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Kind hearts

Nursing staff celebrates dignity of life



Cori Roney's leadership begins with compassion and a curiosity to learn.

by James Coburn - staff writer

Cori Roney helps patients live their lives as happy as they can be.

Her career as a registered nurse comforts lives as the director of nursing at St. Ann's Skilled Nursing & Therapy, located in Oklahoma City.

There are many opportunities to learn about a myriad of modalities in patient care at St. Ann's.

"One is their personalities, just like you get to know about your friends — what they like

and what they dislike. Their ups and downs, what helps them relax. So even if I'm having a bad day, you still have your family here and they can bring you out of it. It ups your spirits because they are here."

Her grandfather was in a nursing home. So, she empathizes with families on their journey into long-term care. It

See HEARTS Page 2

Summit to offer diabetes education



Emily Jones, PhD, RNC-OB, FAHA, FPCNA and PhD Nursing Program director.

by Bobby Anderson, RN, Staff Writer

Christy Olson, RD, LD, CDE, MS has been involved in the planning of the annual Harold Hamm Diabetes Care Summit for more than a decade now.

Emily Jones is working on her first summit.

Both University of Oklahoma College of Nursing faculty members are excited about the educational opportunity the Sept. 10 virtual event will provide to nurses and clinicians.

"I love this summit because it's an opportunity to really help translate and help let clinicians walk away with something new they didn't know before they came," said Jones, PhD, RNC-OB, FAHA, FPCNA and PhD Nursing Program director.

"How diverse our audience is speaks a lot about the impact of the summit. Not everybody practices in the same type of setting. There may be dietitians who attend. There may be registered nurses and scientists who attend along with community health

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HEARTS

Continued from Page 1

helps her to take pride in her work knowing families can take comfort in knowing their loved one is safe and secure when living at home is no longer the best option in care.

Roney began her career as a licensed practical nurse after graduating from the Western Technology Center in Burns Flat. She later graduated from Oklahoma City Community College with a nursing degree. She started in home health and progressed into wound care. Her RN license brought her to a totally skilled facility. She worked at a hospital but wanted to get to know her patients better so she ventured into a skilled rehab facility where she could see patients improve with smiles on their faces when returning home.

Teamwork is a story of success at St. Ann's Skilled Nursing & Therapy. She accepted her new career challenge at St. Ann's in January of 2020. A lot of the staff were new last year when the COVID pandemic emerged throughout Oklahoma. Roney is grateful to work where nurses radiate a caring spirit about the residents.

How St. Ann's nursing staff responded to the pandemic touched Roney's heart with grace. Families have been very supportive throughout all of life's challenges. They are like family, too. Life is more of a celebration at St. Ann's.

"We have birthdays, and our staff will go buy them birthday presents of what patients like. They enjoy seeing them happy," she said. "Our nurses are really compassionate, and you can't teach compassion. It's a natural personality trait. It's easy to train somebody their skills, but not to have compassion."

Roney recalls a patient who had COVID. She had spent a month hospitalized and it was touch-and-go regarding her survival. The woman returned to St. Ann's and is stronger than ever. Seeing someone's health overcome dark struggles is one of the reasons to be a nurse, Roney said,

"Something that has changed my life, my perspective while being at this facility is the support that we have gotten from our families in the community during the hard times," she continued.

The past year represents one



thread of a career that flourished while helping others. As a child she would watch TV shows about medicine. The nurses portrayed seemed so awesome. She earned her CNA license when in high school. It was a natural fit for a teenager who enjoyed making other people feel better.

"I just like taking care of people. If I can make their day better, I feel like I've done my job," she explained.

She has a lot of praise for certified nurse aides. They are the hardest workers, Roney said.

Having been a CNA deepened her understanding of the dignity of life. Being a nurse means more than taking care of a patient, she said. Patients are people with individualized needs.

