

Cindy Roe Faces Huggans June 28th



Cindy Roe has authored several pieces of legislation related to healthcare including House Bill 3313 which would have added an enforcement mechanism to the No Patient Left Alone Act

by Van Mitchell, OKNT writer

Cindy Roe thought about running for public office, but the timing was never right until her predecessor for Oklahoma House District 42 decided not to seek re-election.

Roe, a Nurse Practitioner from Lindsay, was

elected to represent House District 42 in 2019, and is running for re-election. She faces Matthew Huggans in the June 28 Republican runoff, and the winner will face Democratic

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OMRF selects 2022 Langston University Biomedical Research



The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation will welcome nine Langston University Biomedical Research Scholars in summer 2022. From left, 2021 LU-OMRF Scholars Laura Mejia and Andrianna Buxton.

The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation has named nine students as 2022 OMRF Langston University Biomedical Research Scholars.

The program aims to diversify biomedical research in the state and is a partnership between OMRF and LU, Oklahoma's only historically Black college or university.

"OMRF and Langston University created this

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challenger Steve Jarman in the Nov. 8 general election.

"I had thought it would be cool to do, but I never gave it any serious thought," Roe said. "The two individuals that had my seat before me, I would have never run against them (Lisa Billy and Tim Downing), because I thought they did a phenomenal job. When I found out that Tim wasn't running again, I thought I was going to do this."

Roe said she enjoys serving the people of her district, and Oklahoma.

"I had no idea what I was getting into," she said. "I absolutely love it. You learn something every day."

Roe has been a Registered Nurse for 39 years and a Nurse Practitioner for 22 years. She currently chairs the House Public Health Committee.

She has authored several pieces of legislation related to healthcare including House Bill 3313 which would have added an enforcement mechanism to the No Patient Left Alone Act, passed into law in 2021. The Act codified the rights of patients to have a designated visitor, regardless of what they're hospitalized for.

Under HB3313, families or patients could file civil litigation against a hospital if their visitation rights are denied.

That bill passed in the House, but was not heard in the Senate. Roe plans to pursue the measure again next year.

Roe said she began pursuing the legislation after hearing stories of hospitalized patients being denied a visitor and of a local hospital telling one of her constituents that their policies trumped state law.

"I've heard dozens of stories over the past two years of families not being allowed to visit their loved ones in the hospital, and it breaks my heart that they are prevented from being there for them or saying goodbye," Roe said. "As a health care worker, I've seen firsthand how encouragement from a loved one can inspire the patient. What I did was provide a path to civil litigation for individuals that were denied (visiting) their people in the hospital."

Roe was also House author of Senate Bill 1290, the Medical Care Provider Protection Act. The legislation strengthened laws dealing with violence against people who work in hospitals and health care facilities.

"I ran a bill that expanded the definition and included nurses, physicians, and clergy," Roe said.

Roe said she does her homework, and reads every bill that comes across her desk.

"When I run a bill of my own or one that comes before my committee, I do my due diligence," she said. "I want everybody to come to the table. I believe people working together on a piece of legislation, you get better legislation."

Roe said the Oklahoma Legislature has also tackled several health measures during her time there including increasing funding for nursing programs at the University of Oklahoma, and East Central University in Ada.

She was pleased to learn that OU was able to accept 100 percent of their qualified applicants into their nursing program, which will address the state's nursing shortage.

"Lawmakers have been working to address the critical nursing shortage that exists in Oklahoma, as it does in many other states," Roe said. "The news shows our efforts are working. I'm grateful that Oklahomans will receive the care they need from people who will soon be employed in this rewarding profession."

Roe still serves patients while working at a CareFirst Wellness Associates Clinic in Pauls Valley. She lives in Lindsay with her husband, Vern, who works in the oil field. She has nine grandkids and five children, one of whom was a combat Marine in Afghanistan.

Nursing has been a part of Roe's life since she was a child.

"I would go with my mom or grandmother who was visiting someone from church or a friend in the hospital," she said. "I used to be in awe when I would see a nurse in a white uniform. Seeing a nurse walking down the hall was like seeing the president or the Pope, because that was a big deal to me. Seeing that (white uniform) inspired me to be a nurse growing up."



