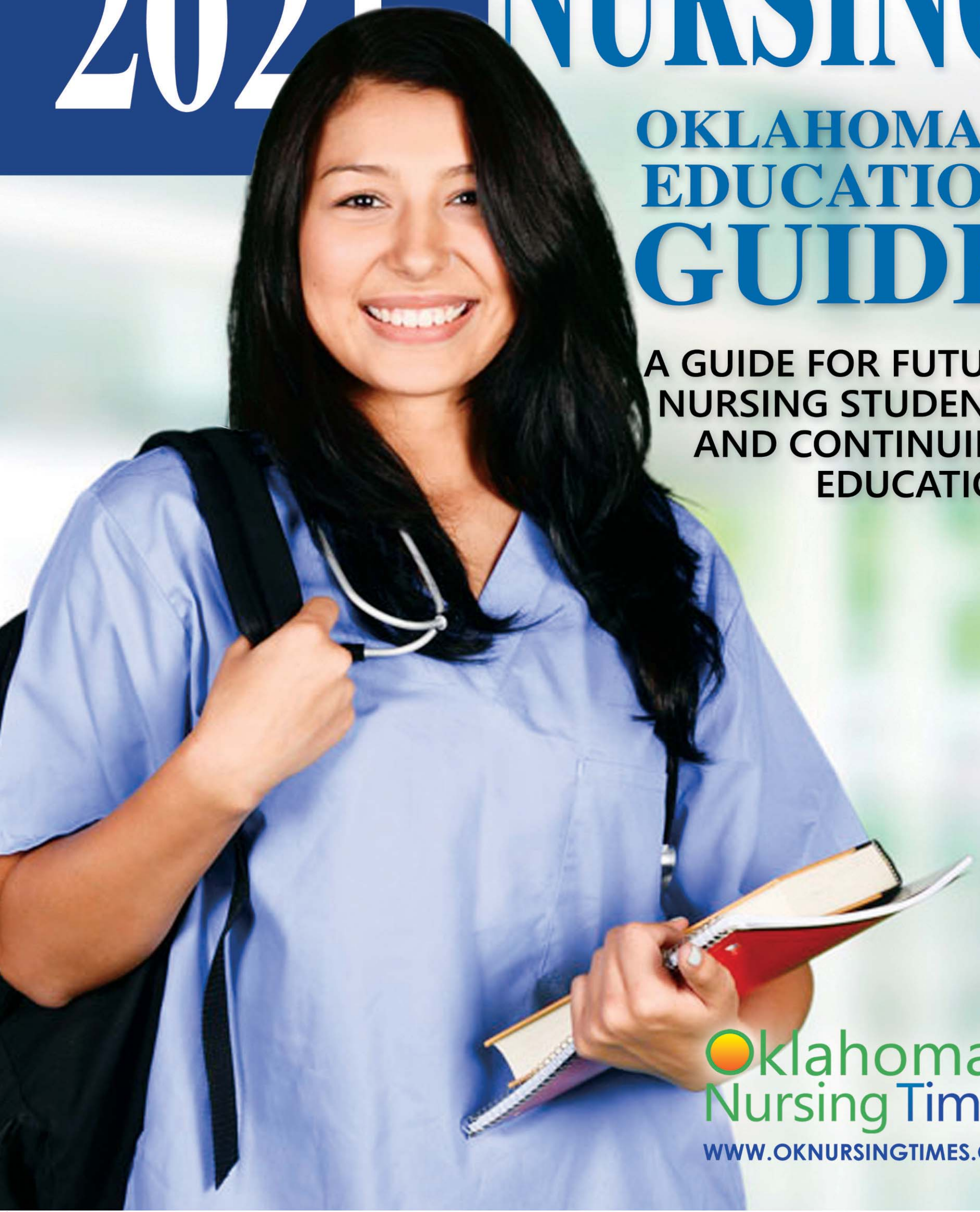


2021 NURSING

OKLAHOMA'S EDUCATION GUIDE

A GUIDE FOR FUTURE
NURSING STUDENTS
AND CONTINUING
EDUCATION



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4 Ways to Join a Winning Program

Oklahoma Christian University boasts the fastest growing nursing program in Oklahoma, and there are lots of reasons why. The highly experienced Nursing faculty use advanced technology to offer online degrees, the new, spacious on-campus labs are cutting edge, and professors in the mission-focused BSN Nursing degree often remind students why they are pursuing a career that is all about caring for others.

"Dr. Gray and all of my instructors pray for us before each exam, and I have no doubt they pray for me outside of class too," said student Kyler Wilson-Walker.

There are 4 ways to join this winning program.

1. Online RN to BSN

Oklahoma Christian University offers the only online, competency-based, credit-awarding RN to BSN in the country! This degree is designed for registered nurses who have some work experience. Students get to apply their experience to their degree and test out of skills they have already learned. This allows students to work at their own pace through a tuition subscription. For only \$4,000 students

can take as many classes as they want in the four-month subscription period. One student even finished her entire degree in that amount of time! However, the average student requires three subscriptions or about one year.

2. INTEGRIS Partnership

Individuals with no experience can apply for a job as a nursing assistant with INTEGRIS Healthcare and enroll as an online student with Oklahoma Christian University. INTEGRIS even offers a \$1,000 signing bonus and tuition repayment! It's a great way to earn a paycheck and a degree with a job that prepares you for class and classes that prepare you for your future.

3. Transfer From Another University

Students who begin college somewhere else and transfer to Oklahoma Christian University step into a community of instructors and students who are all about supporting one another. The tightly knit community is known for supporting others, honoring the creator through nursing, providing an environment designed for each student's success and having fun.

4. On-Campus



"Dr. Gray and all of my instructors pray for us before each exam, and I have no doubt they pray for me outside of class too." Kyler Wilson-Walker, student.

High school graduates who want to become a nurse find their home at Oklahoma Christian University. Students looking for the full college experience are mentored for spiritual, mental and physical growth alongside the rigorous academic program. Living on campus allows students to become a part of the university's traditions, make friendships that last a lifetime and flourish under the guidance of

excellent faculty.

Oklahoma Christian University believes students are more than their degree. It's a university dedicated to helping students learn exactly who they are called to be in a worldwide context. You can find them online at oc.edu or located at 2501 East Memorial Road in Oklahoma City. For more information visit: <https://www.oc.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/nursing>

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Love of life: Nursing Home enriches lives

Danelle Edgar loves seeing the smiles on the faces of the elderly while serving as a registered nurse at Perry Green Valley Nursing Home. Someone has got to make their sunset years special for them, she said.

"It's not something I initially thought I would do. But once I got in here, you just really bond, they kind of become your family," Edgar said at the long-term care and skilled nursing center.

The nursing home is not necessarily a place where the elderly spend their years being inactive. Each moment at Perry Green Valley is dedicated toward the enrichment of lives reaching their personal best.

"COVID has kind of thrown a wrench in everything, but we work around it, evolve and change. That's kind of how nursing is anyway," she said. "We have to do smaller group activities or even individual activities to fit in with the guidelines."

Edgar has been a registered nurse since 2017 when she earned her degree at Oklahoma City Community College. She began her career as a licensed practical nurse at Perry Green Valley.

Edgar works with both long-term care and rehab patients. Compassion, patience, empathy, and teamwork combine to make the patient-centered home function well, she said. And there is not a high turnover rate among the nursing staff. Leadership and the staff pull together for the common.

"We've all been here together for a long time, and so we kind of know how each other works," Edgar said.

Working in a nursing home is not a job for everyone, she said. It takes a special type of person.

"Especially the CNAs, They're in there doing the hands-on work. They're our eyes and ears. They help our nurses tremendously. We could not do our job without them. So, I really admire that they have the heart to be in this line of work and continue to do what they are doing with the long hours and stress. They are very adaptable and compassionate."