"Some people prefer to have their hair fixed, smell good and to wear nice clothes," she said. "That's their preference and it is a dignity. Most of the geriatrics, when they grew up, they dressed to impress all the time. That has helped me as a nurse when looking at the smaller things."

Small things like wearing glasses, how residents rest in bed matter to them. And Roney said if she didn't start out as a CNA that she might have missed that.

About 50 percent of CNAs become nurses at St. Ann's, Roney said. But some of them don't.

"They love what they do. That's their calling."

St. Ann's offers a nursing scholarship through the Bridges program. Each employee also has an educational fund with options that Bridges will pay for.

"That's what I feel like is really good about this facility is we're home-grown and we like to grow people."

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SUMMIT

Continued from Page 1

workers from diverse communities in Oklahoma.

"I think just being part of the group for the day and seeing the broad range of the summit is probably what I'm looking forward to the most."

The Harold Hamm Diabetes Care Summit, co-sponsored by the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists, is the region's premier, annual continuing-education conference for diabetes.

Online registration continues now through the beginning of the event, which will be held virtually this year after a one-year hiatus due to Covid. Olson said the event has been providing information for almost two decades now.

"Most of us - whether you're working in the hospital or in the outpatient setting, or in healthcare in general - deal with diabetes everyday," said Olson, MS, RDN, LD, CDCES. "We have some great, well-known speakers."

Expert presentations include updated clinical approaches for diabetes patient management and interprofessional strategies for diabetes self-care and education.

Participants can earn up to seven CE credits.

Keynote speakers will discuss several notable research topics.

Steven Kahn, M.B., Ch.B. is a Professor of Medicine, and director of the Diabetes Research Center at the University of Washington and VA Puget Sound Health Care System.

His research interests include the role of the B-cell in the pathogenesis and treatment of prediabetes and type 2 diabetes. He has performed physiological studies and actively participates in a number of large multicenter clinical trials to prevent and treat type 2 diabetes, which include the ongoing Restoring Insulin Secretion (RISE) Study that he chairs. Aside from his clinical studies, he has an extensive basic research program examining the loss of B-cells in type 2 diabetes.

Rochelle Naylor, M.D. is an Assistant Professor, Biological Sciences Division, Department of Pediatrics, University of Chicago Medicine

Dr. Naylor is a pediatric endocrinologist, specializing in the care of children and adolescents with diabetes and other endocrine disorders, including disorders of growth and puberty, thyroid disease and adrenal disease.

An active researcher, Dr. Naylor focuses on the diagnosis and treatment of monogenic diabetes -- a rare form of diabetes caused by genetic mutations.

She studies a subset of monogenic diabetes known as maturity-onset diabetes of the young (MODY). She aims to determine the prevalence of MODY, and establish treatment protocols. As a part of this work, Dr. Naylor maintains the MODY section of the Kovler Monogenic Diabetes Registry, a nationwide database of individuals affected by this rare form of diabetes.

In her first year on the planning committee, Jones said she quickly found out the offerings are user-driven.

"What I could tell was this group really didn't want to do a repeat performance of summits done recently," Jones said. "That's another wonderful thing about the summit is it's always fresh. The speakers are always bringing something that hasn't been discussed recently and there's that opportunity for new knowledge development."

While the event will be virtual this year due to Covid, both planning committee members agreed the format offers more flexibility in terms of offerings.

Reduced travel costs and travel



Christy Olson, , RD, LD, CDE, MS.

time allowed the committee to bring in speakers that otherwise might not have been able to attend. The online format also allows for participants from different settings such as rural communities to get the educational offerings as those closer to the larger metro hospitals.

"I think it does open up an entire new pathway to bringing knowledge to Oklahoma clinicians who work in diabetes," Jones said.

