



Covering the gap



NP's keep healthcare going

Dr. Jeffery Barlow, DNP, APRN-CNP, Clinical Operations expert, military officer and educator with over 20 years of experience in the overall clinical operations, financial and personnel leadership of large, medium and small teams.

by Bobby Anderson, RN - staff writer

Whether it's noon in Cordell, Oklahoma or midnight in Madison, Wisconsin, Dr. Jeffery Barlow, DNP, APRN-CNP and his team of Nurse Practitioners at Salubrious Nurse Practitioners has you covered.

Salubrious NPs came about in 2014 by recognizing gaps in the healthcare delivery model in both community-based and hospital-based care by quickly filling that care deficit void with board-certified Nurse Practitioners as a cost-effective adjunct to care delivery without compromising patient care outcomes.

In Salubrious NPs infancy, they partnered with a large Oklahoma City urgent care group that was looking for a broad coverage option with autonomous NPs, which Salubrious NPs filled. Within the first

year of augmenting care for the urgent cares, a windfall of business soon arrived. In 2015, Uber moved into the state of Oklahoma strong, however an OKC city council voted on a new city ordinance that required all drivers be medically cleared.

This left Uber scrambling for a medical clearance outlet and reached numerous rejections until they found Salubrious NPs on a whim referral.

A mutual partnership between Uber and Salubrious NPs was formed, which in turn led to the creation of Oklahoma's first TNC driver protocol creation based on the U.S. Department of Transportation standards, quickly seeing and

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Pregnant and Testing Positive for COVID-19



INTEGRIS Health is seeing an alarming increase in the number of pregnant women testing positive for COVID-19. Prior to June 30, the Women's Center at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center had cared for zero COVID positive expectant mothers. Fast forward to August 10, and the center has now delivered babies from 24 COVID positive women.

Most of these women have been asymptomatic carriers, but a few of them have experienced critical illness. Thirty-five-year-old Carly McKenzie was one of them.

"Not only was Carly pregnant but she also has cancer, so we were being extra vigilant," says her husband Christopher McKenzie. "We didn't go anywhere or see anyone. We were shocked when she was diagnosed with COVID-19."

"It started with a mild cough," describes Carly McKenzie. "And it just progressively got worse. It hurt to breathe. But honestly, I was more worried about my unborn baby than myself."

Carly was admitted to INTEGRIS Southwest

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BARLOW

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clearing over 700 Uber drivers.

Eventually a state resolution was voted on and the citizens of Oklahoma voted to the dissolution of TNC drivers needing to be medically cleared, however this was just the beginning of Salubrious NPs continued growth. Salubrious NPs created a Virtual Visit App in 2016, SNAP Virtual Visits, which is a episodic virtual visit platform that led the charge for many Oklahoma-based organizations to create their own Virtual Visit platform modeling themselves off the blueprint that SNAP Virtual Visits helped create.

This was transformational as "Nobody was doing virtual visits here," Dr. Barlow recalled, "We created a platform from scratch and offer a 24/7/365 access to Nurse Practitioners which could handle 80% of issues typically seen in the urgent care setting."

The price point alone of \$40/visit still remains the lowest on the market. The App steamrolled after that and the rest is history in the making. With a brief introduction in the hands of patients that could create a Virtual Visit, the next healthcare market Salubrious NPs entered was the

hospital-based TeleHealth market.

Salubrious NPs entered into an agreement with a North Carolina TeleHealth Company which enabled both businesses to enter five new states together providing rural facility support for nocturnal coverage of Hospitalist-based services all covered by Salubrious NPs. As healthcare delivery and payment models continue to thin, Salubrious NPs have uniquely positioned themselves to provide a top-quality, affordable and flexible care model that only a Nurse Practitioner group could provide.

"Our group of NPs are unbelievably good," Dr. Barlow said recently from Cordell Memorial Hospital, which his group covers in 24-hour shift increments. "Salubrious NPs now offers care coverage in seven states by either a proprietary app (SNAP Virtual Visits), via telemedicine (TeleMedSNP), or on-site care in any given Family Practice, Occupational Medicine group, Urgent Care, ER, or Hospital setting in any big city or small town within those seven states."

