



A resilient community: Epworth Villa bonds with hope



Epworth Villa CEO and President Ron Kelly admires the courage and encouragement shared among staff and the Epworth community.

by James Coburn - staff writer

Seniors wanting to live their lives in community can be confident in the lifestyle options available at Epworth Villa, a retirement community in Oklahoma City.

"If you stop and think about it, the pandemic has highlighted for us the importance of community," said Epworth

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OU Health Announces Executive Nursing Leadership Role



Amy Trueblood, M.S., R.N., NE-BC, Chief Nursing Officer for OU Health University of Oklahoma Medical Center.

Amy Trueblood, M.S., R.N., NE-BC, has been named Chief Nursing Officer for OU Health University of Oklahoma Medical Center.

Trueblood, who will begin her new position on September 20, comes to OU Health from the University of Missouri Health Care System,

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EPWORTH

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Villa CEO and president Ron Kelly.

The pandemic has interrupted the daily life of Americans in many ways. People have not been able to be as close to one another as in the past. Epworth Villa has met the challenge by preserving community when COVID moved through virtually every segment of society.

Epworth did a lot of shutting things down last year during the height of the pandemic. It joined everyone else in trying to understand how to minimize the risks of COVID-19. Testing and screening protocols were implemented for best practices.

Oklahoma is experiencing a resurgence with the Delta variant as scientists unravel the mystery of the disease with vaccinations available to keep the virus at bay. Kelly said Epworth has done fairly well in minimizing the impact. It's important to be transparent, he said.

"Did we have cases? Yes, we did. We had a few folks that passed away actually that were in our upper levels of care," he said. "It was very sad for us — but from what I saw — what others experienced, that was well above what others were experiencing."

Some people enjoyed the neighborly aspects of greeting friends from their balconies and other measures during a time when the public didn't feel very safe being indoors together.

"There was a friendship tree that came out of that in our cottage area where we have independent homes," Kelly said.

People in the neighborhood would come to a large shade tree to gather at a safe distance in front of one of those homes. That spirit has continued at Epworth.

To this day, people still want to receive the daily community videos that Kelly produces for residents. Kelly now distributes the videos three days a week. He provides updates on the Delta variant and the possible impact it may or may not bring to daily life. Guidance

from the CDC is presented in the videos as to whether a change of protocols should be updated to offer the best protection for the residents.

"So, I think people have really appreciated staying informed with what's going on," he said. "They've taken advantage of every opportunity to keep community going. That has been huge in terms of the thriving of our residents and our staff."

Another area of improvement is creating more options for enriching life at home. Dining venues reopened when Epworth felt confident it was safe.

About 99 percent of Epworth residents have been vaccinated, Kelly said. There have been adjustments, but the community has been able to adapt and thrive since February.

Epworth's nursing staff is one to admire. They have shown a lot of courage, Kelly continued. Folks were happy to be able to adapt to wearing protective equipment. There was greater risk for both staff and residents early in the pandemic.

"We had some staff that tested positive. I'm sure when that happens it rattles you, but they were courageous. Our director of nursing (Mia Owen) led the way. She showed the staff herself. She put on the equipment — did it herself. She went into areas where we had a COVID-positive resident," Kelly explained. "She showed them and demonstrated that for them. That was the kind of leadership we needed. We needed our director of nursing when there was uncertainty. That courage and

that leadership is why I call those folks heroes."

Epworth offers residents the options and amenities of a seamless living environment on its spacious campus.

There are three levels of living including independent living with apartments and cottages. There is assisted living care with a memory care component. Health services at Epworth provides a short-term rehab for people transitioning from a hospital to home. Skilled inpatient and outpatient care is provided.

"We offer that to the broader community outside of Epworth as well," he said.

Epworth at Home is a hospice and home health care to serve the campus and the community at large.

"What I love about it is not only how the staff has served the residents that live here, but how the residents serve one another," Kelly said. "That's the kind of community I see."

Friends encourage one another when they see progress resulting from health care.

"That really uplifts people, not only in those times of need, but in general," Kelly said.

For more information visit: <https://epworthvilla.org> or 14901 N. Pennsylvania Avenue in Oklahoma City.



