoma State Medical Association President Larry Bookman, M.D.

Girl Scout cookie season was set to run through March 22, but due to COVID-19, in-person sales



have been paused. Individual Girl Scout troops have the option of returning their unsold cookies to GSWESTOK or continuing sales online through their individual Digital Cookie websites.

"Oklahomans always set the standard for how we care for our people," said Shannon Evers,

CEO of Girl Scouts Western Oklahoma. "Cookie season was cut short this year because of coronavirus, and while that's disappointing for our girls, they recognize that there's an opportunity here to show love for people who are fighting this pandemic on the front lines."



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