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CAREERS IN NURSING

FAMILY MEDICINE IS FOUNDATION OF PATIENTS HEALTH

By Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Working at Integris in Yukon OK is Stephanie Mendoza LPN. She has been a nurse for two and half years working for Jason Breed, MD, a board-certified family medicine physician who offers obstetric care. Dr. Breed's practice focuses on whole family care, from obstetrics, including surgical obstetrics, to pediatrics, adolescent medicine, mental health, adult medicine and geriatrics. His office is located at 1205 Health Center Parkway, Suite 100, Yukon, OK 73099

Stephanie enjoys being a nurse. "I like my job and I like caring for others. Growing up in Amarillo, Texas, I studied nursing at Amarillo College, graduating in December 2017. I moved to OKC in 2018. I remember when I was a little girl, I always wanted to go into the medical field. At the time, I just wasn't sure where my future would be going. Now, I have a whole new

different answer. I became a nurse to simply help a patient at any time in their life. I worked at a family clinic and on the floor. My first job was at a family Medicine Clinic ranging from newborns to geriatrics. Being able to follow my dream and be a nurse is all it took for me. To me, working in family medicine is the foundation of a patients health."

"Caring for the patients and taking care of that person for the duration of my shift is my biggest rewards of being a nurse; whether it be getting a patient's medication authorized to caring for a patient that is hospitalized. I know that I helped my patients in a time of need and taking care of them because I actually want to," Stephanie commented.

"Personally, my biggest quality as a nurse would be the natural rush of true care when it comes down

to taking care of my community; Whether it be on the floor, Med Surg, Covid Unit or at a Family Medicine Clinic," Stephanie added. "It is all good," Stephanie said.

"My biggest challenge is understanding that every patient's outcome will not be the outcome that we want for them."

Stephanie has a busy day, starting at 8:00 am, talking to each patient that is there to see the doctor, gathering their information for the visit and making sure medications, health maintenance and immunizations are up to date. "I see about three hundred fifty patients per month," she said. "That makes for quite a few patients," she said with a smile.

When asking Stephanie to describe herself, she replied, "If I had to put myself in a nutshell, I'd say that I am a very caring person with a lot of goals that I

want to do for myself, my family and my community. I believe in being honest, friendly and trusting to others. Being a second generation American I understand and know the reality of not having access or even the means to healthcare. So, I am humble and blessed to have the knowledge of being able to help others. I am definitely a leader. I think that encourages me to set more goals for myself and reach them."

"It was my father that influenced me to become a nurse. He always had some encouraging words for me and kept me going. My advice to someone going into the medical field, I would strongly recommend them join healthcare, because it is an important to help our community thrive."

Stephanie is proud to say that she received the Daisy Award for

See MENDOZA Page 5

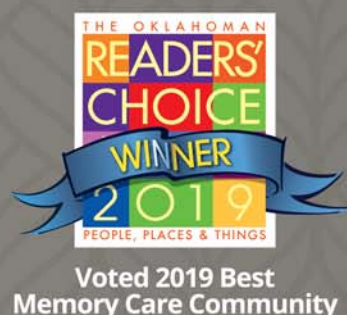


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Stephanie Mendoza LPN has been working for Jason Breed, MD, for the last two and half years. She enjoys what comes natural; taking care of others.

MENDOZA
Continued from Page 4

working on the Covid Unit.

The DAISY Foundation, as part of its service to the nursing profession's role in patient care, established the DAISY Faculty Award to provide colleges/schools of nursing a national recognition program that they may use to demonstrate appreciation to their nursing faculty for their commitment and inspirational influence. "I am very proud of receiving the Daisy Award and consider it a real honor," Stephanie

said.
Stephanie is married to her wonderful husband and they have two children, ages nine and three and a baby on the way. Her favorite hobby is spending time with her husband and her children. Asking Stephanie how the Coronavirus changed her life, she replied, "The Coronavirus made me realize how short life can be. I take extra precautions by washing my hands, constantly and wearing a mask."
Summing up her life in three words, Stephanie said, "Mommy, wife and friend."

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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



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.

