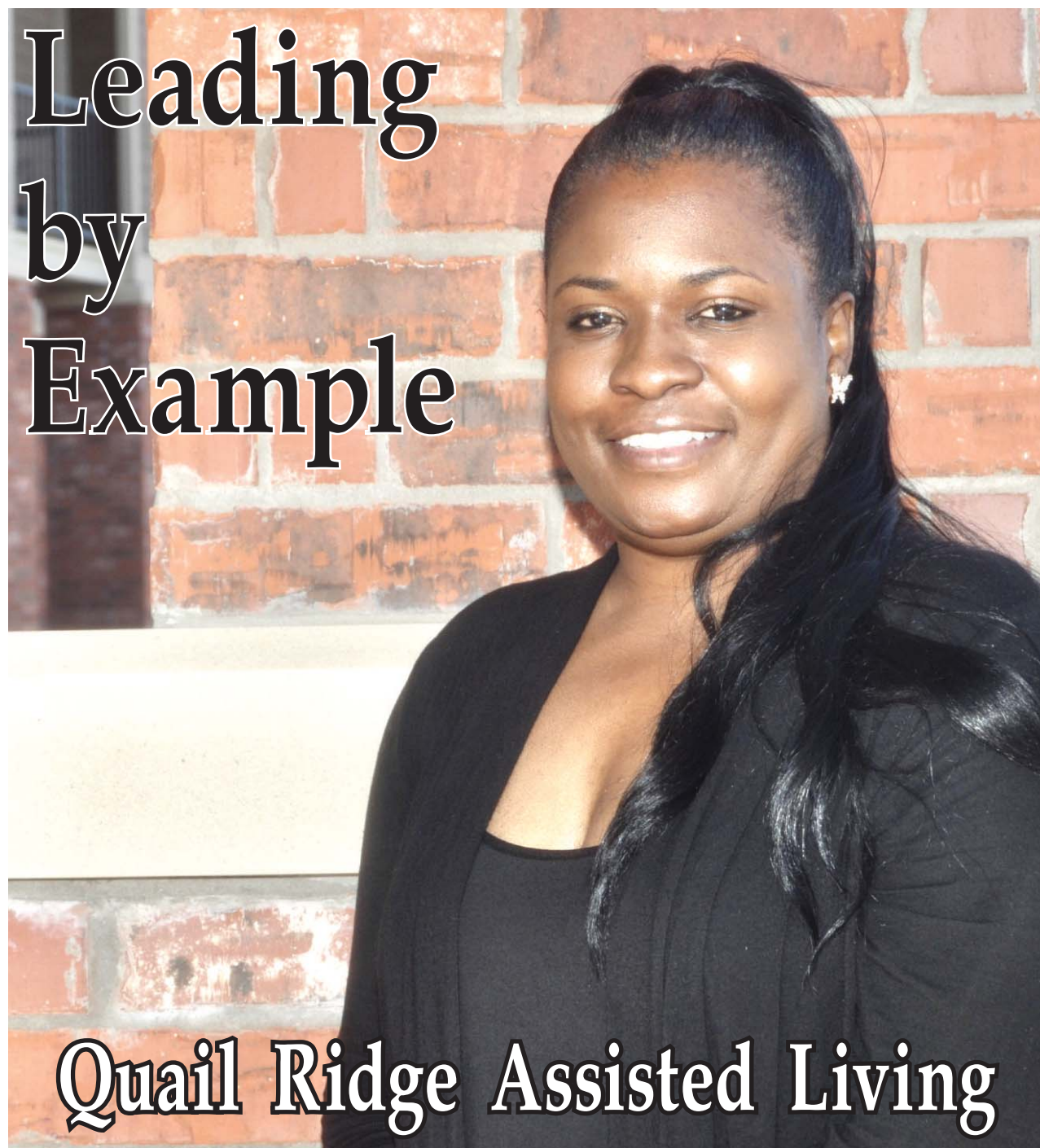


## Leading by Example



## Quail Ridge Assisted Living

Being a good nurse takes a lot of hard work. Leading by example is Tiffany Bryant, LPN and Wellness Director of Nursing at Quail Ridge Assisted Living.

by Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Quail Ridge Assisted Living is an assisted living facility located in Oklahoma City, OK, that assists Seniors in their daily living and has been located in NW OKC for over twenty years. Caring for one hundred fifty-four residents are the utmost professionals. One of the unique amenities is the awesome dining experience that is offered, sitting by one of the many fireplaces, including happy hour!

