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Rachel Wainscott, RN, director of nursing at Fairmont Skilled Nursing and Therapy, located in Oklahoma City, says COVID-19 has brought out the best in the nursing staff.

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Some of the most compassionate people in the world can be found working in nursing homes. At Fairmont Skilled Nursing and Therapy in Oklahoma City, the nursing staff contributes their skills to protect the most vulnerable of humanity, said Rachel Wainscott, RN, director of nursing. The facility is a nursing home with a skilled unit and a memory care unit.

The nurses and staff are hard workers who treat their coworkers and residents as an extension of their family. It's more than a job. Wainscott said her staff has been diligent working overtime during the months of COVID-19.

See PROTECTORS Page 2

COVID 19 Takes Physical, Emotional Toll on Caregivers



Kerri Bayer, the Chief Nurse Executive for INTEGRIS Health, explains the physical and emotional toll the pandemic is having on our caregivers.

There is no denying that the last nine months have been very difficult for our caregivers. COVID-19 is a devastating and relentless disease that knows no rules or boundaries. The medical community is working day and night to unlock its mysteries and we're learning more each day on how to treat those infected - yet the death toll continues to rise. Our caregivers are exhausted from the rigorous donning and doffing of personal protective equipment while in the back of their minds is fear that they could be contracting and or bringing this virus home

See TOLL Page 3

PROTECTORS

Continued from Page 1

"They all work more hours than they probably want to. But they do it because they love the residents," she said while nearby a family outside social distancing from a loved one celebrating her birthday party with them through a protected plexiglass shield with an open top. They seemed to be enjoying the sunlight.

An elderly woman outside the booth placed her hand on the plexiglass to comfort her loved one as they touched opposite sides of the thin barrier. "We love you. See you later," children and family members said when leaving.

It's hard for the families because they can't touch, Wainscott said.

"Sometimes it's hard to hear in that booth, but we make with what we can you know, but at least they get to see their families," Wainscott continued. "They really miss their families, and it's been hard on the residents."

Nurses have their individual ways to cope with the threat of coronavirus. The season has been exhausting, so some of them like Wainscott go workout during their

leisure time.

"They're coping well now. I think it's getting better," she said. "We had an outbreak in April of this year, so we kind of got it down early, hopefully. Now people are coping better, but at first it was hard. Everybody was overwhelmed. We had a lot of staff turnover because everybody was scared. When we got it in our facility, some quit, some came back when they realized, 'Okay, we can do this.'"

Wainscott said her exercise time with lunch helps alleviate middle-day stressors. She will run or do whatever she needs to meet the challenges of the season.

Her career was motivated by her mother who was also nurse. Wainscott's grandmother had a lot of health issues that she helped her mother with. Wainscott has often been told that she has a nurturing personality.

"I love people so much. My heart is meant to be around people and work with people," she said.

Wainscott earned her degree as a registered nurse at Rose State College in Midwest City. She was a certified nurse aide before becoming a licensed practical nurse five years

ago.

"I think everybody should get their CNA first. Start at the bottom," she said. "I understand my CNAs better."

She had worked in skilled therapy as an RN before coming to Fairmont Skilled Nursing and Therapy and loved her older residents. A couple of friends recommended Fairmont to her.

"It was a very good atmosphere whenever I got interviewed," she said.

Wainscott said she hopes more staff comes to nursing homes and hospitals in 2021. That's everybody's wish. The vaccine will help, she added.

Nursing staffs in hospitals and nursing homes commonly have people working double shifts seven times a week this year, Wainscott said.

"I've been here almost 21 years and I love them. They're just like a mother or brother for me. I have no one. I have no sister, so they're all my family," said Nina Perry, CNA.

Staff is hard to find right now — for everybody, Wainscott said.

Bonuses are offered to attract hard working staff members to the


nursing profession. Fairmont ends up getting what it needs, but it's not easy.


Wainscott remains grateful for the many good outcomes in patient care she has experienced in 2020. Life has one many battles over COVID.

"It's always a celebration of course when people get over COVID right now. That's always our biggest celebration," she said. "Also, when we see our residents getting stronger — doing things independently — that's always something we celebrate. When we see them walking, and a month before they were on hospice — we've had incident where somebody has come back from hospice when they were only supposed to live a week. And now he's up walking and eating and doing everything he can. Those are little things that are definitely rewards for us."



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TOLL

Continued from Page 1

to their loved ones. They are witnessing significant mortalities and many say they have seen more death in the last month than they have in their entire careers. They are literally doing everything they can to try to save as many patients as possible. They pour their heart and soul into each patient but at the end of the day, they know some will not make it out of their unit.