Her life is often touched by the gains she witnesses in her patients' lives. She recalls when one of a gentleman was first admitted to Perry Green Valley on hospice about four years ago.

"We didn't think we had very long with him," she said. "He has gotten better over the years. When he first came, he was bedridden, didn't talk and was very contractured. And now he's walking — he's participating in activities — he's very happy and gets along well with all the staff. We all love him. It was just really inspiring to see someone go from not being able to do anything, and now he's doing activities. He doesn't even use a walker. He is our miracle story."

It's important to understand that how a patient behaves with dementia is not the way they lived in decades past. Dementia changes them, she said.

"You just have to have a good relationship with the family, communicating with them to see how they were — what things did they like," Edgar continued.

Research points to redirecting people with dementia when they act as if they are living in the distant past. Perhaps a loved one had died, and they don't realize it. Nurses are trained to meet the resident where they are in life.

"If they are in 1970 at home and we're their kid, then you go with that, because there's more



Danelle Edgar, RN, is a busy nurse with a heart of gold when it come to time spent with each of her residents at Perry Green Valley Nursing Home.

behaviors if you try to tell them 'No, you're wrong. You're not there. Your mother is dead,' or things like that. It's traumatic for them and they're having to relive that every five minutes, if that's how long it takes their brain to process. You just have to be in their world. That's what we are learning."

Many of the nursing home residents were farmers or farming wives. Many of them know and grew up with each other in rural surroundings.

"There's kind of that sense of friendship in here as well," Edgar said. For more info visit: <http://www.greenvalleyhealthcare.net/>



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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.

The **Pre-Nursing** program for 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).

The **Dental Assisting** program



prepares adult students to become members of the dental health care team. Dental assistants have the opportunity to enhance the efficiency of the dentist in the delivery of oral health care. Upon completion of the program, students can obtain certification as a Dental Assistant (CDA).

Each program offers the potential for a high paying career and Francis Tuttle is dedicated to serving the growing demand for a highly qualified workforce in the health care industry. If you're interested, or know someone who is looking to expand their horizons through the expanding field of medical care, check out these and other programs at www.FrancisTuttle.edu and get started on your future today!

Visit www.FrancisTuttle.edu for more information.

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FRANCISTUTTLE
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Equipping servant leaders in a professional community

Since 1975, the mission of Harding University Carr College of Nursing has been to develop nurses as Christian servants. The University's mission permeates classroom and clinical instruction taught by highly trained professionals from a Christ-centered worldview. Close faculty-student relationships and mentorships foster personal, academic and professional growth. Offering undergraduate and graduate programs prepares students to perform well in any healthcare setting.

What nursing tracks does Harding offer? The undergraduate tracks are designed to meet the individualized needs of students, all leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree.

These include:

- Four-year, full-time/part-time traditional track
- 18-month accelerated second-degree program
- Individualized track for students who hold a current unencumbered nursing license without a bachelor's degree. An individualized degree completion plan is collaboratively designed with the student (full-time/part-time available)
- Honors classes

The graduate tracks are designed

to meet the individualized needs of professionals, resulting in a Master of Science in Nursing.

These include:

- Family Nurse Practitioner
- Full-time and part-time options
- Customizable options for those who already have an MSN
- Eligible to sit for national certification exam upon program completion
- Delivery: hybrid format, with online courses and three on-campus intensives throughout the program
- Master's Entry into Professional Nursing
- Traditional bachelor's entry or accelerated bachelor's to master's options
- Eligible to sit for NCLEX-RN exam upon program completion
- Delivery: on campus with some online classes

What sets Harding trained nurses apart from other nursing schools? The undergraduate nursing program has a 99.2% first-time NCLEX-RN pass rate since 2016 and has been ranked the No. 1 Nursing Program in Arkansas by RegisteredNursing.org for four years in a row. This ranking is based on how well a program supports students toward licensure and beyond.

Harding's nursing graduates are well-equipped to enter the field, with high job placement rates and a 100% first-time Family Nurse Practitioner National Certification pass rate since the program's first graduates in 2017.

The first of its kind in Arkansas, the master's entry into professional nursing program prepares graduates for eligibility to take the national nursing license exam to become Registered Nurses. The program provides on-campus, state-of-the-art simulations and diverse clinical experiences in Searcy, Little Rock and surrounding counties to aid students in understanding patient clinical skills and administration and leadership in nursing. Applicants with any undergraduate degree can apply. There are Arkansas nursing prerequisites.

What if I have a degree in another field but have decided healthcare is my passion? The Master of Science in Nursing - Master's Entry into Professional Nursing option is a great path for students who already have a



HARDING
U N I V E R S I T Y

bachelor's in another area of study.

How do the programs interact with the community? Students assist in a variety of community clinical settings that serve diverse patient populations. They also provide health screenings at area churches and various university sponsored events.

Does Harding offer a study abroad program? For more than 40 years, Harding has been training nurses not only for a career in traditional healthcare settings but also to work in health missions. Medical mission opportunities exist locally and abroad in short-term and long-term options. Opportunities are open to graduate and undergraduate students.

Visit:

<https://www.harding.edu/academics/colleges-departments/nursing>



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- Alexis, RN

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Hillcrest Hospital Pryor | Hillcrest Hospital Cushing | Hillcrest Hospital Henryetta | Bailey Medical Center, Owasso
Tulsa Spine Specialty Hospital | Oklahoma Heart Institute | Utica Park Clinic

HillcrestHealthCareSystemJobs.com

Opportunities in nursing are seemingly endless, but it's rare one employer can offer as much to advance a nurse's career as Hillcrest HealthCare System.

The opportunity to provide exceptional patient care in a progressive environment in multiple specialties across multiple campuses exists within Hillcrest.

Melissa Trujillo, director of talent acquisition, says nurses can find it all with Hillcrest HealthCare System.

"I feel like 90 percent of our movement is internal transfers," Trujillo said. "I think it's the progression of our facility makeup. We have facilities that have less than 50 beds and all the way up to more than 650 beds. They all have unique specialties and cases they can handle."

"It gives you a career track, basically."

Serving communities throughout eastern Oklahoma, Hillcrest HealthCare System (HHS) includes Hillcrest Medical Center, Hillcrest Hospital South, Oklahoma Heart Institute, Bailey Medical Center, Hillcrest Hospital Claremore, Hillcrest Hospital Cushing, Hillcrest Hospital Henryetta, Hillcrest Hospital Pryor, Tulsa Spine & Specialty Hospital and Utica Park Clinic.

Across its hospitals and health care facilities, HHS offers 1,143 beds and employs a team of more than 6,500.

Eight facilities and two physician practice groups offer a multitude of opportunities for nurses.

"I think as an HR group we offer a tailor to your skillset and a tailor to your liking. We are a place that promotes transferring from within," Trujillo said.

Not only are nurses able to transfer within facilities but being owned by Ardent Health Services allows nurses to transfer to other states.

Whether it be facilities in Texas or New Mexico or along the East coast the options are there.

"We really offer internal mobility," Trujillo said. "If they were to transfer here to New Mexico they would keep their PTO and their years of service. I would say we pride ourselves on internal mobility because we would rather that RNs stay in our system."

Opportunity abounds at Hillcrest

Hillcrest HealthCare System nurses like Emily Hammett, RN, have an array of choices to take their career within Hillcrest.



"We have lots of opportunities within the system for movement and exposure."

Hillcrest Medical Center, 1120 S Utica Ave., employs nearly 2,500 in multiple units. Hillcrest Hospital South, 8801 S 101st E Ave., staffs nearly 1,000.

Hillcrest South offers a nursing residency program for those graduating in the spring.