Robert Marchbanks is the Executive Director and Tiffany Bryant, LPN, is the Wellness Director of

Nursing. Tiffany has been a nurse for twenty-one years and has been with Quail Ridge Assisted Living since August 2020. "I am a nurse because there is nothing else that I would rather do," Tiffany said. "I spent most of my nursing career in Long Term Care and this was something that I had never done so I wanted to give the senior living a try. I enjoy working here and I know that it is a good fit

See BRYANT Page 2

## Nurse Refresher Course Designed to Update Nursing Knowledge and Skills

For more than two decades, there has been a shortage of licensed practical nurses and registered nurses in Oklahoma. Today, Oklahoma does not have enough nurses to meet the needs of critically ill COVID-19 patients and continue to meet the in-patient and out-patient needs of medical-surgical, pediatric, neonatal and other types of patients, too. Health system nurse executives and their academic partners are collaborating to address this acute shortage.

One strategy being used in Oklahoma to increase the number of available registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) is the offering of a Nurse Refresher Course by the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma in collaboration with Oklahoma Career Tech System. This course is designed to update nursing knowledge and skills to meet continuing qualifications for practice as required by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing.

Recently, based on changes in policy made by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing, the Nurse Refresher Course has been revised to use a competency-based framework in which specific knowledge and skill outcomes are used to evaluate achievement. This methodology recognizes that students learn differently and may require a different amount of time to achieve competency requirements of the course.

The updated Nurse Refresher Course allows students to move through the course at their own pace, while focusing on their specific learning needs to meet continuing qualifications for practice as required by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing. After completing the online didactic

See REFRESHER Page 3



BRYANT

Continued from Page 1

for me.”

“I graduated from Nursing school in Dothan, Alabama in 1990. My first job as a nurse was working in the emergency room as a triage nurse in Dothan, Alabama. Even when I was a little girl, I wanted to be a nurse. I have always had a caring heart to serve others. I have a strong feeling of empathy and I think that is something that will always be with me,” Tiffany stated.

One of Tiffany’s biggest reward is taking care of those that can’t take care of themselves. “It gives me such a wonderful feeling, knowing that I am helping someone, whether it be big or small. The fact of helping others has always made me feel good.”

“One of the biggest challenges is explaining the pandemic to the residents and why we have to do what we have to do. Of course, that is also a problem with some of the resident’s family and to a big number of people, it is heartbreaking and draining. It just breaks my heart sometimes when the resident or their family just don’t understand that what we are doing is for their best interest.”

“If anyone influenced me to be a nurse, it was my grandmother. She was an amazing soul and seemed to lead by example. I wanted to be like her; serving others with a happy heart. I think I followed in my grandmother’s footsteps,” Tiffany said with a smile. One of the reasons that Tiffany feels like she was meant to be a nurse, was the fact that she has always had a caring heart, “I am definitely a people person. I have always wanted to serve others and help them in any way I can; making them smile. I was taught that being kind to someone else is free and kindness will go a long way. I wear my heart on my sleeve and I can be very sensitive at times but I believe it makes me a stronger and better person. I always see the good in someone, hoping for the best,” Tiffany commented.

Asking Tiffany what advice she would give to someone going into the medical field, she replied, “I would tell them that they will know if they are meant to be a nurse by the way they have a way of wanting to care for others. They will know from the very beginning; that certain feeling of being drawn to care for others. They will also need to be flexible because certain situations will happen at the last minute. Plans change.”

Tiffany is most proud of her two wonderful kids; Ashley who is an Army Veteran and son Jaylin who is active duty in the Army. “My greatest reward in life has been the success of my children,” Tiffany said. “Being a good nurse is one thing but being a good mother is priceless. It has been challenging but seeing my children grow up to be men and women has been the greatest joy of my life,” she added. How has the coronavirus changed your life? “Taking extra precautions everywhere I go had been a real change in my daily life. I think one of the biggest changes that I have seen is the lack of communication between residents, their families and all of the staff members here at Quail Ridge.” She replied. “Lets hope it all changes soon.” Summing up her life in three words, Tiffany replied, “Keeps Getting Better.”