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TRUEBLOOD

Continued from Page 1

where she served as Director of Nursing Professional Practice, Staffing Support Services and the Patient Logistics Center.

With a nursing career that began at Mayo Medical Center, Rochester, Minn., Trueblood brings 15 years of nursing leadership experience to her new role at OU Health. She earned a bachelor of nursing science degree from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, and a master's degree in administrative nursing from the University of Illinois, Chicago.

"I am honored to be a part of the OU Health leadership team, where our mission is to lead healthcare in patient care, education and research," said Trueblood. "I look forward to collaborating with all disciplines, staff and leadership to face current challenges and advance patient-centered care and improve the lives of all people influenced by the care we provide. I am excited to engage with patients

and the community to continue and elevate OU Health as the first and best choice for comprehensive patient care in Oklahoma."

A board-certified nurse executive through the American Nurse Credentialing Center, Trueblood is currently pursuing a doctorate in Nursing Innovations and Health Systems at the University of Missouri Sinclair School of Nursing, Columbia.

"Amy is an innovative and courageous leader with a strong track record of building new departments and transitioning culture," said Julie Hoff, OU Health Interim Chief Nurse Executive and Dean of the Fran and Early Ziegler OU College of Nursing. "Her leadership is marked by patient-focused services delivered with respect, and her operational strategies are designed to achieve optimal outcomes. She is passionate about developing future leaders and collaborating across disciplines to create effective strategies that promote success in an ever-changing and intensely competitive healthcare landscape."



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CAREERS IN NURSING

CARING FOR HEART PATIENTS: COMPASSION FROM THE HEART

By Vickie Jenkins, Staff Writer

Anjelica Newcomer, RN works at the Oklahoma Heart Hospital in CCU; an intensive care unit designated for and pertaining to cardiothoracic care. She has worked at OHH for six years and has been a bedside nurse for two years, working for all of the hospital doctors.

Anjelica grew up in Kingfisher, OK and can remember wanting to be a nurse ever since she was a little girl. "I began pursuing education in my teenage years. I achieved education goals of EMT, Paramedic and then, onto RN. I worked as a unit clerk/nurse tech through both paramedic school and nursing school. I attended Oklahoma State University. After attaining my paramedic license, I worked part-time as a paramedic and retained part-time status as a nurse tech. Upon completion and obtaining my license, I began working full-time in CCU at Oklahoma Heart Hospital."

"The reason that I am a nurse is because I feel like I can make a difference and care for people who are potentially facing the end of their lives. As a child, I lost my grandfather to a sudden cardiac event, and I was able to participate in the recovery following a tragic event that led to my uncle's paralysis. Those experiences are what drove me into a career of nursing," Anjelica commented.

What is your favorite thing about being a nurse? "It is common for my patients to be intubated and sedated, therefore they cannot speak for themselves. My favorite thing about being a nurse is the ability to advocate for this type of patient. The biggest reward I see as a nurse is getting to see the efforts we put in to our patients pay off; by seeing sick people get better or get to spend more quality time with their lives." Anjelica feels like her

strongest quality is that she can stay calm when working under pressure in high stress environments.

"On the down side, there is always the challenge in a nursing career of trying to help people that do not want to be helped. Often times, I am dealing with extremely sick patients who are combative because of their condition or are entirely non-compliant with treatment and care. Our goal as nurses is to treat people for their conditions and hopefully see them through to discharge. Combative patients and non-compliant patients are a speed bump in the path to definitive care, but does not prevent us from achieving our goals of making people better."

Is there a typical day for Anjelica's life as a nurse? "I start my day by checking a white board full of names and assignments. Once I see my assignment, I go to the

patient's area to receive the report from another nurse who is ending their shift as I begin mine. The patient that I am resuming care of can be anything from a new heart surgery being recovered in the CCU to someone who can be gravely ill, likely to be secondary to a cardiac event. In addition to providing care to the patient, I am also spending the day educating and/or comforting the family members involved in the patient's care," Anjelica explained. "I work bedside so I usually see about forty patients per month. Of course, that number varies," she added.