"You enter the program, get exposure to multiple units and once you're out of the program then you're well-equipped to go into whatever unit you desire," Trujillo said. "What we're really hoping is they get exposure to units they may think they would not be interested in."

Trujillo points to Hillcrest's medical/surgical units that have an added specialty such as trauma or ortho.

"To me, you don't know what you don't know," Trujillo said. "And since it's temporary and a residency program you're getting that exposure and moving on to the next one. You might have an experience that resonates with you and persuades you to go to the less popular unit just because you're finding out what your niche is."

Hillcrest also offers up to \$2,500 per semester in tuition reimbursement for career advancement. Relocation and sign-on bonuses are also available for new grads.

"Not a lot of facilities in the area offer both of those things for a new grad," Trujillo said.

The system is a large one but time and attention is spent on onboarding new hires and making sure they feel

comfortable.

"We've put a lot of time and effort into it to make sure the new grad feels safe. It's a lot of detail-oriented training," Trujillo said. "I think we've narrowed down the reasons why nurses quit, leave or leave the profession all together is because they don't feel adequately trained enough

to do their job or they feel unsafe.

"I think a lot of our programs are focused around making that new grad feel safe but yet giving them the exposure and skills that they need to be successful on down the road as an RN." For more information visit: <https://hillcrestmedicalcenter.com/>



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A journey to be a future shaper with OBU

The College of Nursing at Oklahoma Baptist University was founded in 1952, offering the first collegiate baccalaureate nursing program in the state of Oklahoma. Graduates from the OBU College of Nursing boast a 100% or near 100% passage rate on the NCLEX, year in and year out. OBU nursing graduates are in demand, not only for their clinical experience, academic knowledge, professionalism, and skilled expertise, but also for the care and compassion they bring to work each and every day.

The OBU nursing faculty provide students with a high-quality curriculum that is contemporary, relevant and meets the ever-changing needs of our health-care environment. The University remains committed to a faith-based, excellence-driven, mission-purposed and community-directed nursing education. Be a Future Shaper in the OBU College of Nursing and help change the world, one patient at a time.

Stavros Hall

The OBU College of Nursing

resides inside Jane E. and Nick K. Stavros Hall, a 32,000-square-foot facility designed to provide cutting-edge nursing education for both undergraduate and graduate-level students. Opened in 2016, it is located on the northeast corner of the OBU campus in Shawnee. The facility features six high-fidelity skills simulation labs, a medium skills lab, a health assessment skills lab, and a home health and bathing training room, totaling 24 beds. The high-tech simulation labs are equipped with the industry's most advanced medical simulation solutions, providing students with realistic training scenarios for their future nursing careers.

Stavros Hall includes five classrooms, a 109-seat lecture hall and computer lab, as well as spaces for students to study, meet and interact with faculty. It features multiple skills and simulation labs equipped with video recording technology, allowing instructors to interact with nursing students during procedures. With full control of the state-of-the-art human



Stavros Hall at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Ok.

simulators, instructors train future nurses to expect the unexpected and react with life-saving speed to evolving situations in real-time. The video technology allows instructors to offer the best possible feedback to students, as they review the scenario together following each simulation.

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Uniform Shoppe dedicated to customer needs *Tulsa and OKC stores differ in tastes*



From left: Owner Jody Weise, Amy Mays, Renita Dearman, Melissa Buffington, and Traci Johnson understand the latest fashion trends in nursing at the Uniform Shoppe, located in Tulsa.

A fashion haven of comfort and style continues to flourish at the Uniform Shoppe in Oklahoma City and Tulsa, said Sherri Stallings, manager of the Uniform Shopp in Oklahoma City.

The Uniform Shoppe is located in the Park Plaza Shopping Center at 6044 S. Sheridan Road, just west of Sheridan in Tulsa; and in Oklahoma City at 10503 North May Avenue, between Hefner Road and Britton Road.

Customer service at the Uniform Shoppe has been an enduring presence for the nursing industry ever since Elaine Weise and her late husband, Albert, purchased the Uniform Shoppe in 1965. By doing so, they established a new location in Oklahoma City. Her sister and brother-in-law started the business in 1962 in Tulsa. This was when the color white was standard for nurses

to wear at the time.

One thing is certain. The Uniform Shoppe has always provided its customers what they want.

"Our customers mean a lot to us and we take care of them," Elaine Weise said. "We sell fine merchandise at competitive prices."

She and her staff have made several friends through the years. The original store was located at 10th Street and Walker. Weise said she has enjoyed interacting with new and loyal customers through the years. It's part of her life and she can't think of doing anything else.

Weise has noticed a contrast in fashion has developed between what customers purchase in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. The differing tastes has been developing for a few years.

A jogger pant is more in demand



The staff at the Uniform Shoppe in Oklahoma City includes from left: Ericka Branham, owner Elaine Weise, Brenda Young, and store manager Sherri Stallings.

at the Oklahoma City store, Stallings said. It's all about how durable and soft the fabric is, she said of the streamlined product.

"Mostly all of your uniforms are going to be the new fabrics. And also, it's all about the color. Our top color here in Oklahoma City is black, navy, and grey," she said.

Jody Weise, co-owner of the Uniform Shoppe in Tulsa said it's unusual that what is popular in one city doesn't sell in the other city when they are 100 miles apart.

"I don't think it is a brand thing. I think it is a style thing," Jodi said. "I think it may really come down to the enthusiasm of our salespeople."

It's not the pricing or brand name, Jody said.

"When they really love something and they really believe in it, I think that's what makes it go," Jody explained. "But part of it is, we will bring in beautiful groupings in both cities. And sometimes, it will just sit in one city and we'll sale a few pieces. But the other city wipes it out."

The demographic doesn't seem to be different in the two cities. And Jody can't say that one city sells more expensive items than the other.

The staff is equally excited about fashion options.

Both cities sell similar colors. A lot of hospitals chose certain colors

of garments for their nurses, she said.

"Sometimes it doesn't matter what it looks like. If it's the right color, it's going to sell," Jody said.

Jody said both cities seem to cater to a jogger pant or a straight leg pant with flex panels on the sides. It's easy to move around with extra pockets.

Another brand, Landau, has a popular grouping in Oklahoma City. In Tulsa, the product was moved around in display, but it didn't sell well, she said.

"Landau came out with another new grouping. It looked different. It had a lot of the same properties. It would stretch and easy-care fabric and colors, and both cities just blow it out the door," Jody said.

But in the groupings, certain styles sell better in Oklahoma City, but Jody said they stay in the store in Tulsa.

"It's the weirdest thing," she said.

Groupings that cannot be found online are doing well in the stores.

"People are finding something that is uniquely styled, priced right and durable," Jody said. Shop the categories online at <https://theuniformshoppe.com> or visit us at us in OKC at 10503 N May Ave. Mon - Sat 9:30am - 6pm or Tulsa at 6044 S Sheridan Rd. Mon - Fri 10am - 6pm and Saturday 10am - 4pm.

NOC offers nursing program at three locations

The Northern Oklahoma College Nursing Program plays a vital role in the delivery of health care services to the citizens of Oklahoma, especially in rural areas.

The NOC program, headed by Division Chair Dr. Nikole Hicks, is future-oriented, learning-focused, connected, and distinctive. Hicks started as NOC Division Chair last fall.

"This is a transformational time in academic nursing education," Hicks said. "I am excited to work with the excellent faculty and staff at NOC to prepare the next generation of nurses to improve the health of Oklahomans in our region."

NOC's program focuses on preparing students for the work force. Over 90 percent of NOC students are employed before they graduate with 94 percent staying in Oklahoma after graduation.

NOC nursing students recently



assisted with vaccinations at the NOC Tonkawa campus gaining valuable real-life experience. NOC nursing students and faculty have also been assisting county health departments administer vaccines within the communities they serve.