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## REFRESHER

Continued from Page 1

portion of the course, students may now complete the skills and clinical experience portion of the course in as little as 40 hours. Using a competency-based framework and reducing the number of clinical hours decreases learning and time barriers and potentially increases the number of available registered RNs and LPNs for Oklahoma.

Oklahoma nurses seeking to return to practice and/or refresh their nursing knowledge and skills should review the Oklahoma Board of Nursing Instructions for reinstatement or return to active status of RN or LP single-state license (<https://nursing.ok.gov/reinstateappl07.pdf>) and the Oklahoma Board of Nursing Refresher Course Policy (<https://nursing.ok.gov/refresher.pdf>). Contacting the Oklahoma Board of Nursing is also encouraged to ensure enrollment in the Nurse Refresher Course meets the continuing qualifications for

practice requirements for one's particular situation. To register for the Nurse Refresher Program, contact an approved Career Tech Center and complete an application. Additional information about the Oklahoma Board of Nursing Board-Approved Refresher Courses can be found at <https://www.okcareertech.org/educators/health-careers-education/documents/Nurse.Refresher.Flyer.October.2020.pdf>. Course fee is \$2,000 and includes access to the online course, lab and simulated clinical experience components.

With the COVID-19 pandemic surge, creating a way for nurses to update their knowledge and skills and meet the continuing qualifications for practice is one strategy nurse leaders have implemented to increase the number of available registered nurses (RNs) and licensed practical nurses (LPNs) for Oklahoma.



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# CAREERS IN NURSING

## A NURSE'S CALLING : LPN CHOOSES TO WORK WITH COVID PATIENTS

by James Coburn - staff writer

Melody Webb's career at The Timbers Skilled Nursing & Therapy has been a surprising one, she said. She has witnessed patients recover from COVID-19 who were once near death.

The coronavirus is a highly contagious disease, so patients living with COVID don't have the comfort of their families in the room with them. And Webb has been quite familiar by working two or three shifts a week with patients on the COVID hall, she said.

She wears the N95 mask with a surgical mask worn on top of it for extra protection, along with a face shield, and a gown and gloves. Afterwards, her personal protective equipment is discarded due to contamination.

Webb wears new equipment each time she enters a room

where a patient is diagnosed with COVID-19. Meticulous hand washing and best practices have proven to be beneficial to the staff and patients.

She sanitizes her work area by wiping it down at the beginning of her work shift each day.

"Whenever we first got the outbreak originally, I volunteered to work on that side because even a lot of the nurses and aides didn't want to work with it," she said. "I think my strength just comes from God and wanting to help my patients get better. I really do everything that I can to still have them feel a little bit of normalcy. They get frustrated and they get sad and depressed. I just try my best to be there for them."

But COVID patients have a lot to live for. Many of them recover

and Webb has witnessed patients recover their health.

"Some of them have been pretty much at death's door and they'll bounce back again. It's pretty amazing."

Patients have been in their early 50s and as old as 102. It helps the nursing staff to see patients fight for their recovery.

"We're their fighting with them, and it gives us hope that they're going to make it through. It's a wonderful feeling to see them thriving whenever they were just so awfully sick with COVID. It's kind of like you celebrate the little wins there," she said.

Family members are updated regularly about the lives of their loved ones. Many of the COVID patients have tele-visits from their rooms with their families and

friends.

"They also like to do the window visit," she said. "And we'll get them up next to the window and open up the shade there."

The staff tries to include COVID patients in activities whenever possible because life becomes very lonely for them, Webb said. She has even taken her cell phone for a patient to speak to their family members on it, Webb said. But they don't hold the phones.

Patients will also give thanks by smiling with their eyes.

