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Golden Age LPN built to endure



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Danielle Hodges, LPN, plans to become a registered nurse after the COVID-19 pandemic passes.

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Danielle Hodges has a lot to celebrate as an LPN working nearly 11 years at Golden Age Nursing Home in Guthrie. She began her career there as a certified nurse aide, and has never looked back, except by being grateful.

"They did the training here, and I started as a CNA and became a CMA and just worked my way up to LPN," Hodges said.

She earned her nursing license in October

of 2019 after graduating from Meridian Technology Center in August of that year. Golden Age was close to home and offered a lot of flexibility for a mother with children in school.

"It's pretty family oriented and is kind of like my second family," Hodges said.

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by Vicki Jenkins - Writer/Photographer

If you happened to have driven by Legend Senior Living Council Road on February 4, between 11:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m., you would have seen signs that read SUPER BOWL, TAIL GATERS WELCOME and a line of cars picking up to-go orders consisting of hot off the grill meals, complete with freshly popped popcorn. It was an extra windy day, and colder than usual for Oklahoma but that didn't stop Stephanie Harvey, Director of Sales at Legend, Diane Young, BrightStar Care, MaLane Harbour, Frontier Hospice, and Sheri Mullikin, Providence Home Care from handing out to-go boxes, along with friendly smiles hiding behind the masks as they faced the cold.

Stephanie Harvey is the Director of Sales at Legend Senior Living Council Road. It's not surprising that Stephanie is a motivated and energetic person with lots of social aspects when it comes to work. "I'm that way in my personal life too," she said with a smile. "I believe that happiness is found within yourself and we all have choices to make. This can make our lives happy or miserable," she said. "We live and learn to make the right choice. It helps me to learn who I really am and why I really want out of my life. I have learned this and hope to live and be an example for people all around me," she added. Stephanie's typical day consists of attending to new residents, current residents, and potential residents, making sure their cares are met.

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HODGES

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Every learning opportunity is one she embraced. Having worked as a CNA was an in-depth experience in getting to know the residents, she said, by spending a lot of time with them. One inspiration led to another. Her former Director of Nurses would always ask her when she was going to start nursing school with each evaluation.

"My mom remembers I wanted to be a nurse when I was really little. And I had a doctor kit — I was always playing doctor with my dolls and said I'm going to be a nurse someday," she said. "I started out of high school and life took different routes and I started back to school 24 years later."

She learned about treatments and assessments in LPN school. But being a long-term care nurse and working in a skilled unit also takes a lot of patience, Hodges continued.

Hodges currently works on the skilled unit where she gets many of the new admissions. Her patients there have conditions such as hip

fractures, broken bones or heart failure. Anyone recovering from an injury or serious illness will often transfer from a hospital to be rehabilitated before returning home or assisted living. They may also be admitted to the nursing home when needed. Her life is often touched by the challenges that she and patients fight to endure. Currently there are not any COVID-19 patients at Golden Age, but Hodges said the pandemic is one of the toughest experiences she has been through. She was a new nurse when the pandemic began spreading throughout Oklahoma in 2019.

"It makes you realize that you don't take things for granted. Hug your loved ones close because you don't know what tomorrow brings," Hodges said. "That was tough. You had to give extra love to people because their loved ones weren't able to. You were all they had. I don't ever plan to go anywhere. This is my home."

She loves everything about her patients, especially taking care of the elderly. She loves that all it takes is a smile on their faces to brighten the day.

Hodges loves that the nursing staff keeps each other going. When somebody is in self doubt wondering if they can endure, they learn from their co-workers they are built to endure.

"We're going to go through this together," is a phrase she has heard. "We are going to help each other out," have been helpful words.

If someone is having a bad day, there is always a helping hand to pick-up the slack, she said.

Golden Age states that it continues to take all necessary steps to protect residents and staff by reducing the risk of spread of COVID-19 in compliance with the Oklahoma State Department of Health, Centers of Disease Control and Prevention and CMS. The facility is currently operating in Phase 2 of the OSDH re-opening plan.