The most recent collaboration is with TeamHealth to facilitate Hospitalist care at Integris Yukon where Salubrious NPs work in concert with TeamHealth physicians in expanding on-site Hospitalist coverage services.



Salubrious NPs continues to become an NP provider group of choice for medical practices, groups, and health systems.

Dr. Barlow notes the majority of providers at Salubrious NPs have multiple specialty NP certifications along with Doctorate-level educations. The group itself consists of 32 nurse practitioners, well beyond what Dr. Barlow ever envisioned.

"Not even close," he laughed. "It started with me and another person and he quickly left the company in which I brought on another partner, Coty Bliss. The point of Salubrious NPs was to model our ownership approach and distribution that's very similar to the (Oklahoma) Heart Hospital." Under the model, each owner must be an active, practicing partner. The philosophy keeps the practitioners not only involved but embedded in the day-to-day activities.

Dr. Barlow notes most Nurse Practitioners come to Salubrious just to toe the water, maybe picking up some additional hours or a second-job. From there, they're often hooked. "I think the autonomy of it," Barlow said. "We're super small. Our structure is very transparent. When they're hired on we share with them our contracts with every place we operate under. Our overhead is very small. We're all working. It's been a fantastic ride, and of course, that piggybacked into telehospitalist work and that's been growing exponentially." As payor-provider models change, Salubrious NPs continues to offer an affordable

staffing source. Dr. Barlow said the company charges facilities an hourly-rate which keeps Salubrious out of many medical billing headaches.

To get an idea of how much an impact Nurse Practitioners like Dr. Barlow have in the rural setting alone, just look at that one rural Washita County Hospital in Cordell, Oklahoma. Some 13,000 people reside in the county. And on this afternoon, Dr. Barlow is the only provider.

"It's a rendezvous spot honestly for true traumas and obviously it's a triage spot for other critical conditions like strokes and heart attacks," he said. "It's critical care, critical access."

Of those patients transferring out to a higher level of care, Dr. Barlow said some 75 percent leave by air.

"The hardest thing out here obviously is getting transportation," Barlow said, noting there's a 45-minute drive to the nearest larger city in Elk City. "But the problem is if we take the local ambulance out for two hours there's no one to service the county."

Five years from now, Dr. Barlow sees Virtual Visits exploding on the small business side.

"Everyone we approach with this and offer some form of medical coverage take it in a second," he said.

On-site visits will remain strong and telehospitalist work (which Dr. Barlow estimates has grown nearly 1,000 percent in the last year and a half) will continue to surge.

"That's going to be the Godzilla of the Nurse Practitioner skill-set just blowing up," he said.

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COVID

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Medical Center on June 27. She was put on a ventilator June 28. She was transferred to INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center July 1.

Carly's condition quickly deteriorated. Her situation became so dire, that she required extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, commonly abbreviated as ECMO, in order to survive. The specialized therapy is reserved for patients facing imminent death.

"ECMO provides support to patients whose heart and/or lungs are so severely diseased or damaged that they can no longer serve their function," says Aly El Banayosy, M.D., Director of the INTEGRIS ECMO Program and Network. "The goal is to allow the heart or lungs to rest and recover while the machine does all the work. When the heart or the lungs have healed and can work on their own, the lifesaving support of the ECMO artificial heart/lung machine is weaned then removed. Carly was on the device for five agonizing days. We really didn't expect her to

survive."

While Carly was on ECMO support and in a medically induced coma, baby Oliver was delivered via cesarean section. He was born 2 and a half months early at just 29 weeks gestation, weighing only 2 pounds, 13 ounces. "All I could think about was that Carly might not ever get to meet our son and that I might have to raise two kids under the age of two alone. It was very emotional and terrifying," remembers Christopher.

"You may think it won't happen to you or that you would be fine if it did. But think about people like my wife. By doing what you're supposed to do like staying away from others and wearing a mask - you literally could be saving someone's life."

"Miraculously, thanks to my faith and to the exceptional care I received at INTEGRIS, I recovered and beat this horrible disease," says Carly. "I want everyone to know that COVID is not a joke and that it should be taken very seriously."