Hicks oversees 11 full time master's and doctoral prepared faculty members at three locations. The NOC program

is approved by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing and is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing.

NOC has nursing facilities at Tonkawa, Stillwater, and Enid.

All nursing locations have a high-fidelity computerized simulation mannequin that mimics real-life human functions and at least four mid-fidelity simulators including an adult, a birthing simulator that provides students with the ability to experience labor and delivery, a pediatric client and a neonate. The mid-fidelity simulators give the student the ability to assess vital signs, master nursing skills and identify changes in a client's status.

NOC also provides health fairs, vital sign and handwashing clinics, health education to public and volunteer hours in the Tonkawa, Enid, and Stillwater areas.

NOC also works with Career Technology Centers to provide LPNs the opportunity to further their education.

Northern offers 14 scholarships available specifically for nursing students along with many other scholarship opportunities.

For more information about NOC nursing, call 580.628.6679.

NOC, a public two-year community college, serves nearly 5,000 students on the home campus in Tonkawa, branch in Enid, NOC/OSU Gateway Program



Division Chair Dr. Nikole Hicks.

in Stillwater, online, and the University Center in Ponca City. Of these students about 60% receive financial aid and/or scholarships. Over 80% of NOC students complete their degree with zero debt.

NOC is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and offers associate degrees in three general areas: Arts, Science and Applied Science. The associate degree fulfills lower-division course work which is applicable towards a bachelor's degree.

For more information about Northern Oklahoma College visit www.noc.edu.



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RSU Program Provides Path to Success

Nursing and health care are among Rogers State University's hallmark academic programs, which includes bachelor's degrees on its Claremore and Bartlesville campuses. RSU is a dynamic regional university providing its students with the complete college experience where students can live on campus (both traditional and family housing options) and participate in a myriad of student activities, including student organizations dedicated to health sciences.

The university supports a rigorous academic program that attracts many students who plan to attend medical school complete their undergraduate studies through RSU's program in medical/molecular biology. RSU's nursing program produces students who consistently score better than the state and national averages on the RN licensure exam.

Rogers State's health sciences programs are some of the most rigorous in the region, producing graduates that are in high demand. RSU nursing graduates maintain a nearly 100% placement rate, securing excellent jobs throughout the region.

RSU's nursing faculty with a collective total of more than 130

years of experience in both academic teaching and practical experience. The university offers several lab environments to give students skillful training for residential environments, hospital beds, isolated acute care, and high fidelity simulation.

For those who want or need to work while attending school, almost 8 in 10 RSU students work while attending school allowing them to achieve their educational goals while balancing financial and family obligations. While RSU is the only public university with on-campus housing in the Tulsa metro area, the university has a large number of commuter students who live at home while attending RSU.

RSU consistently earns national recognition for affordability, both for traditional classes and its RSU Online program. U.S. News and World Report has noted RSU has one of the nation's top 10 lowest, in-state tuition rates, and also highlighted that RSU Online was among the nation's 10 least expensive public online programs. The university also has been consistently recognized for having one of the region's lowest student debt load for graduating students with nearly half of last year's graduating class earning



a diploma without taking a student loan.

The main campus in Claremore features the Stratton Taylor Library, new student residences with bed space for more than 800, the Chapman Dining Hall complete with inclement storm shelter, renovated historic buildings and the 50,000

square-foot Dr. Carolyn Taylor Center, which features ballroom space for community events. Rogers State also is home to RSU Public Television and RSU Radio FM 91.3.

Find your own path to educational success by visiting www.rsu.edu/nursing or call 918-343-7631 to learn more or to schedule a campus tour.



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OU leading nursing renaissance

As Covid-19 threatened nursing education in 2020, the collective minds at the University of Oklahoma Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing decided to use the historic event as a learning tool.

From collecting Covid-19 swabs to administering vaccinations, OU's College of Nursing found a way for students to not only learn but be a part of the solution throughout the pandemic.

"Ever since last fall I've been talking about the clinical renaissance we can be a part of in nursing," said Senior Associate Dean Melissa Craft, PhD, APRN-CNS, AOCN, FAAN. "After the last great plague in the Middle Ages, there was a renaissance. My point all along has been how best to positively use this experience for the betterment of patients and for us as nurses."

The focus has not only been on students simply emerging from the pandemic but flourishing, armed with experience and a new set of skills.

From a nursing education standpoint, the pandemic has taught

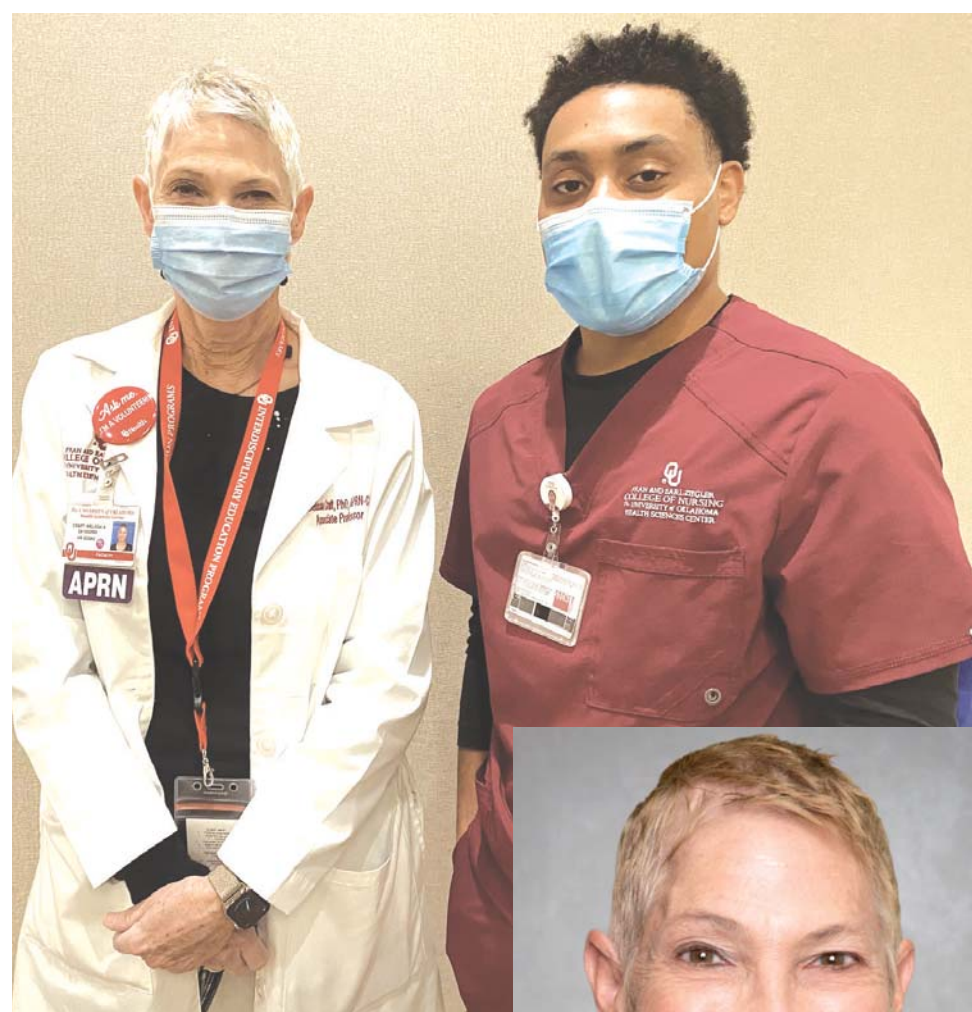
a number of lessons.

"Going back to Florence Nightingale, formalized nursing was birthed because of a war and nurses' responses in stepping into that situation," said Craft. "Florence Nightingale was a scientist, she was an advocate for social justice, a leader in healthcare management, and at the core, she was dedicated to individual flourishing."