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"Langston Scholars have the opportunity to work on research that can span their entire undergraduate careers," said Autumn Huffman, an



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CAREERS IN NURSING

'NEVER GIVE UP': ER NURSE GIVES EVERYTHING SHE CAN

by James Coburn - staff writer

Deborah Johnston doesn't give up. As a registered nurse, she loves the challenge and pace that she has spent as an ER for 28 years.

"I love that you never know what's going to come through the door," said Johnston, emergency room director for OU Health Edmond Medical Center.

Her dedication has never wavered from the ER due to her experiences. She has been with OU Health for four years with the past year as director. She knows how devastating an injury can be to someone. But they don't give up, so neither will she.

"They just keep pushing — they just keep fighting — they just keep getting better. People we didn't think would ever live — when they walk out that door, that's the best thing in the world. If you can do that, I can sure work on my career."

The medical center treats everyone from newborns to geriatrics and

everything in-between, Johnston said. Patients arrive at the ER with a simple laceration to the worst day of their lives and everything in-between, she said.

The medical center establishes immediate communication between the nursing staff and the patient and family to keep them informed of the care plan. One nurse for the patient and one nurse for the family answers questions about procedures.

"We keep talking to them. I think the most important thing is to keep them informed with what we are doing, why we are doing it, and how this is looking," Johnston explained. "If it looks one way, we are going to adjust it this way. If it looks different, we are going to try something else. You have to keep that line of communication open. It's so important."

Education is valued. The staff continues to evolve by updating their knowledge in medical care. There is

always something new to learn.

Johnston received her Associate degree in nursing at Tarleton State University, located in Stephenville, Texas. Johnston continued to challenge herself by earning her Master and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degrees from Oklahoma Wesleyan University, located in Bartlesville.

Nurses have different specialties. Johnston said, more than anything, the desire to have what it takes is indispensable for an ER nurse. The work is demanding and fast paced.

"You see a lot of critical patients. I think you have to have a real affinity to want to do this job in particular," Johnston said. "It takes a lot, and especially the last couple of years with COVID. That was so demanding, so hard physically, emotionally, mentally in every way," she said.

She is grateful that the pandemic has eased at this time. ER nurses learned they were even tougher than

they thought, she said. Anything can be accomplished if they stick together, she added. Many of the nurses changed their roles during the height of the pandemic. Johnston is not an intensive care nurse, but for a period she worked in the ICU.

"I was more of an adjunct for the ICU nurse. I learned a lot of new things, and I also learned by doing that together, there wasn't anything we couldn't do," Johnston said.

Her drive to make a difference sparked as a 13-year-old when her dad died of lung cancer. She remembers a particular nurse who was often at his bedside toward the end of his life.

"It was how nice she was with him. I saw her be that way with everyone I saw her interact with," Johnston said. "And at that point, I thought, 'Man I want to be like her when I grow up. I want to do that. I want to make somebody's day a little better even though I know it's just a

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terrible day.”

When someone enters the ER with chest pain and shortness of breath, there is an immediate response. The patient is greeted in the lobby or at the car with a wheelchair. The plan is for the patient not to exert themselves anymore at that point.

“We get you back into a stretcher, get you hooked up to all of the monitors, oxygen, get an EKG. By this time the doctor is in the room evaluating you and planning what he wants to order,” she said. “We get an IV, get some blood drawn, get some medicine on board — see if we’re making progress.”

The doctor examines the EKG, chest X-ray and lab work to determine the best course of treatment.

It’s imperative to get stroke patients to the nearest emergency department quickly when someone recognizes their symptoms.

A lot of the treatments are based on how much time has passed since the patient was known to be normal.

“That’s part of why you want to get it done as fast as possible,” Johnston said. “You’re losing function

each second of delay.”

Speed and correctness are essential in the care of a stroke patient.

It’s important to keep a parent with a child who enters emergency care.

“It’s imperative that you don’t separate them because that’s really terrifying.”

The medical team presents themselves at the child’s level eye-to-eye. They calmly speak to the child about what and why they will help them.