As for Baby Oliver, he tested negative for the coronavirus but has spent five weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at

INTEGRIS Children's. Thankfully he is doing well and gaining weight. Because of being in quarantine, Carly didn't get to officially meet her son until July 29. "It was amazing," she says. "Even though I just met him, I feel like we have already been through so much together and beaten the odds."

Oliver's big sister, 18-month-old Audrey, still hasn't got to meet him in person since young children aren't allowed in the NICU due to COVID. But hopefully she will very soon when he gets to go home in a few weeks.

While the health system has not had any maternal or fetal deaths related to COVID-19, the INTEGRIS staff hopes others will take the McKenzie's story to heart. "It's important to understand that pregnant women can and do get critically ill from COVID-19," states Whitney Homer, the Nurse Manager of the INTEGRIS Baptist Women's Center. "The advice we give our patients is to create a protective bubble around you and your unborn baby. Do the same for all those in your household. Wear your mask, social distance and wash your hands."

To date, INTEGRIS has had to put 23 COVID patients on ECMO, with more than 50% of those transferred to INTEGRIS from other hospitals around the state of Oklahoma. Two of those have been young pregnant women.



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OBU Honors Henson, Walker and Baxter with Highest Employee Awards

OBU presented its annual faculty and staff awards Friday, Aug. 7, during the University's back-to-school employee meeting in Raley Chapel's Potter Auditorium on the OBU campus in Shawnee. OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas presented the awards along with Dr. Susan DeWoody, provost, and Mike Johnson, director of human resources.

The meeting was physically distanced, with all employees wearing face coverings while spread a minimum of six feet apart throughout the auditorium. Specially designed stickers marked which seats were available for use and which were not. A number of employees opted to join the meeting online via Zoom in lieu of attending in person.

Each year, OBU presents its three most prestigious awards to recognize quality teaching and faithful service: the Distinguished Teaching Award, the Promising Teacher Award

and the Meritorious Service Award. Nominations for the awards are made by alumni, current students, faculty, staff and administration. In addition to public recognition and a token of the university's appreciation, the recipients receive cash awards provided by OBU graduates John and Janet Hudson of Edmond, Oklahoma.

The University typically presents these three awards during Spring Commencement ceremonies in May. However, the presentation was moved to the employee meeting after the coronavirus pandemic shifted Spring Commencement to an outdoors location held Aug. 1.

Dr. Robbie Henson, dean of the College of Nursing, received the Distinguished Teaching Award. This award is presented to a faculty member who has taught at OBU for five consecutive years or more and has displayed excellence in the

classroom. Henson earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing from OBU, a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Texas-Arlington, and a Ph.D. from the University of Colorado. She has clinical experience in a wide range of specialties including adult medical-surgical, intensive care, home health, psychiatric-mental health and maternal-newborn nursing. She previously received both the Oklahoma Nurse Educator of the Year award and the Promising Teacher Award at OBU.

Teri Walker, degree counselor, received the Meritorious Service Award. This award is presented annually to a faculty or staff member who has invested a substantial commitment of years and service, and who has been a loyal and faithful faculty or staff member. Walker began working for OBU 37 years ago. Before settling into her current position, she worked as the

Howard Residence Center director and Geiger Center director. She is known for actively participating in various aspects of life on Bison Hill including attending sporting events, theatre productions and fine arts concerts, making a lasting impression on generations of Bison students and alumni.

Benjamin Baxter, chair of the Division of Communication Arts and assistant professor of animation and media production, received the Promising Teacher Award. This award is presented to a junior faculty member who has taught at OBU less than six years and has demonstrated outstanding potential as a teacher. Baxter joined the OBU faculty in 2016. He earned a Bachelor of Arts from Ouachita Baptist University and a Master of Fine Arts from the Savannah College of Art and Design. He has worked as a freelance

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Dr. Robbie Henson, dean of the College of Nursing, received the Distinguished Teaching Award, presented by Dr. Susan DeWoody (left), provost, and OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas. photo by Heather Hamilton.

OBU

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photographer for more than 15 years and has experience in 3D modeling, lighting, texturing and rendering.

For more information about OBU, visit okbu.edu.