"To me (what the pandemic) has taught us as a college is what we do as nurses is infinitely needed. What the pandemic has taught everyone is the knowledge and skill of nursing as scientists, as advocates, as leaders in healthcare management, and at their core, dedicated to human flourishing is incredibly essential in our society."

The pandemic not only validated to Craft that what is currently being done to prepare nurses for their profession needs to continue, but it also allowed introspection and an opportunity to revisit if the profession is doing everything it can as a science and advocate for social justice.

The pandemic also served to further highlight the underlying



Dr. Melissa Craft and OU student Romalace Jenkins serve at a community vaccination clinic.

disparities in our healthcare system.

"As nurses, as nursing students, and as a college we can't be blind to that," Craft said. "We really have to look at it as an opportunity. Again it's the renaissance which was all about going back into learning, wisdom, discovery and exploration."

As in-person nursing education ground to a halt around the country, the OU College of Nursing sought out opportunities to engage students and help them learn during these unprecedented times.

One of those opportunities came out of the Swab Pods, where students staffed Covid-19 testing stations in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

The students loved it, especially in a time where they were taken out of face-to-face classroom and the clinical learning settings.

"The core of what nurses do is they lean into situations," Craft said. "It's like firefighters run into a burning building, nurses run into taking care of people. When we started looking at (the swab pods) it was clinical, it was community and reaching out to where our community needs us. It was sort of a rethinking of what it does mean to

Dr. Melissa Craft is helping lead the OU College of Nursing's education renaissance.

do clinical work. It doesn't all have to happen in an acute care setting. In fact, we need to recognize that "the majority of patients' lives don't occur in an acute-care setting." Therefore we need to be where the patients are and our students need to learn where the patients are.

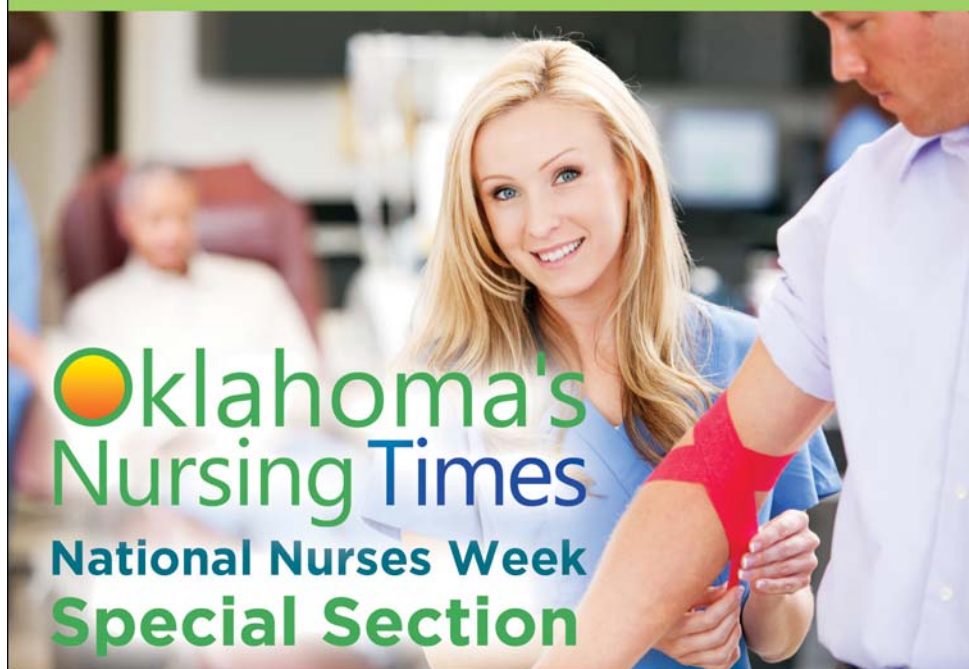
The university also leveraged its partnerships with OU Health as well as the Oklahoma City County Health Department and the Oklahoma City VA Health Care System to identify other student learning opportunities.

"What we've done as a college is to look at every opportunity not to continue what we've always done but ascertain what the OU College of Nursing can do now to make a difference," she said.

For more information visit:

<https://nursing.ouhsc.edu/>

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Join us in supporting nurses as we publish our annual National Nurses Week special section designed to highlight how essential nurses are in the health care system. This is a great time to show your appreciation for the nurses that work at your facility or organization.

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- Students, faculty, and staff engaged in COVID-19 initiatives
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Preparing For Nursing School

Graduating High School? Thinking about college? There's so much to consider when it comes to getting ready for college: where to go, what to study, how to apply, how to pay for it all and more. Use all resources available to explore your options including this guide.

Prepare before you walk through the classroom door. Visit websites for colleges included in this guide. Don't limit yourself to local colleges, visit state and regional colleges to get an idea about what is best for your specific needs. Here are a few effective tips to help you get ready to enter nursing school with confidence.

Talk With Nurses - Talk with nurses you know. Use social media to connect with new and experienced nurses, Have your questions ready and be brief and to the point about your interests.

Volunteer - Volunteering in a healthcare position with a nursing center, hospital or other healthcare facility will help you decide if nursing is for you.

Read Up - Read about, and pay attention to nursing in the news. Subscribe to online publications like : Oklahoma's Nursing Times www.oknursingtimes.com and The Oklahoma Nurse - The Oklahoma Nurses Association newsletter www.ona.nursingnetwork.com.

Be Ready to Invest - Be ready to invest in your future. Know your financial position and avoid credit card and major expenses that can cause stress and distract from your studies.

Research

Search for and complete Scholarship opportunities/applcations. Some colleges offer scholarships and financial aid for nursing. Review your colleges' acceptances and compare financial aid offers. Talks with your school counselors. School counselors are experienced in the college preparation process and can give further advice on your next move.


FAFSA

Complete and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®), at fafsa.gov, along with any other financial aid applications your chosen school may require.

Testing

Register for all tests in advance and take time to prepare. Ask your school counselor to waive any fees that may apply.


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— JaLisa Shaw
MNTC Practical Nursing Graduate

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LPN to RN: Evening or online at WOSC



Working full-time, the struggle is real for LPNs trying to get their RN.

Throw in family and the rest that life has to offer and it gets easier and easier to postpone your dreams.

Leaders at Western Oklahoma State College recognized that reality and answered the call to bring quality, affordable and convenient nursing education to those that needed it.

And as an added bonus, it's helped Southwest Oklahoma facilities find the trained staff they need.

"We really feel that our nursing program has a strong tie to workforce," said Chrystal Overton, M.S., R.N. and Vice President for Academic Affairs at WOSC. "I feel in our state Gov. Stitt is really pushing workforce development with colleges and universities and we feel like nursing is one of those programs that has that tie."

Located in Altus, Western Oklahoma State College was originally established as Altus Junior College in 1926, and is the oldest original municipal two-year college in Oklahoma. On August 16, 1974, Altus Junior College became Western Oklahoma State College by an act of the state legislatures.

The school's nursing program began in 1981 and graduated its first class in 1983.

Two other locations are also offered: one in Lawton, housed at Cameron University and the other in Elk City, housed on the campus of Great Plains Regional Medical Center.

Accredited by the National League of Nursing Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation, the school offers a

traditional program for general students and advanced standing placement for LPNs. A full-time day program is offered at each campus along with the LPN to RN online track offering an online didactic with face-to-face clinicals.

The evening track at the Lawton campus began last year through a partnership with Comanche County Memorial Hospital.

The fall of 2018 was the first online offering for LPNs to advance their education. No driving around after work and no classroom to sit in.

"This was very successful," said Stacey Machado, DNP, RN, and the Director of Nursing Education at Western Oklahoma State College.