“I’m grateful every day I have this career. I don’t even call it a job. It’s not like coming to work. It’s coming to do what you like with the people you like,” she said. “There’s never a day I wake up and think I wish I didn’t have to go there today. It’s been the biggest blessing I could have ever imagined. Even more so, I didn’t think 28 years later I would still be here.”

When she’s not serving in the ER, her favorite thing to do is to go to the mountains in Colorado or Wyoming.

“If I can’t make it there, I have a couple of donkeys I love to spend time with. I have some dogs and love to hike, anything related to water, reading, and spending time with my family,” she said.



Compassion, speed, and correctness serve ER nurses and their patients well at OU Health Edmond Medical Center’s emergency room, says Deborah Johnston, RN, ER director.

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Rose State leads the way

Connie Kuebeck, RN, MS, MBA is the associate dean for health sciences at Rose State University.

She'll celebrate 43 years in nursing this May.

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early evening we have a cohort we can put them in. If they prefer to come during the day we offer that, too, and at least once a year we have an online option," Kuebeck said. "It just makes it more available for those students who already have family or work obligations or it just doesn't fit with their schedule to come during the day all the time."

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Kuebeck said that for roughly every 13 students there is one faculty member.

And, Rose State NCLEX pass rates are consistently above state and national averages.

Kuebeck shifted to education in 1998 and has seen educational offerings change with the times. The focus at Rose State has always been on the student and Kuebeck says that's why faculty focus on making those bonds.

She saw it daily during the early stages of the pandemic when hospitals kept students out of the hospital.

The encouragement was there on a daily basis, which helped students stay focused on their ultimate goal of becoming nurses.

"For the students who got to go

back in and do clinicals I was amazed at their resilience," she said. "They were willing to get in there, pitch in and help. The students were watching from the sidelines at home and we all felt kind of helpless."

"When they eased up restrictions on students they were happy to get back in there and be part of the solution. It made them want to be more a part of nursing even more than before."

Kuebeck said the school welcomes applications from any and all prospective students.

"We have great advisors here with our health science division who are experts in helping people plot out their education path in the most efficient manner and to get them to their goal in the least amount of time," Kuebeck said.

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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2022 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

Educate with purpose

ADON leads with experience

Jenifer Presley stresses the importance of on-the-job learning as an LPN and the assistant director of nurses at Golden Oaks Village, located in Stillwater.

Presley has served for three years at Golden Oaks Village and been a nurse for seven years. She graduated from nursing school at Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater and did undergraduate studies at Oklahoma State University.

"We learn something new every day," Presley said. "It's not just something where you go to school every day and learn everything. For years there is always something else to know."

Studying for a career in nursing gives you a good base of skills for an active career, she continued. Having performed clinical work in school

proved to be a valuable resource to draw from early in a nursing career.

She understands how families feel when depending on competent health care workers to assist ailing loved ones. She was 19 when her father became ill, and her family called for an ambulance.

"I think that's what sparked it. I love taking care of people," she said.

Presley would tell nursing school students to pay close attention to dedicated nurses in the field. Nurses who love their careers stand above the rest, she said.

"You can always point out who's a hard worker and wants to be there," she explained. "They are who you should follow and look up to. Watch the things that they do and how they deal with their patients."

Residents at Golden Oaks Village

are individuals so it's good to take time to listen and learn from them, she continued.

"It makes it easier for them and for you during the process of their care," she said.

Being team oriented in a compassionate setting makes Golden Oaks Village the favorite place that Presley has ever worked, she said. As a charge nurse, Presley is a team leader offering her support to ensure care is being provided that the residents need. She said there is always help when she needs assistance. She leads the team whenever there is a nearby emergency.

"We have a good group of girls here," Presley said. "And, if I ever need help or must do something in another room, I never have to worry about it. It feels good knowing you have support and knowledgeable people who want to be here to help."

Golden Oaks Village is located on 40 acres in Stillwater in a wooded country setting that is filled with ponds and wildlife. A peaceful view accompanies a paved walking trail. Independent and assisted living facilities serve more than 100 seniors and the



Jenifer Presley, LPN, and the assisted director of nurses at Golden Oaks Village in Stillwater is always open to a new learning opportunity.

elderly every day.