When asking Anjelica what her best quality of a nurse is, she replied, "Compassion, attentiveness and empathetic." It is obvious that Anjelica possesses all of these qualities.

"When I was in nursing school, my mentor was my mother-in-law

See **NEWCOMER** Page 5



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NEWCOMER

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who worked thirty plus years as a nurse and she still continues to be my mentor. In return, I am a paramedicine lab and clinical instructor. I believe that I am a mentor to the students as well as those people who are new to nursing, or in the medical field in general."

Anjelica's definition of compassion is, "The ability to put all else aside in your life and to provide care for an individual's needs to include physical, mental and spiritual health." Anjelica's volunteer work includes volunteering in several homeless shelters, free clinics and the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon medical tent. "I plan to expand my volunteering services to third world countries with time."

"I am presently continuing my education and completing my BSN with dreams of continuing on to medical school." Anjelica has a passion for learning and continues to set goals and reach them.

"Summing up my life in three words? Come Home Safely."



Angelica Newcomer, RN works at the Oklahoma Heart Hospital in CCU. Her strongest quality is staying calm when working under pressure in high stress environments.

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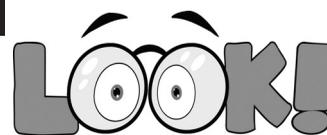
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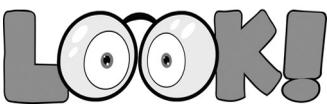
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Presbyterian Health Foundation Announces Gift to Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health

In a response aimed toward addressing needs of especially vulnerable patient populations, Presbyterian Health Foundation has donated \$100,000 to Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health. Specifically, these funds will elevate the care of patients being treated for childhood cancers at the Jimmy Everest Center, and patients receiving care at Children's Heart Center, both services of Oklahoma Children's Hospital.

Jon Hayes, President of Oklahoma Children's Hospital, said, "We can never overstate our depth of gratitude for the generous support of donors like Presbyterian Health Foundation. This response to practical needs makes a difference in ways that really count. Advanced technologies and innovative therapies are essential,

but comfort is a cornerstone of compassionate care."

The foundation funding will be used to purchase high-quality infusion chairs for the Jimmy Everest Center, which will maximize the comfort of children undergoing cancer treatment for long periods. Enhanced environments serve to minimize the impact of isolation and other necessary precautions that must be observed to protect patients with weakened immune systems.

The donation also will provide much-needed equipment upgrades for Children's Heart Center, including a stress exercise system and non-invasive blood pressure monitoring capability. A treadmill, and upright and recumbent ergometer eBikes, represent practical technological advances that are both diagnostic and rehabilitative. In addition, patient rooms will be enhanced with décor that is more child-friendly.

Hayes said the long-standing support from Presbyterian Health Foundation plays a key role to ensure exceptional care and enhance a healing environment. "We're committed to providing pediatric care that's second to none," continued Hayes. "Our kids are the most direct beneficiaries of these enhancements, but philanthropic support helps us better serve entire families who are reassured that every conceivable measure is directed toward



the healing and restored health of their loved ones. 'Little things' aren't superficial. They're often the big things that make hospitalization less fearful and stressful."

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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.



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

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 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://>

Understanding Covid-19 boosters

Recent Covid-19 surges have booster shots on the minds of many Oklahomans. But who should get one?

While an additional SARS-CoV-2 vaccine dose after initial vaccination is important for the most vulnerable, not everyone needs one just yet, say Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation experts.

"Extra doses are only recommended for specific groups," said OMRF immunologist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D. "Certain immunocompromised people, as well as Pfizer vaccine recipients who are 65 and up, who live in long-term care facilities, or who are at high risk because of an underlying medical condition associated with severe Covid-19."

The first group makes up just 3% of the U.S. population, but is critical, said Chakravarty. Because while the Covid-19 vaccines approved

for use in the U.S. offer strong protection against severe illness and death in most people, studies have shown some moderate to severely immunocompromised individuals did not respond well to the initial vaccine series and may remain vulnerable.

"This includes people taking certain high-dose steroids and other immunosuppressant drugs," said OMRF physician-scientist Hal Scofield, M.D. "People undergoing active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood, as well as people with advanced or untreated HIV infection are included, too."