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 1,868, with students from 35 states and 34 other countries. OBU has been rated as one of the top 10 regional colleges in the West by U.S. News and World

Report for 28 consecutive years and Oklahoma's highest rated regional college in the U.S. News rankings for 25 consecutive years. OBU is one of three universities in Oklahoma and the only private Oklahoma university listed on Great Value College's rankings of 50 Great Affordable Colleges in the Midwest. The Wall Street Journal ranks OBU second in the nation for student engagement among all U.S. colleges and universities. Forbes.com consistently ranks OBU as a top university in Oklahoma and the Princeton Review has named OBU one of the best colleges and universities in the western United States for 15 consecutive years.



Benjamin Baxter, chair of the Division of Communication Arts and assistant professor of animation and media production, received the Promising Teacher Award, presented by Dr. Susan DeWoody (left), provost, and OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas. photo by Heather Hamilton.



Teri Walker (center), degree counselor, received OBU's Meritorious Service Award, presented by Mike Johnson (left), director of human resources, and OBU President Dr. Heath A. Thomas. photo by Heather Hamilton.

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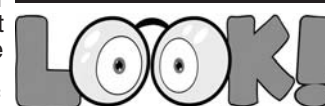
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OMRF receives \$2.2 million to study brain cells

The National Institutes of Health has awarded an Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist \$2.2 million to study the inner workings of brain cells.

OMRF researcher Tommy Lewis, Ph.D., received a five-year grant that will investigate the roles that mitochondria — the driver for energy and metabolism in cells — play in brain cells and how they respond in neurodegenerative diseases.

"Finding the 'why' behind each part of our cells is critical to advancements in treating conditions that impact us as we get older," said Lewis, who joined OMRF from Columbia University in 2018. "Diseases like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's affect millions of Americans — but to find relief, we need to understand the basics."

The grant was awarded under a federal program for promising scientists still early in their

careers, known as the Maximizing Investigators' Research Award, or MIRA. The competitive program offers long-term support, the flexibility to pursue new research directions and favors bold, risk-taking science.

"Dr. Lewis is part of the remarkable class of young researchers who have joined OMRF's faculty in recent years," said Holly Van Remmen, Ph.D., who leads the foundation's Aging and Metabolism Research Program. "This grant will be pivotal as he continues to establish his lab and allow him to dig deep into the basic functioning of the brain. This is the kind of science that paves the way for new drugs and therapies that target devastating conditions."

Called "the powerhouse of the cell," mitochondria generate the energy produced in cells and keep them running properly. When

brain cells begin to fail, disease is the result. Research shows that different areas of these cells contain specialized mitochondria, but the reasons why remain a mystery.

Using a unique imaging method, Lewis' laboratory team at OMRF will observe the function of different mitochondria in brain cells and track what happens during disease progression in real time.

"In neurodegeneration, there's a belief that only one part of the neuron is affected at the early stage of disease and as deterioration continues, it spreads. Research shows this is true in Parkinson's," Lewis said. "To stop the progression of these diseases, we need to be able to identify and target that specific part of the cell without damaging the healthy parts."

Breaking mitochondria into subtypes will allow Lewis' lab to pursue this possibility on a very basic level, and dig deeper than ever before.

"Learning how to prevent the deterioration from progressing could save the rest of the cell and



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Tommy Lewis, Ph.D.

eventually, we hope, the patient's quality of life," Lewis said.

The grant (1 R35 GM137921-01) is funded by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, a part of the NIH.



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Regular shifts, family - a life outside of work - all come into play for today's nurses seeking to advance their degrees.

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"It's all online," Gray said. "I love the flexibility of it. My experience has been that nurses in practice have a lot of expertise that we don't give them credit for in the education setting. One of the things I like about this program is it's designed to let nurses build on their expertise and move through quickly."

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and grades.

Competency-based education (CBE) means a registered nurse's training, education and work experience allow them to earn college credits for what they already know. Skip class for skills mastered on the job by testing out of that segment and earning college credit.

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Gray said the next cohort is forming now with an expected March 2 kickoff. After that another will begin in May with no caps on enrollment.