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

Continued on next page



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SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19		
COVID-19 Cases		560,850
New Cases		3,080
New Cases 7 day Average		2,634
Active Cases		23,035
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths		9,292
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location**		Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations
		Cases (ICU)
Region 1 (NW)		48 (10)
Region 2 (NE)		131 (34)
Region 3 (SW)		160 (40)
Region 4 (EC)		97 (27)
Region 5 (SE)		86 (13)
Region 6 (Central)		109 (29)
Region 7 (Tulsa)		435 (136)
Region 8 (OKC)		412 (121)
Total		1,478* (410)
Other Types of Facilities		
Focus Facilities		65 (28)
Rehabilitation Facilities		2 (0)
Tribal Facilities		44 (9)
Other Facilities Total		111 (37)

*Includes 42 hospitalizations in pediatric beds.

**Focus, Rehabilitation and Tribal Facilities numbers are not assigned to a specific region as their patient populations reside across the state. Information provided through survey of Oklahoma hospitals as reported to HHS as of the time of this report. Response rate affects data. Facilities may update previously reported information as necessary. Data Source: Acute Disease Service, Oklahoma State Department of Health.

*As of 2021-09-03 at 7:00 a.m.

EDGAR

Continued from Page 10

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 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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Public Health and Policy Researcher Joins the TSET Health Promotion Research Center

Amanda Kong, Ph.D., MPH, has joined the TSET Health Promotion Research Center at OU Health Sciences Center. Kong is an expert in health geography, tobacco control and tobacco-related health disparities.

Kong comes to the HPRC from

the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health where she received her doctoral and master's degrees in health behavior.

While at UNC-Chapel Hill, she was the principal investigator of a grant funded by the National

Cancer Institute (F31CA239331) that investigated inequities in tobacco retailer density in the U.S. and associations between retailer density, tobacco use and COPD-related hospitalizations. Kong's study found that substantial racial, ethnic and socioeconomic inequities in the locations of tobacco retail outlets persist in the U.S. Additionally, she showed that county-level tobacco and convenience store density were associated with daily adult smoking, COPD-related hospital discharges and number of days spent in the hospital. Her study highlights the need to reform national and local policies related to neighborhood retail tobacco product outlet density.

Currently, Kong is co-leading a grant funded by the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center that uses a social ecological and health geography approach to explore racial and socioeconomic inequities in substance use and health care seeking behaviors among cancer survivors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While earning her degrees in public health, Kong recognized her passion for research, which centers on understanding the inequitable availability and marketing of unhealthy commodities, such as tobacco and alcohol products. She values collaboration with practitioners and community partners to translate science and evidence-based research into sustainable and effective pro-equity public health policies.

"I am thrilled to be joining the TSET Health Promotion Research Center," Kong said. "I look forward to working with my colleagues to promote health equity in Oklahoma and nationally by continuing to build my research on understanding place-related effects on tobacco use and cessation and cancer prevention and control."

The HPRC receives funding from OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center via a NCI Cancer Center Support Grant (P30CA225520) and Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust contract number R21-02.

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INTEGRIS Lakeside Physician's Group Welcomes New OBGYN

Crista (Thomas) MacAllister, M.D., is a board-certified obstetrics and gynecology physician. She received her medical degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine and completed her residency in Oklahoma City.

Her specialties include normal to high-risk pregnancies, laparoscopic surgery, cervical dysplasia, family planning and adolescent gynecology.

"I am honored and blessed to have the opportunity to care for women as an obstetrician and gynecologist. I love building lifelong relationships with women as their physician, from their adolescent years through menopause. I am delighted to follow the path God has designed for me in caring

for women through medicine." MacAllister offices with the Lakeside Physician's Group located at 11101 Hefner Point Drive, Suite 204. She is accepting new patients. Call 405-936-1000 to make an appointment.



Crista (Thomas) MacAllister, M.D.