The first cohort of 28 students graduated in May 2019 from the LPN-RN online program that included a clinical component.

In the fall of 2019, WOSC brought in its first cohort of students in the evening track at Lawton.

Now 18 more are on track to graduate in the spring of 2021.

This evening program is a great option for many students. Having this additional option for students will increase the capacity at Western and as well as help provide southwest Oklahoma with the Registered Nurses needed to maintain healthcare in the rural parts of the state.

The program also had a goal of collaborating with clinical affiliates so students would have immediate options for work.

"It absolutely made sense," said Machado. "Our goal when our



Opportunities for nurses to advance abound at Western Oklahoma State College in Altus.

students graduate is they are immediately ready to go after passing boards. Also we wanted them to have an opportunity to work at their clinical sites."

The plan has been a win for everyone. Students are getting the hands-on experience they need and are able to scope out where they feel like they will fit in.

The clinical sites get on-the-job feedback to make offers before graduation. Machado knows facilities appreciate her students.

"A lot of feedback we get from area hospital nurses, managers and directors is that our students come out as great critical thinkers," Machado said. "They're self-reliant and able to get on the floor and show they've come out of a program that has rigor in the training process."

The application window for the next spring period will begin November 1 for any returning or transfer students coming into

nursing.

Applications for the following fall will open in December.

"To obtain an associate degree that leads to a high wage, high skill career and career is phenomenal," Overton said of the opportunity. "They can decrease the amount of student loan debt they have and be able to go out into the workforce after passing boards.

"That's pretty critical. A large number of students do go on for their bachelor's and some their master's. When you look at the economy and concern with high student loan debt, our program really makes sense."

Machado said the school's curriculum is aligned with most bachelor's programs meaning students won't be slowed down by having to take more prerequisites later on down the road.

For more information go to: <https://www.wosc.edu/index.php?page=nursing-admission>

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Learning on the front



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Already an experienced nurse, Verena Turner is furthering her career in public health by pursuing her bachelor's degree in nursing through OSU's online RN to BSN completion program.

Her passion for serving patients who need her most has been elevated amid the coronavirus pandemic. Turner, who is typically a nurse in a neurology intensive care unit (ICU), transitioned to caring solely for coronavirus patients over the last several months. The day-to-day patient care is an opportunity to apply her coursework.

"I love being a nurse, although I wouldn't say being a COVID nurse was my goal for this year," Turner said. "Seeing these patients recover, getting text messages and cards and emails from families of patients we've seen at the absolute worst and not knowing if we're going to keep them alive makes it all worth it."

Due to isolation restrictions,

Turner said she may be the only person her COVID patients see for 13 hours. She endures layers of uncomfortable personal protective equipment (PPE) to spend extra time with the patients.

"Our patients a lot of the time are intubated and sedated, but they know there's somebody there," Turner said. "This has definitely opened my eyes that nurses have a really big impact."

Serving in a COVID care unit builds on Turner's past work as a licensed professional nurse on a surgical floor and more recently in the ICU. Not only does she apply hands-on experiences from working full time to her coursework, but she also learns from classmates who are working in diverse healthcare environments.

Dr. Mary Malaska, OSU RN to BSN program coordinator, said the OSU curriculum, which consists of eight nursing classes and two health classes, is specifically designed to enhance nurses' professional skills.

"Students expand their professional nursing lens from the practical, foundational skills they learned to become a registered nurse," Malaska said. "Our coursework provides higher level thinking that teaches the 'why' behind their past education."

Students are challenged with topics ranging from leadership and goal-setting, to public health policy and nursing theory. During the COVID pandemic, the epidemiology course has been especially applicable.

"Factors like causation, testing and data analysis are key tenets of the course," Malaska said. "Their application now in a global pandemic just underscores the relevance of our program."

Balancing COVID nursing responsibilities with classwork has certainly not been easy. Some OSU RN to BSN students working in COVID units travel to as many as four healthcare facilities in one metropolitan area tending to patients, in addition to managing coursework and responsibilities at home.

Malaska is working with

Dr. Alana Cluck, RN to BSN clinical faculty, to study the impact of COVID on nurses' mental health. While respondents reported positive aspects, like spending more time with family due to canceled personal events, they also reported increased stress.

"Many nurses feel like they are placed in impossible situations, having to decide which patient to tend to first when two patients are crashing at the same time," Malaska said. "This isn't a decision nurses usually have to make."

Oklahoma State nursing faculty understand that stress, and they are committed to supporting their students academically and professionally. As the world continues to social distance in order to combat the spread of coronavirus, nursing faculty have remained connected to students through weekly video updates and discussion boards.

This is part of a culture of support Turner observed even before the COVID pandemic, something she is thankful for as a full-time working mom. The 100-percent online program also added flexibility.

"My professors realize we're all in this together and have been super flexible and supportive," Turner said. "They even send emails checking to see if we're safe and okay."

For Turner, who expects to graduate in May 2021, the hands-on experience of caring for COVID patients during a pandemic as well as the healthcare applications learned from her RN to BSN program are preparing her to achieve her dreams.

"I think COVID is going to be something we're dealing with for a long time," Turner said. "The experience of working on a COVID floor, coupled with the higher-level concepts I am learning in the RN to BSN program, will shape my career."

For this nurse - whether treating COVID patients or furthering her education - each task is a labor of love.

Visit:

<https://education.okstate.edu/>

Trade School vs College – What's the Difference? College

Those who go to college obtain a general academic education that can prepare them for a variety of careers. This education typically takes four years. It also requires students to select a "major" or concentration. Your major or concentration is the field of study that you plan to focus on in your time at college. Aside from a few majors that are career-specific such as engineering or accounting, colleges don't specifically prepare you for a trade. Instead, they provide you with a solid base of academic knowledge that you can apply to a number of different career paths.

Technical School

Tech school, aka vocational school, is almost the complete opposite of college. Rather than receiving a broad education, you enroll in a course of study and take very specific classes to prepare you for a particular job. A few examples include nursing, culinary arts, massage therapy, office management, cosmetology, fashion design, information technology, etc. Although vocational classes are typically found in community colleges, there are also a large number of technical institutes that provide this kind of training.

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"I was truly blown away by the level of professionalism and commitment from the faculty and staff. The knowledge and support I received are unparalleled."

- Kayce (Tuter) Brown, RN to BSN student



nursing.okstate.edu

OCU continues to lead



As a preeminent nursing program, Oklahoma City University's Kramer School of Nursing continues to innovate its offerings to produce some of the most highly skilled nurses in our region. The school fosters a learning environment where students are challenged to think critically and holistically, encouraging them to use their passion and knowledge to advance the profession of nursing. With students consistently exceeding the national licensure pass rates for the traditional Bachelor of Science degree and certification pass rates for the Doctor of Nursing practice family nurse practitioner, and high job placement rates after graduation, it's not a surprise to see that OCU's Kramer School of Nursing was included in the Nursing Schools Almanac's 2020 rankings of the best U.S. nursing schools.

The fall of 2020 brought additional career advancement opportunities for OCU's Kramer School of Nursing students. LPNs now have the option of an LPN-BSN degree track. Nurses who want to pursue their master's degree, but need flexibility, can choose the MSN-HyFlex program. Nurses who work within the context of population-focused care have the option of getting an MSN in the Community Based Public Health (CBPH) track, which is also offered as a DNP Completion track. In addition to the programs, OCU's KSN enrolled their first cohort in the BSN-DNP, Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner track, the first BSN-DNP PMHNP program in the state.

The Meinders Simulations Center offers a seven-bed high-fidelity laboratory mirroring the hospital environment, allowing students to practice with realistic patient care scenarios.