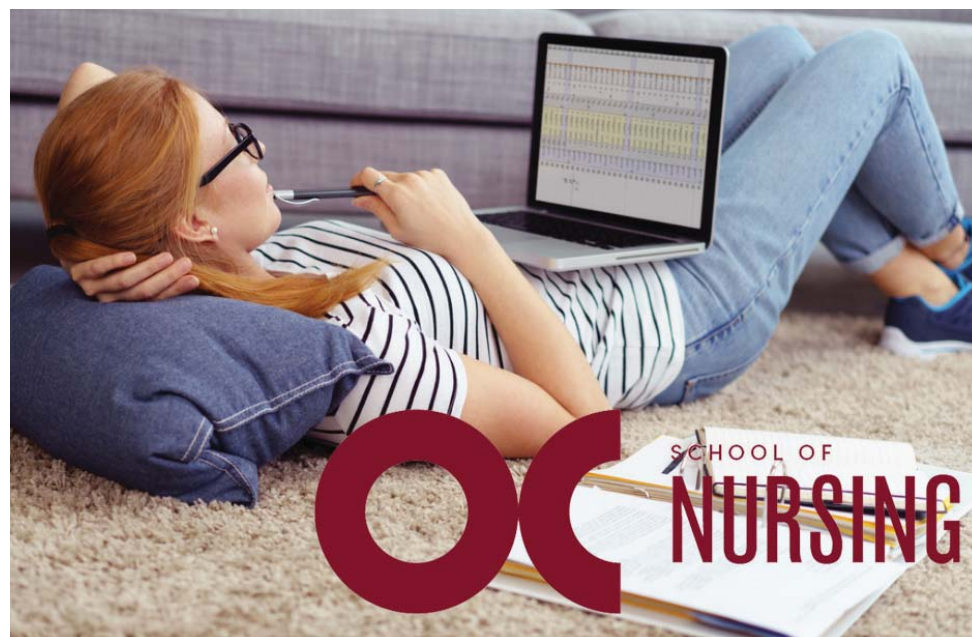
"We adjust the number of faculty members based on the number of students," Gray said. "A faculty mentor is assigned to each individual student and stays with them throughout the program monitoring progress, evaluating and really just being a coach right there with them all the way through the program."

Students are allowed to work at their own pace and pay a flat rate for each term. Gray said students range from taking the full three terms to finishing in just one.

"I think most nurses if they have family or any other responsibility it's probably going to be three terms," she said.

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Ellie
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Our daughter, Ellie, was born in November 2008. When she was 3 months old, we found out she had a liver problem. We went to Children's Hospital in OKC, but were soon sent to a transplant center in Nebraska for evaluation. On March 18th, Ellie was put on the list for transplant. We came back home to wait. Ellie was treated at Children's twice a week, until she began to lose weight in May. We went back to Nebraska the day after Mother's Day, and she was admitted to the hospital. While there, I was evaluated as a living donor for Ellie, and we soon learned I could give her part of my liver. Ellie's transplant was on May 22, 2009. It was the hardest thing that I've ever done, but the

easiest decision of my life. We came home Father's Day weekend.

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SITUATION UPDATE:

- As of this advisory, there are 58,733 confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- There is one additional death identified to report. No deaths were identified in the past 24 hours.
- One in Oklahoma County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
- One in Rogers County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
- One in Sequoyah County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
- One in Tulsa County, one female in the 50 - 64 age group.
- There are 800 total deaths in the state.
- For more information, visit coronavirus.health.ok.gov.

COVID-19 Oklahoma Test Results

Confirmed Positive Cases	58,733
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date (As of Aug 28)	806,545
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date (As of Aug 28)	874,676
**Currently Hospitalized (As of Aug 28)	570
Total Cumulative Hospitalizations	4,821
Identified Deaths in the Past 24 hours	0
Total Cumulative Deaths	800

**The total includes laboratory information provided to OSDH at the time of the report. Total counts may not reflect unique individuals.*

***This number is a combination of hospitalized positive cases and hospitalized persons under investigation, as reported by hospitals at the time of the report. The data reflect a change in calculation and should not be compared to prior data.*

****The purpose of publishing aggregated statistical COVID-19 data through the OSDH Dashboard, the Executive Order Report, and the Weekly Epidemiology and Surveillance Report is to support the needs of the general public in receiving important and necessary information regarding the state of the health and safety of the citizens of Oklahoma. These resources may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be used in any way that would determine the identity of any reported cases. Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. *As of 2020-08-31 at 7:00 a.m.*

NURSE TALK



I would be a cheetah because I am so boujee!