In response, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration expanded the emergency use authorization of Pfizer and Moderna's Covid-19 vaccines to this fraction of Americans. They should consult with their doctor and, if advised, receive a third dose of the vaccine they initially received

at least 28 days after their second dose.

In September, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also recommended boosters for three groups who received their second Pfizer dose at least six months prior. Those people are adults ages 65 and up, residents of long-term care facilities, and people aged 50-64 years who have underlying conditions such as chronic lung disease, dementia, diabetes, heart disease and obesity. A full list of high-risk conditions is available at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Additionally, the CDC said, adults aged 18-49 with those same underlying medical conditions or aged 18-64 who live or work in high-risk environments such as health care or schools may choose to get a Pfizer booster after assessing their own risk. "Those who qualify in this first booster wave should check with their primary care physician and get the shot if advised," said Scofield. "If you received a vaccine other than Pfizer's, stay tuned."

With high community rates of Covid-19 and more than 40% of Oklahoma adults not fully vaccinated, initial doses, masks, and physical distancing remain



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation physician-scientist Eliza Chakravarty, M.D.

important, said Chakravarty.

"The vaccines work. The majority of patients hospitalized, ventilated and dying from Covid are those who haven't been fully vaccinated," she said. "Boosters may be top of mind for some, but moving the needle on initial vaccination is critical to save lives."

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SITUATION UPDATE: COVID-19

COVID-19 Cases:	622,780
New Cases	445
New Cases 7 day Average	1,080
Active Cases	9,418
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths	10,616
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location**	Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations
	Cases (ICU)
Region 1 (NW)	29 (4)
Region 2 (NE)	52 (20)
Region 3 (SW)	135 (34)
Region 4 (EC)	47 (16)
Region 5 (SE)	35 (6)
Region 6 (Central)	59 (21)
Region 7 (Tulsa)	230 (82)
Region 8 (OKC)	235 (62)
Total	822* (245)
Other Types of Facilities	
Focus Facilities	29 (14)
Rehabilitation Facilities	2 (0)
Tribal Facilities	28 (9)
Other Facilities Total	59 (23)

*Includes 28 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 2021-10-08 at 7:00 a.m.

Presbyterian Health Foundation Announces \$8.5 Million in Research Grants and Community Support

Oklahoma City: Presbyterian Health Foundation (PHF) has awarded \$8.5 million in total grant funding to Oklahoma City-based biomedical research institutions and public health innovators in its last fiscal year ending September 30, 2021.

The award total includes \$7.7 million in research grant dollars, which have been awarded for more than 80 research projects at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) and Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF). Funded projects are furthering research discovery in the areas of cancer, diabetes, neuroscience, cardiovascular and autoimmune diseases, plus a new area of emphasis, COVID-19.

"Inspiring health innovation is the focus of our mission and we're proud to support this critical work" said new PHF President, Rick McCune. "The robust research talent within Oklahoma City's scientific investigative ecosystem is incredibly deserving of this support. We know it will fuel the best and brightest to continue their work, ultimately supporting improved health outcomes for us all." One of the grants awarded to OMRF was in support of a collaborative sciences project for scientists working to detect abnormalities in metabolism to determine how those abnormalities can exacerbate disease states, particularly in multiple sclerosis. One of the grants awarded to OUHSC focused on acute and chronic osteoarthritis pain and exploring treatments that could prevent or slow the disease's progression.