With family members not being allowed inside the hospital for safety concerns, our caregivers are playing dual roles. They are not only caregivers to these patients, they are also their support system. They are comforting patients when they are scared, hugging them when they are lonely and unfortunately holding their hands as the pass away. Our caregivers serve as the liaison between our patients and their families worrying at home. They facilitate phone calls and video conferences when they can and become emotionally

invested. It is physically, mentally and spiritually exhausting.

While the recent approval of the COVID-19 vaccine is rejuvenating and uplifting, it will still take quite some time and will require majority compliance to see the true impact. In the meantime, the models indicate that it will get worse before it gets better. Our caregivers are bracing for what is to come.

Support from the community is imperative to help get them through these dark days. Anything helps. Cards, notes, care packages, prayers. They are all meaningful and appreciated. These tokens are sometimes the catalysts that get them through their next shift. It's amazing to watch their faces light up when they receive even the simplest gesture. Anyone interested in supporting our INTEGRIS Health caregivers can make a monetary gift to the Caregiver Relief Fund at integrisrelief.org or reach out to the INTEGRIS Health Foundation team at giving@integrisok.com to discuss other giving opportunities.

AHCA/NCAL Issues Statement Regarding COVID Relief

The American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL), representing more than 14,000 nursing homes and assisted living communities across the country that provide care to approximately five million people each year, released the following statement in response to the pending COVID relief package.

The following statement is attributable to Mark Parkinson, president and CEO of AHCA/NCAL: "While we appreciate the difficulty in reaching a bipartisan compromise, we are disappointed that Congress could not strike a deal that recognizes the dire situation our long term care residents and staff are facing right now. Due to soaring community spread, nursing homes are experiencing a record-breaking number of cases and deaths—worse than the spring. Even with a vaccine on its way, it will likely take months to fully vaccinate our residents and staff, as well as the remaining public. Facilities will not be able to return to normal for some time, meaning providers need ongoing support with PPE, testing and staffing.

"Meanwhile, nearly two-thirds of long term care facilities are operating at a loss, and the additional funds slated for the Provider Relief Fund for all health care providers in this legislation are minimal. Hundreds of facilities are in danger of closing their doors permanently and uprooting the frail seniors they care for. Congress must do more in the new year by directing specific aid to long term care. We owe it to our nation's seniors and our health care heroes."



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WELCOME TO THE WORLD: LABOR AND DELIVERY

Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Virginia Hubble, RN, BSN can be found at the Women's Center/Integrus Baptist Medical Center. Beginning a job as a nursing assistant/med technician in the medical field in 1977, her job soon turned into a career. Graduating from University of Oklahoma, Virginia received her bachelor's degree. "I initially thought I would work in the newborn area of Children's Hospital. It wasn't long after that, I was asked by the supervisor if I would consider working in Labor and Delivery. I fell in love with the mother/childcare and I have never considered anything else," Virginia commented.

Growing up in Ponca City, OK, Virginia is the fifth child of ten children. "Being a middle child, I caught myself wanting

to take care of everyone! My parents worked hard to provide for their children and they wanted to make sure all of us had an education. It was my mother that influenced me to be a nurse. My mother knew it was important for all of us to be well educated, leading us to successful careers. She always told me that I would make a good nurse. I followed her advice and feel very fortunate that I found my calling," Virginia said. "She was right!"

"Another person that had an influence on me was actually my high school choir teacher, Robert Moore. He placed challenges before us that required hard work, dedication and the desire to strive for excellence not only in performance but in every

aspect of life. He made a profound impact on my belief that impossible things could be possible," Virginia said.

"My rewards as a nurse are too numerous to count. It fills my soul to attend to a young mother, giving her the reassurance that I will be by her side to aide her in bringing her new baby into the world. I love being present to witness the love between two people blossom instantaneously once the child arrives. I feel so honored to be a part of one of the most important days a of a women's life," Virginia commented.

Virginia explained how there are also challenges that appear everyday. "I always enter the hospital with a silent prayer to protect my patients and

coworkers, to guide our minds, hands and heart to make the best decisions and provide the very best care to others. I also hold close the relationships I have with the physicians, scrub techs, unit coordinators, housekeepers and other staff members. I have spent a lot of time with them and consider each one as family."