Jennifer Portillo, LPN

I would be an elephant because they have the best memory. They are usually calm and spend their time relaxing in the water.



Tyra Mayes, LPN

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

The Grand
Bethany, OK

I would be a duck. No matter what the situation is, even when stressed, they just let everything run off their back!



Nedra Jones, RN,
DON

I would be a big, fat cat! I would sleep and eat all day!



Ella Lynette Lord, RN



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Couple Give Cardiac Care

by Vickie Jenkins

It doesn't happen too often but every now and then, we come across two nurses that just happen to be married (yes, happily married) and both work at the same place. This is the case for Denny and Kayla Hinkle, both RN's. Denny Hinkle, MSN, BSN, RN is the Nurse Manager of the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit and the Cardiac Decision Unit. His wife, Kayla, works in the Post Coronary Care Unit. Even though Denny works days and Kayla works night shift, they are both dedicated to their work, caring for the patients.

Currently, Denny manages both the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit and the Cardiac Decision Unit. "I have been in this role for about a year. I started at Norman as a contract nurse in the CVICU and then the opportunity arose to interview for manager and it seemed like a good fit," Denny said. "My first job as a new nurse was at Integris Southwest Medical Center in their ICU. That hospital is one of the busiest in the city. The ICU is not specialized and it allowed me to see stroke, cardiac, and medical ICU level patients. The people that I worked with at this facility are some of my closest friends now and some of those memories are some of my fondest," Denny added.

Kayla has been a nurse for five and half years and has worked on PCCU for one and half years. The rest of the time was spent working in step-down cardiac.

Asking Kayla what qualities make a good nurse, she replied, "I think a nurse should pay attention to detail, have critical thinking, time management, have the ability to handle stress well, and believe in teamwork. Throughout our careers, I have been in stressful situations with Denny and he is always calm and collected. From the beginning, I took note of this and decided that I wanted that as a tool in arsenal. I noticed whenever the leader is calm, everyone is calm. Teamwork is the number one quality every good nurse needs. Nursing is not a one-man job, but includes other nurses, respiratory, pharmacy, case managers,

physical therapy, occupational therapy, doctors, dietitians, etc. Teamwork is very important for a good nurse," Kayla explained.

I asked Denny what qualities he thought made a good nurse. To each nurse, they have their own idea of what the most important quality would be. Denny had completely different answers. "A nurse needs to be able to take guidance, be genuine, maintain a sense of humor and think critically. Healthcare is a profession where things change daily and if you get a mindset because that is how it has always been done, it will be your downfall, he said. "Having a sense of humor is vital to surviving as an RN, especially in a high stress area like ICU. Humor is our biggest stress relief. If we can laugh at work for a few minutes, it allows us to better focus on what is needed for our patients," Denny stated.

As far as recognitions and awards, Denny and Kayla were both recently recognized on KFOR news as nurses on the frontline.

Denny has received the 2016 nurse.com GEM Award finalist for Excellence in Management, March of Dimes nominee for Management, and Nurse of the Year at Integris Southwest Medical Center ICU.

Kayla's recognitions include March of Dimes 2016 Finalist Rising Star Category, Integris Southwest Medical Center IMC Nurse of the Year 2017, March of Dimes 2018 Nominee Charge Nurse Category, and 2020 Norman Way Nominee.

Denny and Kayla are avid travelers. "We have traveled to numerous countries and all over the US. Last year, we went to Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Hawaii and Greece. We also go to Disney numerous times a year, including every year on Halloween. This year, we were supposed to go to Patagonia for our five year anniversary in May and Thailand for my thirtieth birthday in July, but had to cancel both due to COVID," Kayla commented.

Pets in the Hinkle family include two dogs that they adopted. "We have two precious, snuggly dogs named



Denny and Kayla Hinkle, both RN's, work at Norman Regional Healthplex, focusing and caring for their heart patients.

Wrigley and Addison. They were both adopted from the Oklahoma City Humane Society. Wrigley is three and she is a Leopard Catahoula,

She is hyper, the attention hog and jealous. Addison is two and she is an Australian Cattle dog. She is shy, a little laid back and skittish," Kayla said.

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