"We get lots and lots of thanks from our residents. With COVID it does make it a little bit more difficult to express smiles and stuff. They've got masks on and it's hard to see

See LPN Page 5



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## LPN

Continued from Page 4

somebody smile, but they're very appreciative to us," Webb said. "It's just very challenging for us with all the equipment that we need to stay safe and keep our residents safe," Webb said. "It makes it a little more difficult, but I think it makes it more worth it, also."

She has found a lot of support for health care workers at The Timbers. The community is recognizing the dedicated work of nurses as they respond to patients' needs. Patients' family members have expressed their gratitude by bringing the nurses and staff comfort food for their compassionate care. She only wishes that the entire community would wear masks to help health care workers remain safe from COVID-19.

"I encourage everybody to wear a mask," she said. "I mean I know the percentage of recoveries is high for the virus, but I don't think people are considering the elderly are immune compromised people that have a tougher time with fighting it off."

Webb came to The Timbers a year ago after receiving the LPN training in Tennessee and where she worked with geriatrics patients with special needs. In Tennessee she also worked at a skilled facility. When she and her husband moved to Edmond, Webb found The Timbers a convenient place to work with her children attending grade school across the street at Orvis Risner Elementary.

She goes an extra mile by



Melody Webb, LPN, volunteered to work with patients fighting COVID-19 earlier in the year as patients were admitted to The Timbers Skilled Nursing & Therapy, located in Edmond.

adding a sense of normalcy to the working environment during an unprecedented time. When working during Thanksgiving Day, Webb wore a head band with turkeys on it, and the activities director passed out trail mix to the residents.

"We tried to have a lot of fun with it," she said.



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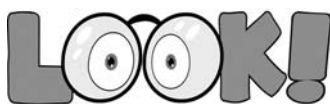
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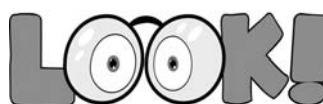
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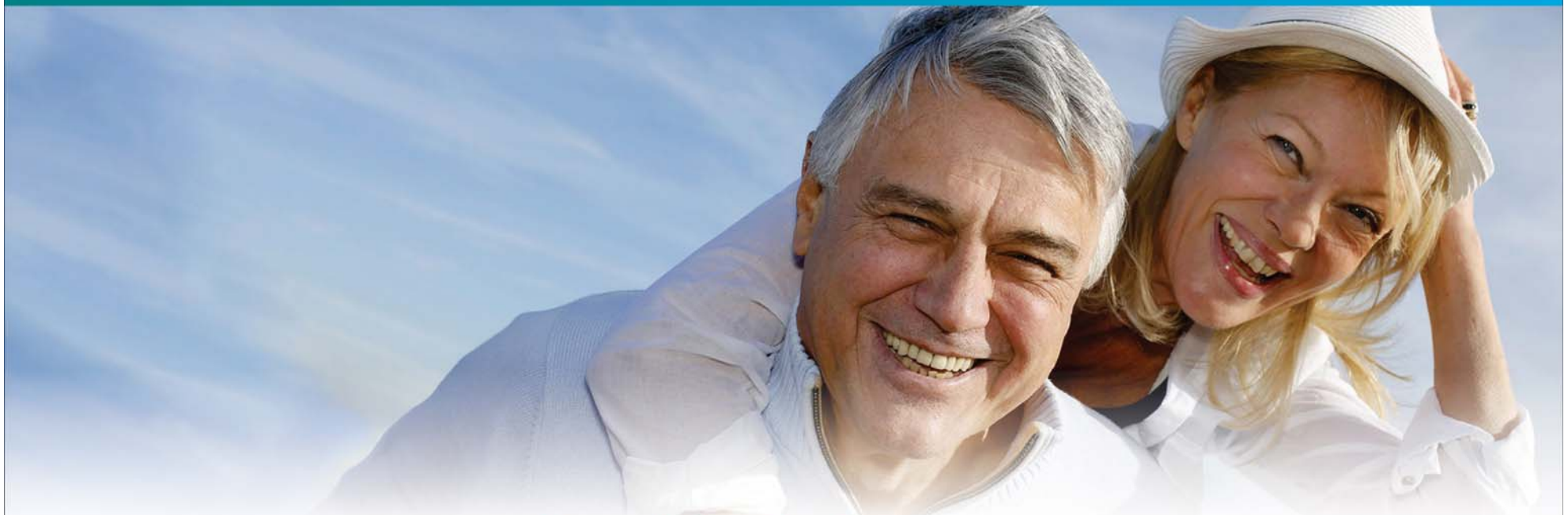