"While we are yet unable to fully re-open our doors to the public, residents may safely reunite with their loved ones using our indoor visitation area, Welcome Window or virtual methods," Golden Age explains.

Family members are allowed to come inside to see a family member on hospice services by wearing personal protective equipment, Hodges said.

While working in the skilled unit Hodges always asks a patient about their goal. She works closely with the therapy department about how to achieve the personal best for each patient.

She said it's a heart-felt moment to see a patient return home knowing they will have their quality of life continue outside the skilled unit.

Many former patients come up and hug her at the grocery store or right her letters of thanks.

Hodges is on her feet a lot and loves her family time with her husband and three children, and four grandchildren. Another grandchild is on the way. She also has goats at home she attends to.

"Yard work for me is relaxing," she said.



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LEGENDS

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Growing up in New Mexico and Oklahoma, when Stephanie was little, she wanted to be an X-Ray technician but later on, decided she would stay in the medical field, working on the business side. She has worked in the business/medical area for ten years. She has several relatives who decided on their career as EMS, RN's and staff.

What advice would you give to someone going into the medical field? Stephanie replied, "No matter what position you choose, whether your job is in a hospital, or in doctor's office, do the best job you can do. You must have plenty of patience and perseverance. Always love what you are doing, that is a key factor."

Stephanie shows true leadership with her compassion and discipline. "Yes, I am very much a leader," she said. I love a challenge and use my experiences to help other people become the best version of themselves. I love working here and feel like everyone is family," Stephanie said. "There are forty-seven residents here on a daily basis. The staff gets along with the residents and that makes a big difference," Stephanie said. "The

biggest challenge I have? It is being successful in my career and being a mom to my two daughters, Chelsea and Chloe. It's hard to balance work like and personal life sometimes, but it always seem to come out in the right way in the end. Stephanie has received numerous awards and recognitions with positions in different positions of her job roles.

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How has the Coronavirus changed your life? "Covid has affected the impact of being able to assist with resident to receive care in an appropriate time frame due to protocol and insecurities and lack of knowledge when it comes to contraction of the virus," Stephanie explained.

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Pictured L-R Stephanie Havey, Legend, Sheri Mullikin, Providence Healthcare, Malane Harbour, Frontier Hospice.

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Asking Stephanie to describe her life in three words, she replied, "Happy, healthy and fun."

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CAREERS IN NURSING

WORKING WITH GERIATRICS : PROVIDENCE HOME CARE

Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Providence Home Care is a Home Health and Private duty agency serving the OKC metro area since 2002. They have the honor of currently caring for one hundred forty patients. Their clinical team consists of three RNs, three LPNs and a number of physical and occupational therapists. They offer a variety of skilled services with specialty programs in cardiac care, tele-monitoring program, orthopedic after care, wound care, disease management and maintenance.

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Kimberly Walinski, RN is

Director of Clinical Services. She has worked at Providence Home Care for five years. Taking on many responsibilities, Kimberly stays busy as she oversees care of all of the patients, reviews daily labs, schedules, communicates with physicians and their staff members. "I serve on the Leadership team at Providence. Working here has been a blessing. I was fortunate to have mentors that encouraged me, guided me and believed in me. Sometimes, you don't know what you are capable of until someone believes in you."

As a young child, Kimberly had a dream of being the next Whitney Houston. "As I got older and realized that I couldn't sing well, I thought I would make a great attorney. I loved to argue

my point because I hated to be wrong," she said with a laugh.

It was nineteen years ago that Kimberly became a nurse. "I chose nursing after watching my mother suffer from cardiac and respiratory illness starting in her late forties. I was inspired to learn more about disease management and prevention. After receiving my CNA my senior year in high school, I applied to LPN school. I graduated from Southwest Technology Center and received my LPN license in 2001. In 2007, I decided to advance my education and received my ASN from Platt College here in OKC."