Crystal Westmoreland, PhD, MSN, RN, Chair of Traditional BSN Education at Kramer, states, "I love the collaboration between faculty, staff and students. The mentorship program allows faculty and staff to really get to know students as individuals, helping them through life's obstacles as they pursue their degree. As with all of our programs, Kramer doesn't have wait lists and offers students a variety of full-time and part-time options."

KSN offers an outstanding RN-BSN program in which RNs can complete their BSN in just two semesters, with no prerequisites required. "We have small, individualized classes taught

by a group of amazing faculty, who love working with practicing nurses" said Pam Tucker, MSN, RN, Chair of the RN-BSN program. "The RN-BSN program continues to be an excellent career advancement path for nurses." The program features the best of both worlds with nursing courses meeting face-to-face half day per week and the remaining elective/general education courses offered online. The program is currently offered at OCU, Mercy Hospital-OKC, and Norman Regional Hospital. No nursing exams, care plans or clinical hours are required. RN-BSN students are awarded a discounted tuition rate from the standard OCU tuition.

ADVANCING PRACTICE

Vanessa Wright, PhD, MSN, RN, Associate Professor and MSN Program Coordinator notes the MSN program is now offering Hy-Flex program delivery options where students may choose to attend face-to-face, synchronously using video conferencing, asynchronously fully online, or some combination of the three based on their life schedule and preferred learning modality. The MSN currently offers tracks specializing in Education and Leadership, and Community Based Public Health.

Elizabeth Diener, PhD, RN, PNP, CNE Chair of Graduate Education discusses the Doctor of Philosophy degree. "The PhD degree prepares expert nurses in the roles of nursing education, research, and leadership to serve the community, state, and nation," she said. Students meet on campus for 2-3 days at the beginning of each semester and then complete courses online over the remainder of the semester.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice Completion program is for nurses with careers in all types of health care settings who already hold a master's degree in nursing, advanced practice, or a related field. The program is 30-32 credit hours, post-masters. Focus areas include clinical, community based public health, and executive leadership in organizational or educational settings. Post master's certificates are also available for advanced practice nurses who seek additional certification in an advanced practice role.

Gina Crawford, DNP, APRN-CNP, FNP, CNE, Assistant Dean and Chair of Advanced Practice Programs points out, "Kramer School of Nursing was the first to offer a post-bachelors Doctorate of Nursing Practice program in the state of



Oklahoma. It's been very fulfilling to see this program grow and see the success of our alumni who are now working in a variety of clinical settings and some who own their own clinics." Kramer School of Nursing is the first in Oklahoma to offer the BSN-DNP Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner option.

OCU'S KSN is offering a

virtual information session for the Community-Based Public Health programs monthly from 5:30-7 pm. Prospective students can join an informative webinar and then participate in a breakout session to meet with program advisors and faculty for information specific to the program of their interest. For more information, visit:

www.okcu.edu/nursing.

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Dr. Rosa Ketchum prepares students to achieve their calling as a nurse at Oklahoma Wesleyan University, located in Bartlesville.

Students are meaningful at the School of Nursing at Oklahoma Wesleyan University.

"They are more than a number. They have a name and story that matters," said Dr. Rosa Ketchum, RN, a director in the School of Nursing at Oklahoma Wesleyan University.

"They have a name, a story, and because of the size of all of our programs — that name and student matters to the faculty."

Located in Bartlesville, Oklahoma Wesleyan University offers students three programs.

- OKWU had a total of 954 total degree seekers this past fall. 545 traditional on campus students and 409 in the graduate & professionals studies.

- OKWU has 42 students in the traditional pre-licensure BSN program (this includes traditional BSN admission and LPN-BSN students).

- There are 70 students in the Graduate and professional online program (this includes the RN-BSN and MSN).

The School of Nursing is always starting new cohorts in both their Masters and Bachelor programs.

"We do have an LPN to RN program," she added. "We also, with that have a night to weekend

program."

Flexibility is key in fitting active lifestyles and schedules, she said.

"Especially considering the working adult or realizing that some people have to work and go to the school at the same time."

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing program is based on pediatrics, community health, medical surgical, critical care, and all learning experiences to prepare an RN for a nursing career. The university also offers an RN to BSN program which is for the already practicing RN focusing on community health, leadership and ethics, that are not part of an associate degree program.

"We have a graduate program that has two tracks. There's a nursing education track to help hospital nursing educators or academic nurse educators. And then the other track is administration, which is focused on nursing management. Hospital administration is what we're preparing those nurse leaders to do," Ketchum said.

Smaller cohorts cover all of the programs. The students are more than a number at the School of Nursing at Wesleyan University.

"I feel like because of the size of our school, and the mission of

Connecting to community

Nursing students thrive at Oklahoma Wesleyan University



**OKLAHOMA
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY**

our school, and that being faith based — the faculty is in a place where they can really care for the students," Ketchum said. "They see them not just as a nursing student but as a person who is going to be a nursing professional, but also a person who has interest and value. I think because of our class size and the mission of the school, that's really important."

Oklahoma Wesleyan University has maintained hands-on clinical experiences among the nursing students during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ketchum continued.

Students have adapted to wearing masks and social distancing as a precaution. But virtual simulation experiences have increased to help the students meet their clinical learning objectives. Nursing care related to the pandemic has been a prominent theme of graduate students. Many of them have investigated ways to prevent burnout and fatigue due to the pandemic.

"I feel like nursing is a calling," Ketchum said. "It's not just a profession, it's not just a job, but it truly is a vocation. And so, whenever you get to meet students who feel that calling to serve nursing, to serve others in ways

that are not easy, you get to meet really special people."

Ketchum began her nursing career as an associate degree nurse. She earned her Bachelor in the Science in Nursing degree at Oklahoma Wesleyan University in the RN to BSN program. Her Master of Science in Nursing degree was earned at Indiana Wesleyan University before receiving her doctorate at Grand Canyon University.

Being called to nursing is a special passion that not everybody has embedded in their careers. There is a selflessness by placing others first, she said.

"We serve them wherever they are, and I think that is really beautiful," she said. "People who are called to nursing are beautiful to me — they make you better."

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The BSN and MSN degree programs are accredited by CCNE. The baccalaureate degree and master's degree in nursing at Oklahoma Wesleyan University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation>).

Standing in the Gap

Northwestern forging tomorrow's nurses

Nursing has always been a profession that has stood in the gap, taking care of those who need it the most.

So when the Covid pandemic came, leaders at Northwestern Oklahoma State knew their students needed their education now more than ever.

"One of the things we've been able to do since the pandemic is we're continuing to forge ahead and maintain face-to-face classes and clinicals," said Shelly Wells, PhD, MBA, APRN-CNS, ANEF, Division of Nursing Chair & Professor. "That's in all three of our programs."

Tight-knit clinical partner relationships coupled with one of the state's lowest student-to-faculty ratios kept Northwestern students in the classroom and at the bedside during a once-in-a-lifetime event.

Long-known as one the most affordable nursing programs in the state, Northwestern features nationally-award-winning faculty and small class sizes.

It's no wonder there's such high interest in the school's three different options.

The traditional BSN program is offered at four different sites including Alva, Enid, Woodward and University Center in Ponca City.

The online RN to BSN program offers a 12-month cycle with no clinical hours and a liberal course transfer policy. It was rated the #1 RN-to-BSN program in Oklahoma in 2020 by www.intelligent.com.

The hybrid BSN to DNP program has also taken off. "There's been a lot of demand for both online and hybrid," Wells said. "We are one of only two public universities that offer a family nurse practitioner emphasis and we are the only program in the state that has an emphasis on rural nursing and the needs of rural communities."

The decision to stay in class and the hospital came with much planning and cooperation.

A Nightingale Award of Nursing Excellence recipient from the Oklahoma Nurses Association, Wells takes pride in her low faculty-to-student ratio and the relationships her faculty has forged at healthcare facilities across northwestern Oklahoma.