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# Health Care Training is a Core Area of Francis Tuttle

Among the most highly regarded of the many career training programs offered at Francis Tuttle Technology Center are those in the health sciences. From programs for adults looking for a new career, to those designed to prepare high school students to earn a living while exploring other health career options, there are many available to choose from to help people who are considering pursuing a career in the helping professions of health care. Francis Tuttle has experienced faculty who have worked extensively in the industry, with state of the art equipment used in health and medical facilities throughout the metro area and around the country, and a dedicated focus to help fill a looming skills gap. Below is a brief description of each of Francis Tuttle's program offerings.

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adult and high school students is an exciting opportunity to begin exploring a health care pathway and see what careers are available with additional training. Students gain knowledge about the broad spectrum of health professions. Through the program, students can obtain certification as a Nurse Aide (CNA) and an Advanced Unlicensed Assistant (AUA).

The unique **Respiratory Care** program for adult students works cooperatively with Oklahoma City Community College, whereupon completion, students receive a Certificate of Completion from Francis Tuttle and an Associate of Applied Science degree from OCCC. Students are trained to assist with the treatment of individuals with pulmonary and cardiac disorders, and obtain eligibility to take the national examinations to earn a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT)

credential and apply for an Oklahoma Respiratory Care Practitioners License.

The **Practical Nursing** program prepares adult students to provide quality health care in a variety of settings. Three enrollment options are available to best fit student needs: full-time, blended online, and the 1+1 program. Upon completion, students are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) to become a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

The unique **Orthotic & Prosthetic Technician** program, along with certification in Pedorthics, each for adult students, is a hands on program to prepare students to assist the disabled by fabricating the orthopedic braces (orthoses) and artificial limbs (prostheses) necessary for their rehabilitation. Pedorthics offers specialized training to manage comprehensive pedorthic patient care for all injuries and pathologies involving patient feet. Upon completion of the program, students are eligible to take the American Board of Certification (ABC) national certification exam to be recognized as a Certified Technician

in Prosthetics and Orthotics (CTPO). After training and one thousand hours of work experience, students may take the Pedorthic Certification Exam (ABC or BOC) to be a Certified Pedorthist (C.ped).

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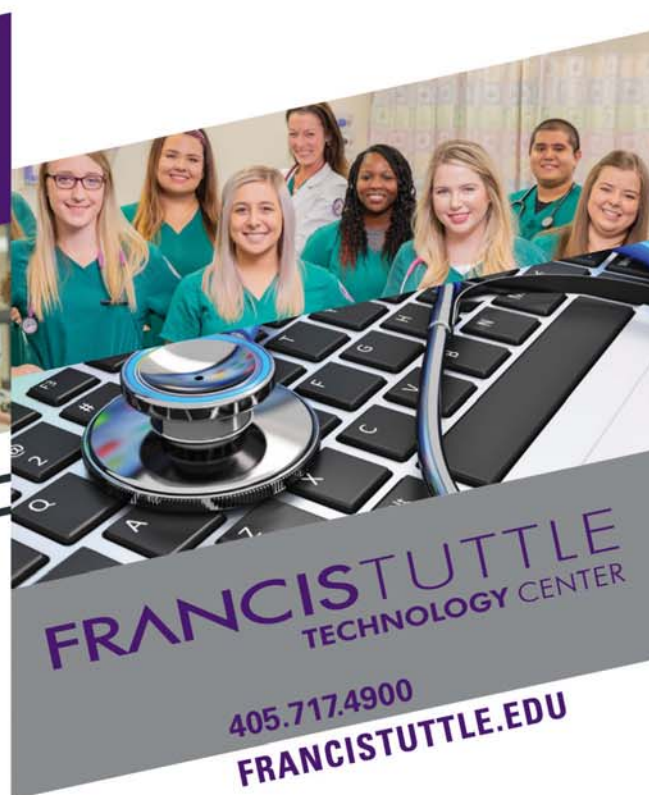
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# OMRF, Stanford research collaboration awarded \$2.6 million in funding

The National Institutes of Health has awarded the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation and Stanford University \$2.6 million to use tiny fish to investigate the genetic origins of several human diseases.