What qualities make a good nurse? "I believe one should be able to see the whole picture. I've learned that while we may see illnesses every day, for each

patient, it is personal. This is their journey, their struggle, their battle. I see everyone as an individual, not a case and not another disease. Individualized care, time and understanding is just as valuable as the skill we provide," Kimberly commented.

Kimberly considers her biggest reward as a nurse is that she cares for them during a vulnerable season of life. "Knowing that I played a part and that every night I can go to bed knowing that I brought value. Working primary with geriatrics is an honor. I can't think of a more deserving populations to care for," she said.

"On the other hand, the biggest challenge as nursing manager has been learning to

See WALINSKI Page 5



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WALINSKI

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manage people. To find a balance between making decisions that are best for our company and operations but also provide the best work environment for our team. The work we do is hard, physically and emotionally taxing. I have to care for my employees as well as my patients," Kimberly added.

Asking Kimberly if anyone influenced her to be a nurse, she replied, "My mother always told me that she wanted to go to nursing school but never had the opportunity. It was an incredible pride for her that I became a nurse. She told anyone about it, as long as they would listen," she said. "My mother passed away eight years ago and it brings me joy knowing how proud she was to have a daughter in nursing," she added.

How has the Coronavirus changed your life? Kimberly replied, "It has been incredibly challenging and managing in healthcare during the pandemic. From creating new

infection prevention policies to acquiring proper PPE to protect our staff and patients. We were all fearful at the beginning but the care-workers had to put that to the side, working hard to educate ourselves and take every possible precaution to protect ourselves, patients and families. It is a full team effort and our team has handled it amazingly. As healthcare providers, we made a choice to care for others, putting their needs above our own."

Kimberly is a strong individual that has always had a determination to succeed in everything she sets her mind to. "Facing challenges made me strong. It taught me that I can accomplish anything if I am willing to work hard for it."

What three words describe your life? Kimberly replied, "Career-mom, grateful, busy."



Kimberly Walinski, RN, is the Director of Clinical Services at Providence Home Care.



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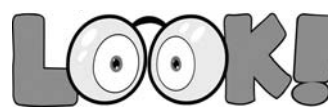
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161 LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSING**Licensed Practical Nurse**

Home Health - Weekends PRN at Encompass Health - Home Health and Hospice in Stillwater, Oklahoma. At Encompass Health - Home Health, the LPN administers skilled nursing services to clients requiring intermittent professional services. These services are performed in the clients' home in accordance with the physician's orders and the established plan of care, under the direction and supervision of the Branch Director and Supervising RN, and teaches the client, family and other members of the health care team. 2318 West 7th Street, Stillwater, OK 74074.