"Take your time and get to know them," she said. "It can make as much difference in your life as you can in theirs. That makes for a meaningful job." For more information visit: <http://www.companionhealth.net/>



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Proud of Progress with a Cry for Help

Story by Darl DeVault, Contributing Editor

Bonnie Wells, 66, has made it her mission to help Edmond area adults with developmental disabilities become more independent as executive director of Edmond's EARC Inc. (Employment and Residential Centers) for the last 18 years. One of the highlights of her working in the field since 1978 has been applying energy to innovation. She has done this during the nonprofit's more than 50-year local mission, helping shift clients from State institutions to home settings.

Wells deflected inquiries about her role in building up EARC to serve 56 clients over the years. She wanted to discuss a burgeoning problem she and others in leadership face in providing clients a better quality of life through vocational and residential services.

"The most important story in our nonprofit sector serving developmentally disabled and the senior services world is how the COVID 19 pandemic has caused severe labor shortages," Wells said. "All of our managers have been filling multiple roles and working ridiculous hours due to this problem."

She explained how worn out and depressed many of her fellow service providers have been since absorbing the pandemic's additional stresses. "Even though we are all career caregivers, who love what we do and who we serve, we wonder how long we can continue to endure," Wells said.

Because she and many other nonprofit leaders have served people with disabilities for the past 40 years, Wells makes what she sees as an appropriate statement: "The government needs to look forward and work on massive educational incentives to get good people to go into healthcare. This is especially important at the direct nursing care

level and administrative positions. Otherwise, at the current rate of burnout in caregiving, not enough staff with the right skills will be there ready to help seniors in their own homes or other settings."

This effort to provide the best support by supplying appropriate help and housing reflects a tradition begun in 1982 when EARC opened the first of two six-bed group homes in north Edmond. After they opened the second similar home in 1985 on the south side of Edmond designed to provide training in areas of independent living skills, they expanded their mission.

In 1989, they built The Nova Centre in Edmond, a 16-bed, long-term care facility for residents with more severe disabilities with specialized nursing provided. Clients furnish and decorate their space to suit their own style to make them feel more at home. These clients share living areas for social interaction and family-style dining.

EARC Inc.'s non-profit mission is to provide clients with affordable quality housing in the Edmond Community. This instills a sense of pride in the individuals with intellectual disabilities and certain persons with related conditions who moved from closed Oklahoma public institutions to private settings.

The EARC purchased four private three-bedroom residences between 2012 and 2019. The agency operates another to serve 15 resident clients in a Daily Living Support program.

"A good example of this is when we bought and furnished a home for three men moving from the closing Northern Oklahoma Resource Center in Enid in 2013," Wells said in an interview. When the Southern Resource Center in Pauls Valley closed in 2014, 219 residents needed to transition from the two State-



Bonnie Wells has guided EARC Inc. in Edmond for 18 years in providing employment and residential services encouraging independent lifestyles in their adult developmentally disabled clients.

operated facilities.

Wells said this was a significant change and move for anyone who has lived in the same setting for more than 30 years, where their only experience in the community was during visits to their parents' or siblings' homes.

EARC wanted to expand the number of its DLS homes, but quality affordable housing in Edmond to rent for its clients was challenging to find.

Organizers select these homes because of their spacious three bedrooms and open living areas, although sometimes they need to be architecturally modified to make them handicapped accessible. The Oklahoma State Developmental Disabilities Services Division provides

those materials and skills for the architectural modifications.

The rest of the 52 adults receiving residential service occupy their own apartments or family members' homes with EARC training and paid staff, who are sometimes family members. They all receive needed care, from usually 20 hours per week up to 24-hours of care per day.

Wells says the agency is grateful to Edmond citizens for their generosity as donations from the community to EARC thrift stores create job opportunities for their clients. They employ 22 clients working for the three thrift stores as cashiers, truck driver assistants, janitorial workers, or those processing

see EARC page 13

EARC

Continued from Page 12

and hanging clothes.