ANA Urges US Dept of Health and Human Services to Declare Nurse Staffing Shortage a National Crisis

The American Nurses Association (ANA), representing the interests of the nation's 4.2 million nurses, urges the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to declare the current and unsustainable nurse staffing shortage facing our country a national crisis. In a letter to HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra, ANA calls for the Administration to acknowledge and take concrete action to address the current crisis-level nurse staffing shortage that puts nurses' ability to care for patients in jeopardy.

"The nation's health care delivery systems are overwhelmed, and nurses are tired and frustrated as this persistent pandemic rages on with no end in sight. Nurses alone cannot solve this longstanding issue and it is not our burden to carry," said ANA President Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN. "If we truly value the immeasurable contributions of the nursing workforce, then it is imperative that HHS utilize all available authorities to address this issue."

ANA calls on the Administration to deploy these policy solutions to address the dire nurse staffing shortage crisis. HHS must:

- Convene stakeholders to identify short- and long-term solutions to staffing challenges to face the demand of the COVID-19 pandemic response, ensure the nation's health care delivery system is best equipped to provide quality care for patients, and prepared for the future challenges.
- Work with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on methodologies and approaches to promote payment equity for nursing services and remove unnecessary regulatory barriers to APRN practice.
- Educate the nation on the importance of the COVID-19 vaccine to provide resources for widespread administration of the COVID-19 vaccine and any subsequent boosters.



Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN.

- Sustain a nursing workforce that meets current and future staffing demands to ensure access to care for patients and prioritize the mental health of nurses and other health professionals.

- Provide additional resources including recruitment and retention incentives that will attract students to the nursing profession and retain skilled nurses to the demands of patient care.

"ANA stands ready to work with HHS and other stakeholders on a whole of government approach to ensure we have a strong nursing workforce today and in the future," said Dr. Grant. "Our nation must have a robust nursing workforce at peak health and wellness to administer COVID-19 vaccines, educate communities, and provide safe patient care for millions of Americans. We cannot be a healthy nation until we commit to address underlying, chronic nursing workforce challenges that have persisted for decades."

OMRF receives grant for ovarian cancer research



OMRF scientist Magdalena Bieniasz, Ph.D.

The National Institutes of Health has awarded the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation \$450,000 to research promising new ovarian cancer treatments.

OMRF scientist Magdalena Bieniasz, Ph.D., received the two-year grant to test combinations of drugs that may be more effective than current treatments for aggressive forms of ovarian cancer.

"There is a receptor protein that signals tumor cells to multiply faster and survive better," said Bieniasz, who joined OMRF in 2016 from the Huntsman Cancer Institute in Utah. "We are studying drugs that could inhibit this signal."

The presence of this receptor signal is one reason ovarian cancer often develops resistance to traditional therapies. After chemotherapy treatment, this signal promotes the growth of any cancer cells that weren't stopped, producing a new tumor resistant to the previous medicine.

In an effort to slow or prevent this resistance, Bieniasz's lab team plans to pair the compound blocking receptor signaling with a chemotherapy-type drug.

"We know that to achieve the

strongest response, there has to be a combination," Bieniasz said. "Two drugs combined may be better than the sum of each by itself."

These drug combinations will be tested on cell models that represent tumors of patients at the University of Oklahoma Health Stephenson Cancer Center. OMRF scientists will use a targeted approach to treat the models, applying different drug combinations based on cancer type and stage.

"In targeted therapy, drugs are matched to specific tumors that have specific features," said Bieniasz. "We characterize the samples so we know which tumor would be a good candidate for each treatment."

Bieniasz noted this project will focus not only on what works, but why. Understanding the mechanism of the receptor signaling inhibition will help set up future studies for more effective treatments.

"The signaling protein is present in nearly half of ovarian cancer patients, and each one of those patients could benefit from this," Bieniasz said.

The grant, No. R21 CA264573-01, is funded by the National Cancer Institute, a part of the NIH.



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