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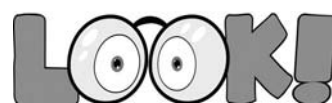
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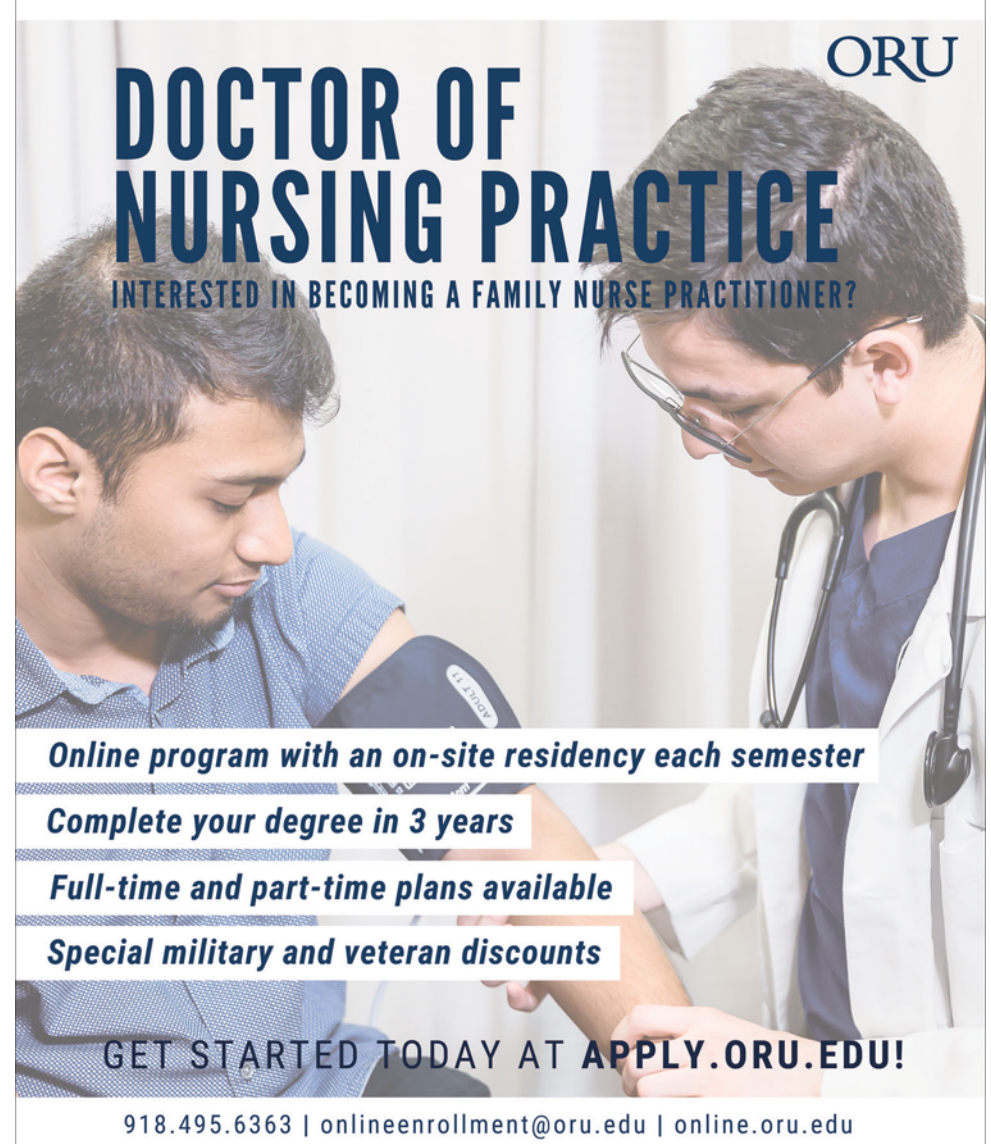
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KINDRED HEALTHCARE AND MERCY ACQUIRE EVEREST REHABILITATION HOSPITAL OF OKLAHOMA CITY

Kindred and Mercy now operate two rehabilitation hospitals in Oklahoma City

Kindred Healthcare, LLC and Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City today announced they have acquired Everest Rehabilitation Hospital of Oklahoma City. Kindred and Mercy will operate the hospital, now renamed Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital Oklahoma City South, through their existing joint venture.

Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital Oklahoma City South is a 36-bed rehabilitation hospital located in the southern part of Oklahoma City at 7900 Mid America Blvd.

Kindred and Mercy also operate Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital Oklahoma City, which opened in October 2012 and is located in the northern part of the city. Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital Oklahoma City currently has 50 beds and, as previously announced, is adding a 10,000-square-foot patient wing that will increase capacity by 32%, with 16 additional beds and two additional patient care areas.

Both Oklahoma City hospitals serve patients recovering from strokes and other long-term illnesses or injuries and feature specialized clinical programs.

"We are excited to build on our relationship with Mercy and increase access to rehabilitation services in Oklahoma City," said Russ Bailey, president of Kindred Rehabilitation Services. "Our new hospital will provide the same high-quality, compassionate care and patient advocacy for which Kindred and Mercy are well known."

Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital in northwest Oklahoma City frequently operates at or near capacity, which limits the ability to expand services or admit additional patients for needed rehabilitation care. The additional beds under construction at the north location as well as the addition of a second facility in southern Oklahoma City will help meet a growing demand for rehabilitation services.

"As an Oklahoman, I am honored

to be part of expanding services to more patients in Oklahoma City as we continue to grow with Mercy," said Sharon Smeltzer, division vice president – West, Kindred Hospital Rehabilitation Services and the first chief executive officer of Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital. "This expansion is possible because of the hard work, dedication and commitment of our co-workers to providing high-quality and compassionate rehabilitative care."

Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital Oklahoma City was named the best physical rehabilitation center in Oklahoma and one of the best in the country by Newsweek magazine in 2020.

"We know our patients need access

to more rehab services to aid in their recovery and it's important to us to be able to offer a complete continuum of care at Mercy," said Zack Dawson, vice president of operations and post-acute services at Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City. "We're excited those services will soon be available for even more patients in a convenient location."

"Everest Rehabilitation Hospitals is honored to have been an instrumental part of developing and operating a rehabilitation hospital for Oklahomans for decades to come. We are so excited for Kindred's and Mercy's addition to their successful joint venture," said Jay Quintana, CEO for Everest Rehabilitation Hospitals, LLC.

Primary care clinic in Moore welcomes new nurse practitioner

A nurse practitioner has joined the team at Norman Regional's Primary Care – Moore clinic. Debbie Strickland, APRN-CNP, specializes in family medicine and is accepting new patients.

She completed her Master of Science in Nursing at the University of Alabama. She is a member of The Institute for Functional Medicine and the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners.

Strickland's interests include the management of:

- COPD • Diabetes • Hormone deficiency supplementation • Hypertension • Lyme disease • Vitamin & mineral deficiency supplementation • Wellness & disease prevention

Strickland said, "My patients can expect me to look at the whole picture to uncover the roots of the patient's ailment." This allows her to create and implement a comprehensive shared plan of care. Her overall goal is to help her patients achieve their optimal level of functioning and health by integrating healthy lifestyle modification, replacement of hormones and vitamin/mineral deficiencies, and medication if needed. She encourages her patients to be engaged and involved with their plan of care.

A life-long learner, Debbie enjoys learning about complementary options for health. She also enjoys riding bikes, hiking, working outdoors, reading and spending time with family and friends. Debbie's great, great, great, great grandfather was Jesse Chisholm, a fur trader and merchant known for scouting and developing the Chisholm Trail.



Debbie Strickland, APRN-CNP.



Cooper was diagnosed with a fatal liver disease at two months old. Transplantation was the only option that would save his life.

On July 7, 2001, a wonderful family gave Cooper the gift he needed. He received his new liver and is now 14 years post-transplant.

Cooper is now in the ninth grade and has a passion for bowling. He plays competitively and also bowls for his high school team.

Cooper is alive and doing well today because of the gift that one family gave 14 years ago. We are so blessed by Cooper. When you meet him, he makes you want to be a better person. He has touched so many lives by sharing his story. Cooper realizes that without his donor family, there would be no story to tell.

Organ, eye and tissue donation saves lives. Please make your decision to donate life and tell your family. Register to be an organ, eye and tissue donor on your Oklahoma driver's license or state ID card or register online at www.LifeShareRegistry.org. You may also call 800-826-LIFE (5433) and request a donor registration card.

Cooper LifeShare

NURSE TALK

If you were given a talent, what talent would you want to have?



Providence
Home Care

My talent would be to cook well. I love to eat but I am a terrible cook!



Kimberly Walinski, RN

I would like to have the ability to be a public speaker without stammering and stuttering.



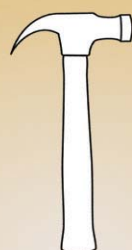
Jolynne Manley, LPN

I would love to be given the talent of a photographic memory; the ability to learn multiple foreign languages, being able to quote the content of most everything.