"Some people desire to have an administrative position but my desire is the bedside of the patient." Virginia said that she was overwhelmed to be given the award from the March of Dimes this year, receiving the highest honor; The Lifetime Achievement award, given to her by her church the year of the OKC bombing. "How strange to have received

See MILESTONE Page 5

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MILESTONE

Continued from Page 4

two awards in two momentous times," Virginia said. "There are countless nurses, women and men, who go to work each day and display exemplary attitudes, compassion and care to others. To be selected as one of them is truly an honor," she added.

When Virginia is not working at the hospital, she enjoys spending time with her husband, Dennis, of forty two years. They have three sons and two daughters, two daughter-in-laws, one grandson, and another grandbaby expected April 2021.

My life as a nurse? "I am a leader. I have had the privilege of training many nurses over the years and have been excited to see these woman excel in the nursing profession. It is fulfilling to see young nurses develop their skills and critical thinking to provide excellent care to their patients. I feel like it is also important to promote a good morale in the workforce so I enjoy the camaraderie we share amongst ourselves in having fun at work an outside of work." Virginia stated. "I am also a follower at times when I may not agree with things related to change but I know I must give change a try before I make comments or suggestions for a more efficient or practical application. Nursing is not



Virginia Hubble provides love and comfort to the women as they experience the most exciting day of their life; the day their baby is born!

something one can do without care. Just as a master craftsman hones his skills, a nurse also works over time to master her/his skills to truly develop an art of nursing," Virginia added.

To sum up Virginia's life in three words? "Family, faith and friendship," Virginia replied.

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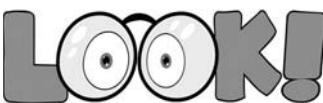
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Oklahoma's
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OU College of Nursing Receives Anonymous \$2 Million Gift

A \$2 million gift to the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center paves the way for expansion and technical innovations at a time when nursing education has never been more vital. The donation makes possible a more than \$5 million budget that includes contributions by OU and other groups. The gift will fund a project to expand the previously funded Forni Clinic, adding a first-of-its-kind simulation center, a state-of-the-art clinical assessment lab and a universal-design apartment home for nursing students' education. The budget also includes an endowment to sustain the learning space in perpetuity.

"We are incredibly thankful for this extraordinary gift, which will enhance a learning space that expertly

prepares OU nursing students to have an immediate impact on those in their care," said OU President Joseph Harroz Jr. "For more than 100 years, OU nurses have actively fulfilled our university's core purpose of changing lives. This gift to expand the Forni Clinic will broaden this work even further, supporting our efforts to transform health care in Oklahoma, and beyond, through education, research and clinical care."

The Forni Clinic is located on the second floor of the OU College of Nursing and simulates an outpatient clinic with seven rooms equipped with examination tables, diagnostic equipment, desks and cabinetry to foster learning and clinical skills development. This gift will expand the clinic to provide students with a 21st century learning experience.

The design of the proposed expansion will further replicate a clinical environment, including a state-of-the-art electronic medical record learning center. Each area will be equipped with video recording capabilities to support student learning and clinical evaluation.

An external consultant's recent evaluation of the college's use of simulation along with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic brought to light the great need to expand the Forni Clinic.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges for nursing programs nationwide, as access to clinical environments has become limited, albeit necessary," said Julie Hoff, dean of the OU College of Nursing. "This transformational gift will be used to create a top-tier learning environment, ensuring that the OU College of Nursing not only remains competitive but that our graduates are prepared for the real-world experiences they will face as frontline health care professionals."

The expanded Forni Clinic, including the proposed simulation center, clinical assessment lab and home environment, will serve as a multi-function learning setting where students can practice procedural skills and conduct complex patient scenarios in a simulated hospital, clinic or home location using human patient simulators, static mannequins or standardized patients. These state-of-the-art facilities will also enable faculty to better prepare students for complex, fast-paced and rare situations when seconds count to ensure optimal health outcomes.

The expansion will increase the quality and use of simulation across the curriculum and encompass the entire continuum of care, including telehealth, point-of-care testing and



remote patient monitoring that will enhance students' abilities to integrate new technologies in the management and care of individuals and families, both face-to-face and remotely. Together, the Forni Clinic, simulation center, clinical assessment lab and home environment will provide nursing students with a modern, safe setting to build clinical competence, self-confidence, reflective practice, teamwork and inter-professional collaboration using real-life situations and without risking harm to others.

This investment by the anonymous donor will drive the vision and strategy that will continue OU's pursuit of clinical, educational and research excellence at both the state and national levels. The expansion also exhibits OU's commitment to convergent research, a strategy outlined in OU's research strategic framework aimed at tackling complex problems that impact our society by working across academic disciplines.

The Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center is the largest nursing program in Oklahoma, with more than 12,000 alumni and an annual enrollment of approximately 725 undergraduate and graduate students. The College of Nursing leverages its location at the OU Health Sciences Center campus where training opportunities across a diverse clinical landscape are present at Oklahoma's only comprehensive academic health system — OU Health.

To make a contribution supporting the Ziegler College of Nursing expansion, visit link.ou.edu/nursingsim.



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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2020 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

OU College of Nursing launches BSN-DNP program

Long known for its history of innovation and producing some of the state's best in nursing, the OU Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing took the next step last fall, announcing a new BSN-DNP program.

"Really it's limitless what these graduates can do and we're so excited to be preparing them at the doctoral level," said Program Director Amy Costner-Lark, DNP, APRN. "We're very excited to get this first group in."

The BSN-DNP program allows nursing students to earn their doctorate of nursing practice after earning a bachelor of science degree in nursing. Students in the BSN-DNP program will focus on advanced nursing competencies.

"The most important thing to remember is our healthcare system is increasing in complexity and patients are sicker and going home sooner than they ever have before," Costner-Lark said. "The program prepares nurses to practice at the highest level to ensure quality outcomes, to provide cost-effective care and use evidence-based practice. We're creating high-quality clinicians and high-quality nurse specialists and high-quality nurse executives to transform the health of Oklahoma and the nation."

We anticipate by 2025, a DNP will be the required educational standard to enter practice for advanced practice nurses. The addition of the program helps move the OU College of Nursing in line with other medical specialties requiring doctorates for advanced practice, such as pharmacy, physical therapy and audiology.

The BSN-DNP program will offer three specialty pathways: Family Nurse Practitioner; Adult/Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist; and Executive Leadership.

"Given the increasing complexity of patients in a rapidly transforming healthcare system, preparing nurses to practice at the highest level is critical to ensure quality outcomes," Costner-Lark said. "Offering a BSN-DNP program is aligned with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing position statement on the



OU College Nursing Dean Julie Hoff says the new BSN-DNP program is one of the most robust in the state.

DNP as entry-level for advanced practice nurses. The University of Oklahoma has a rich history of preparing exceptional nurses, and this program will continue to provide high-quality clinicians who focus on evidence-based practice and quality improvement for the citizens of Oklahoma and beyond."

Julie A. Hoff, PhD, MPH, RN serves as the dean of the college of nursing and notes the DNP is uniquely positioned to support innovation and entrepreneurship within the profession and will help guide healthcare delivery into the future.

"Given the current health status of Oklahoma the DNP program will really provide us with the ability to advance health sooner in the state of Oklahoma," Hoff said. "This will

really answer that call as well as advance the care that is delivered.

"It's not just care at the level of individuals it's care across families, communities and populations."

Costner-Lark said OU students have a wealth of resources at their disposal throughout their journey.

"We're certainly a leader in education in the state of Oklahoma and also a leader in healthcare," Costner-Lark said. "Our partnership with OU Medical, Inc. not only gives us access to high quality research that's being performed but also opportunities for our students to train in a cutting-edge hospital and clinics across the state.

"It's been a very exciting process to develop this program."

One of the nation's few academic health centers with seven professional

colleges — Allied Health, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health and Graduate Studies — the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center serves approximately 4,000 students in more than 70 undergraduate and graduate degree programs on campuses in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

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 Nursing – Advancing Health Sooner

*Samantha Acosta,
future Air Force BSN, RN*



Highlights:

- Nationally ranked by U.S. News & World Report
- New BSN - DNP Program
- Advanced Practice Board Certification and NCLEX pass rates above state and national averages
- PhD scholarship opportunities – up to \$150,000
- Study Abroad opportunities
- Interprofessional experiences across colleges and campuses
- Faculty-led practice and research mentoring across Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programs
- The College of Nursing is one of seven OU Health Sciences Center colleges
- One college, three locations: Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Lawton



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NURSE TALK



Dasher because in my spare time, I love to run outdoors!



Rebecca Pierce, RN
Educator

Cupid describes me the best. I am very affectionate and I love bringing people together.



Christina Jackson, LPN

Which one of Santa's reindeer best describes you and why?



Carter
Healthcare

I would choose Blitzen. I'm always early and like to stay on task, getting stuff done.



Shonda Miller, RN

I am a very loving person and am actually notorious for playing Cupid.