OMRF scientist Gaurav Varshney, Ph.D., and Stanford scientist Philippe Mourrain, Ph.D., received a four-year grant to use zebrafish to study how small genetic variations affect gene expression and lead to sleep disorders, cardiovascular disease, eye diseases, obesity and skin pigmentation abnormalities in humans.

More than 95% of genetic variations associated with human disease are in the non-protein coding regions of DNA. Although the variants' role in disease is

known, which gene each one regulates has eluded researchers. Using scalpel-like precision of the gene-editing tool CRISPR, Varshney hopes to change that.

"Simply put, we can't tell if a certain gene, or the one next to it, is responsible for a disease," said Varshney, who joined OMRF from the National Human Genome Research Institute at the NIH in 2017. "CRISPR allows us to zero-in on genes more than ever before."

The researchers will investigate 18 genetic variants identified as conferring risks for diseases in humans. The paperclip-sized zebrafish share 70% of humans' genetic code. By introducing genetic changes in the fish that correspond to the changes



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Gaurav Varshney, Ph.D., uses zebrafish to study the genetic origins of human diseases.

seen in humans one-by-one with CRISPR, the scientists will learn which genes are regulated by the variants. Ultimately, the genes causing human disease will be identified.

More than 80% of human genes known to be associated with human disease have a counterpart in zebrafish. Because the fish reproduce frequently, develop quickly and are transparent, scientists can easily monitor their developing cells and see in days what would take years to observe in humans.

"Thanks to Dr. Varshney's pioneering and unique work in CRISPR gene editing since 2013, Stanford and OMRF can team up to understand complex mutations that are located in non-coding DNA regions shared by fish and human genomes," said Mourrain, an

associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Stanford.

OMRF scientist Linda Thompson, Ph.D., leads the federal Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence grant at OMRF that provided funds to help Varshney to establish his independent research program at OMRF.

"This research is exciting and well-suited for the discovery of new disease-modifying drugs," said Thompson, who holds the Putnam City Schools Distinguished Chair in Cancer Research at OMRF. "It's unbelievably clever and powerful work."

The grant, No. 1R01GM136741, is funded by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, a part of the NIH. Varshney also receives funding support from NIGMS grant No. P20GM12345 and the Presbyterian Health Foundation.

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# NURSE TALK

*"That everything will be okay. You can see your family. It's breaking my heart with the COVID."*



Romana Jurado,  
CNA

*"I'm looking for COVID cases to drop, hopefully tremendously and that we can move forward with everyday life without a mask."*



Tabitha Campbell,  
LPN charge nurse

*What do you hope for in new year?*



Fairmont  
Skilled Nursing  
and Therapy

*"A better year than 2020. I'm hoping for a decline in COVID and hopefully a better year on that."*



Brittney Butler, LPN

*A good and healthy year with more residents to help. It's just like my family."*



Nina Perry, CNA

## Enid Family Care Clinics Earn Recognition

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) recently announced that five INTEGRIS Family Care Clinics in Enid have earned Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) Recognition renewal.

The clinics received the initial recognition for using evidence-based, patient-centered processes that focus on highly coordinated care and long-term, participative relationships. The facilities receiving the PCMH Certificate of Recognition renewal are listed below:

### **INTEGRIS Family First**

**INTEGRIS Christopher A. Shearer, D.O.**

**INTEGRIS Dustin Baylor, M.D.**

**INTEGRIS N.W. Family Medicine Clinic**

**INTEGRIS Family Care Services of Enid**

The NCQA Patient-Centered Medical Home is a model of primary care that combines teamwork and information technology to improve care, improve patients' experience of care and reduce costs. Medical homes foster ongoing partnerships between patients and their personal clinicians, instead of approaching care as the sum of episodic office visits. Each patient's care is overseen by clinician-led care teams that coordinate treatment across the health care system. Research shows that medical homes can lead to higher quality and lower costs and can improve patient and provider reported experiences of care.