“We have created many income-producing jobs in our thrift stores with the processing operations we undertake to prepare the donated items for resale,” Wells said recently. “Through these opportunities, many of our clients earn wages significant enough to be taxpayers and reduce their dependence on taxpayer funding.”

These clients are employed alongside workers without disabilities after receiving on-the-job training from an EARC job coach.

Wells said EARC is proud of a core group of about a dozen dedicated community volunteers who help sort, clean and price the thrift stores’ donations. The stores are at 100 E. 3rd and Litter in Edmond, a larger Edmond store at 92 E. 15th St and in Guthrie, at 1408 E Oklahoma Ave.

To volunteer or donate to help area adults with developmental disabilities in this United Way community partner nonprofit, visit the EARC website at www.earcinc.org.

ANA Reacts to Tulsa Shooting, Calls on Congress to Take Decisive Action



AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION

A mass shooting at Saint Francis Hospital campus in Tulsa, OK on June 1 that left four people dead, including multiple health care professionals, is the latest act of gun violence in a recent uptick of mass shootings nationwide. The following statement is attributable to American Nurses Association (ANA) President Ernest Grant, PhD, RN, FAAN:

“We find ourselves here again as a nation grieving more lives lost to unspeakable acts of gun violence. Ordinary places like our grocery stores, churches, movie theaters, shopping malls, health care facilities, and schools have become the scenes of carnage and death that are reminiscent of war zones. It feels as if nowhere is safe. And I feel like a broken record each time I must issue a statement on arguably preventable gun violence.

ANA continues to urge Congress to develop commonsense, bipartisan legislation that can help protect our communities and repair a system that has allowed gun violence to become our norm. ANA is encouraged that bipartisan members of Congress are at the table negotiating a legislative proposal designed to address these senseless mass shootings. They must press forward and find a solution. The public health crisis of gun violence has had a grip on our nation for far too long and we need decisive action from our elected officials now.

How many Americans and children must be slaughtered before we act? How many parents and families will have to bury their loved ones and carry unfathomable lifelong trauma before we decide to end this madness? The conscience of our country is hanging in the balance. Our action and inaction today will reflect the value that we place on the lives of all people and children as well as the future generations of this country.”

Situation Update: COVID-19

New Cases 7 Day Average	345	
New Cases Week of 5/22/22 - 5/28/22	2,417	
Active Cases	4,522	
Total Cases	1,051,070	
Total Cases	1,051,070	
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths	16,140	
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location**	Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations	
	Cases (ICU)	
Region 1 (NW)	1 (0)	
Region 2 (NE)	8 (1)	
Region 3 (SW)	6 (0)	
Region 4 (EC)	11 (1)	
Region 5 (SE)	1 (1)	
Region 6 (Central)	9 (1)	
Region 7 (Tulsa)	35 (18)	
Region 8 (OKC)	35 (2)	
Total	106* (24)	
Other Types of Facilities		
Focus Facilities	2 (0)	
Rehabilitation Facilities	0 (0)	
Tribal Facilities	1 (0)	
Other Facilities Total	3 (0)	

*Includes 19 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 2022-06-02 at 7:00 a.m.



LIFE IS A GIFT

In 2021, the United Way of Central Oklahoma and our more than 19,000 donors and 600 workplace campaigns selflessly contributed to the United Way Campaign. And to share the gift of a better life for thousands of Oklahomans.

And, as always, behind it all is your support. Your generosity is the heartbeat for us all. And we thank you.

TOP 20 CAMPAIGNS IN 2021:

Large Business Contributors (250+ Employees)

Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc.	Devon Energy Corporation	Continental Resources	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	OU Health
OGE Energy Corp.	MidFirst Bank	The Chickasaw Nation	Cox Communications	St. Anthony Hospital
Chesapeake Energy Corporation	Bank of Oklahoma	Ascent Resources	UPS	COSTCO Wholesale
American Fidelity	BancFirst	INTEGRIS Health	First Fidelity Bank	Jasco Products Company

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Clements Foods Company	Mustang Fuel Corporation	Tronox LLC	BC Clark Jewelers	Oklahoma City Thunder
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