Monica Hernandez, LPN

Watch as INTEGRIS Southwest Medical Center Caregivers

INTEGRIS Southwest Medical Center started vaccinating its caregivers with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine on Tuesday, Dec. 15. Ryan Griswold, D.O., and Travis Esposito, D.O., both emergency room physicians, were the first to receive the shot at the hospital.

Charles Maines, RN, works in the COVID intensive care unit at INTEGRIS Southwest. He was a patient himself earlier in the pandemic after catching the virus. At one point, he was hospitalized and listed in critical condition. He was off work for three months before returning to the trenches. He was one of the first in line to receive the vaccine as well. You can watch his vaccination [here](#).

David Chansolme, M.D., the medical director of infection prevention at INTEGRIS Health, has been vocal about the seriousness of COVID-19 since the very beginning. He participated in the Moderna clinical trial but doesn't know if he received the placebo or not. So he too was vaccinated this week at INTEGRIS Southwest. You can watch his vaccination [here](#).

John Adams is the Chief Hospital Executive of INTEGRIS Southwest Medical Center. He says distribution of the vaccine has rejuvenated his staff. "We have been caring for a large number of COVID-19 patients since very early on in the pandemic. Our caregivers have seen the virus cause death and pain not only among the community, but even within our own team members

and families. They are exhausted both physically and emotionally. The vaccine provides some much needed optimism, and helps re-energize all of us to keep pushing."

But health officials warn we're not out of the woods just yet. It will take several more months and majority compliance to see the true impact of the vaccine. In the meantime, we need to continue to wear masks, wash our hands and watch our distance from others.



Ryan Griswold, D.O. and Travis Esposito, D.O.

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SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

Cases	282,587
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date (As of 12/24/20)	2,314,672
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date (As of 12/24/20)	2,591,908
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facility Hospitalizations (As of 12/24/20)	1,619
Other Types of Facilities Hospitalizations (As of 12/24/20)	110
Total Cumulative Hospitalizations	16,336
Total Cumulative Deaths	2,383

- As of this advisory, there are 282,587 cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- 2,736 is today's 7-day rolling average for the number of new cases reported.
- There are 13 additional deaths identified to report.
 - *One in Adair County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
 - *One in Canadian County, one male in the 36-49 age group.
 - *One in Cleveland County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - *One in Comanche County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
 - *One in Johnston County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
 - *One in McClain County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - *Two in Noble County, two females in the 65 or older age group.
 - *One in Oklahoma County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - *One in Pontotoc County, one male in the 50-64 age group.
 - *One in Pottawatomie County, one male in the 65 or older age group.
 - *One in Tulsa County, one male in the 50-64 age group.
 - *One in Washington County, one female in the 65 or older age group.
- There are 2,383 total deaths in the state.
- Additional hospitalization data can be found in the Hospital Tiers report, published evenings Monday through Friday.
- For more information, visit <https://oklahoma.gov/covid19.html>.

*The total includes laboratory information provided to OSDH at the time of the report. As a result, counts are subject to change. Total counts may not reflect unique individuals.

***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 2020-12-28 at 7:00 a.m.

OU College of Nursing Announces Distinguished Alumna for 2020

Kathleen Parker, director of the Nurse Residency and Training programs at the Oklahoma City Veterans Affairs Health Care System, has been selected to receive the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

The College of Nursing's Distinguished Alumni award was established by the Alumni Board of Directors to recognize graduates who demonstrate "outstanding leadership related to the field of nursing or health care" and who have made "significant clinical, academic, research or other contributions to nursing or health care on a local, state, national or international level."

Kathleen Parker, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, earned her bachelor of science degree in nursing from OU in 1986, followed by a master of science degree in nursing in 1996. She was the first graduate of the OU College of Nursing's PhD program in 2011.

In her 25 years with the Veterans



Kathleen Parker, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC.

Administration, Dr. Parker has held various program management roles. Currently, she has oversight of the VA Nursing Academy Program, the Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency, Nurse Practitioner Graduate Trainees, Nurse Practitioner Residency, and the RN Transition to Practice. In 2019, she created a business case for a Nurse Practitioner Residency Program to attract nurse practitioners to the VA. Along with other stakeholders, Dr. Parker was successful in attracting federal funding to establish the state's first and only Nurse Practitioners Residency Program at that time.

Dr. Parker is the president elect for the Association of Black Nursing Faculty Inc.; past chairperson, member and consult for the Evidence-based Practice Field Advisory Group (ONS VHA EBP); and she volunteers for the Food Bank for the Heartland, Oklahoma City Public Schools and the VHA wheelchair games.



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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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