Chrystal Mohr, RN, BSN

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SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

Cases	427,558
*Total Cumulative Negative Specimens to Date	3,135,060
*Total Cumulative Number of Specimens to Date	3,536,729
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facility Hospitalizations	366
Other Types of Facilities Hospitalizations	30
Total Cumulative Hospitalizations	24,156
Provisional Death Count (CDC/NCHS)	7,202

- This week, 28 Oklahoma counties are in the “orange” risk level, 47 are in the “yellow” risk level, and two are 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 427,558 cases of COVID-19 in Oklahoma.
- 648 is today’s 7-day rolling average for the number of new cases reported.
- Today’s Provisional Death Count (CDC/NCHS): 7,202
- Additional hospitalization data can be found in the Hospital Tiers report, published evenings Monday through Friday.
- Register online to receive a notification when you’re eligible to schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment at vaccinate.oklahoma.gov.
- For more information, visit <https://oklahoma.gov/covid19.html>.

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

*****The purpose of publishing aggregated statistical COVID-19 data through the OSDH Dashboard, the Executive Order Report, and the Weekly Epidemiology and Surveillance Report is to support the needs of the general public in receiving important and necessary information regarding the state of the health and safety of the citizens of Oklahoma. These resources may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be used in any way that would determine the identity of any reported cases.**

Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health. *As of 2021-03-05 at 7:00 a.m.

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Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health Opens Space for Patients undergoing Cancer



Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health held a ribbon cutting for a newly updated space that creates options for patients hospitalized while undergoing cancer treatment.

The ribbon cutting incorporated both virtual and socially distanced elements to reveal renovations to the space, located on the hospital's 10th floor, which has been named Keaton's Clubhouse, based on the life of a young courageous patient named Keaton Barr?n, who passed away in 2018 at the age of 8. Much-needed upgrades for the well-used space were accomplished through a \$75,000 gift from Keaton's Kindness Foundation.

The foundation honors the life of the namesake who began his journey as a cancer patient as a 2-year-old.

The renovated space has been the only space where children, whose immune systems are

vulnerable as a result of treatment, could gather to participate in group activities designed to provide emotional support and social connection, as well as normal, child-like fun. In pre-pandemic times, the space was often the venue for a family meal or birthday party. It also offers a place to interact and connect with other children and family members coping with the challenges of critical, often life-threatening illnesses.

Jon Hayes, president, Oklahoma Children's Hospital, said, "I'm deeply grateful for what Keaton's Clubhouse contributes to the environment of hope and healing we strive to create here and the generous gift that has made it possible. Oklahoma Children's Hospital, its providers and staff members celebrate the life of every child and the families that accompany them when hospitalization becomes

necessary. Keaton's lasting legacy will benefit countless individuals, ensuring a more comforting, nurturing environment for patients and families who are facing possibly the most difficult chapter of their lives."

Keaton's parents, Holly and Luke Barr?n, are grateful for the skilled and compassionate care their son received as an inpatient at Oklahoma Children's Hospital.

"What our son was able to do to impact the lives of others was nothing short of amazing, and we want to make sure amazing things continue to happen for other children and the people who love them and care for them," said Luke Barr?n. "I'm not that selfless, and to see how this one little boy was able to bring love, care and compassion to other people is quite remarkable."

"To mitigate the emotional and social impact of isolation that can

occur with severe illness, events must come to the child who cannot participate in group activities, typically held in the Children's Atrium or The Zone. An alternate space is an opportunity to keep children connected and engaged. Keaton's Clubhouse helps us make that happen," said Sara Jacobson, director, Volunteers and Philanthropy.

To keep Keaton's determined spirit of kindness alive in tangible ways, Keaton's Kindness Foundation was established with a simple mission: "To be kind to others, be courageous, compassionate and caring." Beyond funding renovations for Keaton's Clubhouse, the foundation hosts Break Out parties in the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit and offers monthly Lego parties for children with cancer. Additionally, the foundation supports a variety of hospital initiatives that improve the experiences of families.

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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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United Way
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