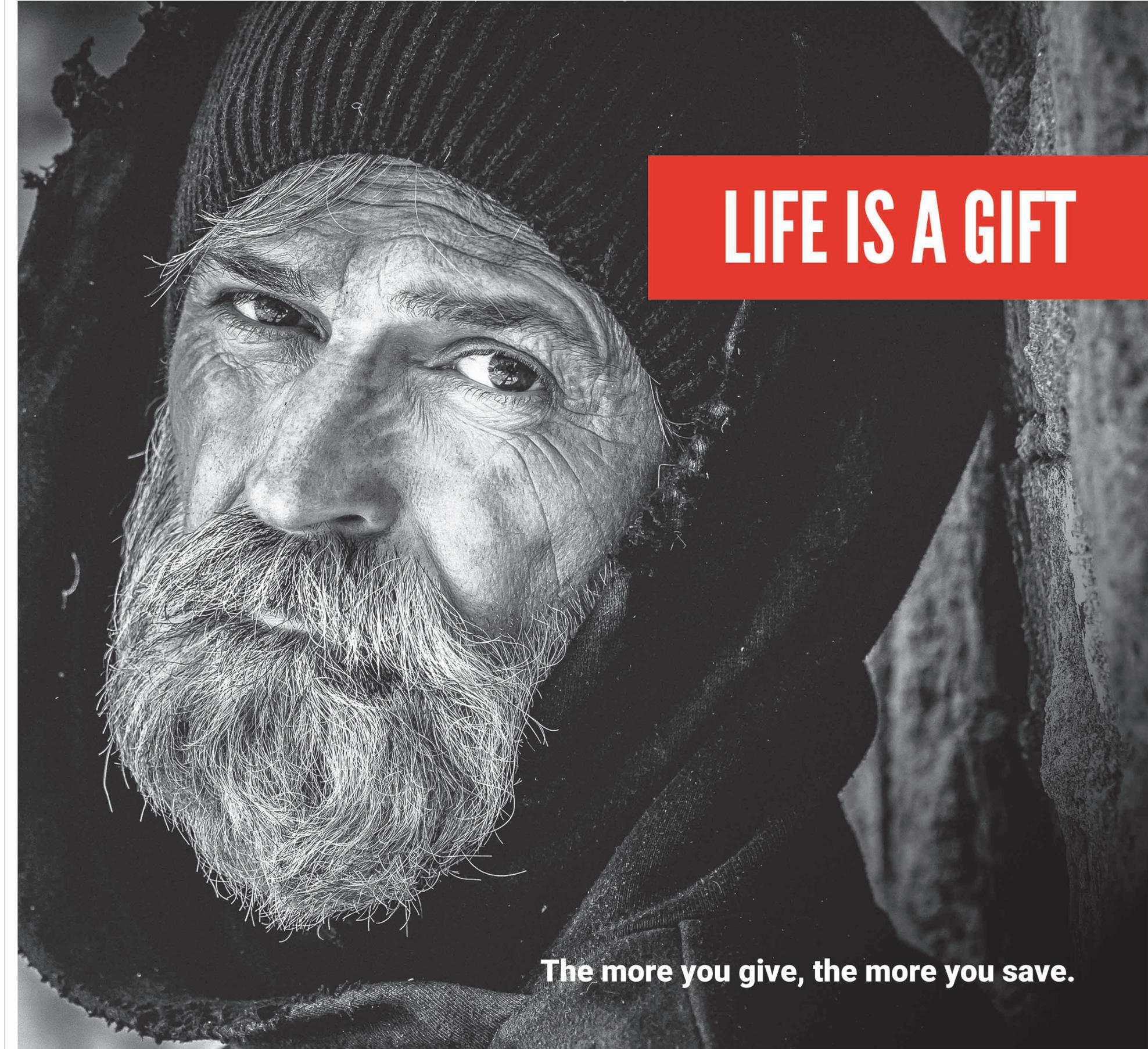
"The results from our collaborative and team science



requests continue to not only impress us, they are gaining traction and securing additional funding from national institutions such as National Institutes of Health, the American Cancer Society, and the American Heart Association, which will help bring those discoveries to our doctors' offices and our hospitals," said PHF Chairman, Tom R. Gray, III. "We're thrilled to see such productive research collaborations happening across the campus."

Since its inception, PHF has awarded nearly \$200 million in grants primarily to biotechnology and medical research organizations in Oklahoma with an emphasis on research and innovation taking place within Oklahoma City's Health Center campus.

Presbyterian Health Foundation (PHF) (phfokc.com) is a private Oklahoma City-based foundation dedicated to accelerating lifesaving scientific research from ideas to medical innovations. Since 1985, PHF has granted nearly \$200 million to biomedical research institutions and health focused organizations with an emphasis on the Oklahoma Health Center campus.



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