Allowing students to learn in their communities creates a natural draw.

"Part of it is because we are offered at four different sites so we have limited numbers at each site," Wells explained. "We're able to maintain that social distancing in the classroom. Part of it is the partnerships we've established with our clinical agencies."

This spring some of those clinical agencies are supporting paid internships for senior nursing students.

"The hospitals are paying these students to do their clinical hours," Wells said.

The BSN programs are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN) and is approved by the Oklahoma



Board of Nursing (OBN). The BSN-to-DNP program is accredited by the Commission for Collegiate Education in Nursing (CCNE) and approved by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing.

With more than 30 years of teaching experience in nursing, Wells has closely followed the national trend calling for more BSN-prepared nurses.

"All the hospitals we have talked to in Oklahoma prefer to hire BSN-prepared nurses and they are encouraging their staff to go back and complete their BSN," Wells said. "We're seeing those numbers increase."

For More information visit: <https://www.nwosu.edu/>



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The online RN-to-BSN is a 12-month online program with no traditional clinical hours requirement and no campus visit requirements.

The BSN-to-DNP Family Nurse Practitioner program is a hybrid model offering online classes, limited campus visits, and local clinical practicums.



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The traditional **Bachelor of Science in Nursing** program is the fastest-growing program at SNU! Since 1982, Southern Nazarene University's Liberal Arts-based program has been preparing well-rounded graduates to work as professional nurses in today's fast-paced, technologically advanced healthcare environment.

Given the increasing complexity of patients in a rapidly transforming healthcare system, preparing nurses to enter the profession and be successful in the field is vital. A goal of the university and the SNU School of Nursing (SON) is to prepare nurses to be servant leaders, focusing on the growth and well-being of the people and the communities where they live and work. Feedback from employers about SNU graduates include that they are well prepared, compassionate, caring, and have a drive to learn how to best take care of their patients. SNU graduates embody the philosophy

of the School of Nursing, which can be summarized in the words **"THINK. DO. LOVE!"**

"To be a part of the SNU School of Nursing is to be part of a family. There are many great characteristics that the SNU SON encompasses. The faculty advocate for students and make us feel valued. We are fortunate enough to attend a nursing program that not only helps us become great nurses, but also well-rounded people.

"I feel confident that my education at SNU has equipped me to serve others and lead in love. There is so much compassion that is felt while attending the SNU School of Nursing." ~ Student Nurses' Association President and Senior Nursing Student, Ciara Lackey.

SNU welcomes all inquiries about the program!

To learn more, please visit our website at snu.edu/nursing, or schedule a campus visit at snu.edu/campus-visit.



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By any measure, Southwestern Oklahoma State University with campus locations in Weatherford and Sayre is considered by many to be the home of one of Oklahoma's best universities. SWOSU is known for its quality programs having 14 nationally accredited academic programs—most among the senior regional universities in Oklahoma.



SWOSU
Southwestern Oklahoma State University

The SWOSU School of Nursing offers five programs: the traditional BSN program taught on campus and three online degrees for students who are already RNs: RN to BSN, MSN in Nursing Education (graduate) and MSN Nursing Administration (graduate).

SWOSU also offers online professional programs in Health Information Management, Healthcare Informatics and Information Management (graduate).

The university also has two contractual agreement programs between SWOSU and Caddo Kiowa Technology Center for the Occupational Therapy Assistant and the Physical Therapist Assistant Programs.

Six of SWOSU's nationally accredited programs are in Health Information Management, Nursing, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiologic Technology and Medical Laboratory Technician.

The university boasts professionally and academically qualified faculty who mentor students towards accomplishment of their goals.

SWOSU boasts one of the most diverse selections of academic college course options and the university is top rated in affordability. As always, SWOSU is dedicated to providing its students with a quality education while preparing them for the career of their dreams.

Weatherford is very accessible—located on Interstate 40, less than one hour west of the Oklahoma City metro area. The location is convenient for commuters and traditional students. Visit <https://www.swosu.edu> for more information.

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Nursing Education, Empowering the Next Generation of Oklahoma's Elite Nurses



For nearly 50 years, the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) has provided Oklahoma with well-qualified and educated nurses. Graduates of Central's nursing programs are known for being some of the best nurses in the state of Oklahoma and around the nation, and the UCO Department of Nursing is proud to continue this tradition.

Central's bachelor's and master's programs prepare tomorrow's leaders in nursing through a variety of settings, which helps the demand at all levels of nursing services needed in Oklahoma. Central offers traditional and nontraditional programs that fit the needs of anyone wanting to pursue a career in nursing or further their nursing education. Accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, Central offers the traditional BSN program with courses offered at the conveniently-located Edmond campus; the fully online RN to B.S. in nursing track; the fast-track B.S.; and, the fully online master's degree in nursing, which includes two tracks.

Traditional BSN Program

The traditional nursing program is for someone who has not yet obtained a license to practice nursing as a registered nurse. This may be a student who is attending college for their first degree or someone who has already earned a degree in another field and has decided that nursing is in their future.

Online RN to B.S. in Nursing Track

Central's RN to B.S. track is available 100% online for registered nurses who are interested in furthering their nursing education. Upon successful completion, nurses will have earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing. Central's commitment to providing registered nurses with quality, convenient, student-focused curriculum and a cost-effective baccalaureate nursing education is the inspiration for the track.

With both part- and full-time options available and for as low as \$8,500, Central's track is designed to provide flexibility for students, with the option to complete the track in as little as 10 months.

"The RN to B.S. in nursing track at UCO takes the flexibility, affordability and convenience of an online degree with the recognized quality provided by our faculty to provide an experience students are looking for," said Barbara Arnold, Ed.D., RN, chairperson and associate



professor of nursing at Central.

Fast-Track BS

Central's Fast Track in nursing is for those students who have earned a traditional bachelor's degree in another field and would like to change to the profession of nursing. Upon successful completion, a Bachelor of Science in nursing will be awarded. The fast-track program can be completed in just 16 months and provides the flexibility of hybrid courses.

Online M.S. in Nursing

The Master of Science in nursing degree at UCO will help to provide for the increasing global need of health care practitioners with expanded nursing knowledge. The program offers working RNs flexibility through fully online courses with both part- and full-time options available. The program can be completed in as little as 16 months, if pursued full time. Students are required to also complete 100 clinical hours. The online Master of Science in nursing can be completed for as little as \$15,000.

Nursing graduate students have the ability to choose from two tracks, the nursing education track or the specialty nursing track. A master's degree in nursing education will prepare students for academic positions in nursing education or for a position in hospital staff education. The specialty nursing track allows students to meet individual goals in areas such as leadership or administration.

Next Generation of Nurses

All UCO nursing programs offer real-world instruction from supportive nursing faculty who are experts in their field of nursing. Graduates from UCO nursing programs are recognized within the health care community for their knowledge, professionalism and leadership potential. Central prides itself as a smart investment for success and for preparing future leaders in an opportunity-rich environment.

"I have to thank UCO's online RN to BS program for giving me courage, skills and knowledge, I have learned so much in the program already. I have found great love and passion for evidence-based practice, quality management and nursing research," said Vicena Skelton, a current Central RN to BSN student.

"This program has fantastic faculty, staff and educators that are understanding and caring. They have helped make pandemic online learning doable and your degree achievable."

The UCO Department of Nursing has degree programs that can help you achieve your career goals, whether you are new to health care and are seeking your first degree in nursing or are a registered nurse interested in advancing your current career.

For more information about nursing programs offered at Central, visit www.uco.edu/nursing.

A photograph of three healthcare professionals, two women and one man, wearing teal scrubs. They are standing in a row, with the woman in the center slightly in front of the others. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. A large yellow diagonal shape is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing text.

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