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# SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

Cases	365,992
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date	2,674,361
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date	3,025,993
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facility Hospitalizations	1,491
Other Types of Facilities Hospitalizations	143
Total Cumulative Hospitalizations	20,692
Total Cumulative Deaths	3,187

- This week, 76 Oklahoma counties are in the “orange” risk level and one is in the “green” risk level for the COVID-19 Risk Level System. OSDH continues to monitor closely the statewide hospitalization trends for COVID-19.
- The COVID-19 Risk Level System will be updated every Friday in the Situation Update at 11:00 a.m. This week’s map can be seen in this update below the test results chart.
- As OSDH continues to meet with stakeholders across the state, the COVID-19 Alert Map is subject to further revisions as science and public health guidance advances with the ongoing pandemic.
- As of this advisory, there are 365,992 cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- 2,564 is today’s 7-day rolling average for the number of new cases reported.
- There are 47 additional deaths identified to report.

\*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 2021-1-22 at 7:00 a.m.



# Covid-19 employee testing keeps OMRF running strong



OMRF Vice President of Human Resources looks on as OMRF scientist Antonina Araszkiwicz tuns in a saliva sample for Covid-19 screening. Since starting the weekly in-house testing program developed by its researchers, OMRF has had no instances of onsite spread of the virus among employees.

Once a week, after she brushes her teeth and gets ready to leave for work at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, Cindy Carter sets a 30-minute timer on her phone.

When Carter's phone buzzes on her drive, it reminds her of the task that now kicks off her week: submitting a saliva sample for OMRF's weekly employee Covid-19 testing program.

Before leaving her car, Carter opens her testing kit, which OMRF provides to staff members each week. Inside is a cup, a barcoded sample tube, pipette, alcohol wipe and biohazard bag.

"I don't want to take off my mask indoors, so before I go in, I spit into the cup, put the sample in the tube and throw the waste away in a biohazard receptacle," said Carter, a lab manager for OMRF's Cardiovascular Biology Research Program.

Carter then enters OMRF's Research Tower, where a human resources staffer sits behind plexiglass, ready to collect samples.

"They scan a barcode on my employee badge, then a barcode on the tube," explained Carter, who joined OMRF in 1996. "Only human resources has those codes. It couldn't be easier or faster."

Each Wednesday morning, having collected samples from the 300-plus employees who are onsite each week, foundation technicians analyze the samples. The OMRF-developed process can run 186 samples at a time and examines each sample five times for accuracy. And because of the "specificity" of the test, it can detect amounts of the virus much smaller than those picked up by many commercially available tests.

The lab relays any positive results by Wednesday evening to OMRF

Vice President of Human Resources Courtney Greenwood, who contacts those individuals. "If you haven't heard from me by Thursday morning, you know you're in the clear," said Greenwood.

When it came to adding testing to OMRF's existing pandemic protocols of mask-wearing and physical distancing, Greenwood said OMRF leadership agreed the test had to be fast, free of nose swabs, and affordable for the foundation.

OMRF scientist Joel Guthridge, Ph.D., and his team answered the call, using existing equipment, technology and staff to develop the saliva-based PCR test at a fraction of commercial costs.

"It's pennies on the dollar comparatively," said Guthridge. "Our goal is to help people be healthier. We had to achieve that mission on our own turf so that we could forge ahead with our other research."

More than 4,000 samples have

been run since the testing program started in October. To date, they've identified 17 employees who were positive for the virus. In the same timeframe, there have been no instances of onsite spread of the virus among employees.

"This testing program has really proven effective at keeping our workforce safe and avoiding outbreaks," said Greenwood. "It's helped us maintain our laboratory operations, and we plan to continue the program as long as the virus remains a threat in the community."

For Carter, OMRF's weekly testing program, along with a host of other onsite safety protocols, have provided comfort during unsettling times.

I've felt really good about coming into work during even the worst stretches of the pandemic," said Carter. "Having worked here as long as I have, I'm not surprised they went above and beyond to protect us."



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# PREPARE TO BE SURPRISED.

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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