



Dianne Gremillion, RN, feels rewarded by helping nursing students prepare for their NCLEX tests as owner and operator of Innovative Teaching Solutions in Oklahoma City.

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Dianne Gremillion believes you bring about what you think about.

"When I was in nursing school, I would look at my teachers and think that will be me someday," said Gremillion, RN, owner and instructor at Innovative Teaching Solutions. She founded the educational training company in 2007.

Innovative Teaching Solutions specializes in NCLEX review and test taking strategies. She provides ways of breaking down the questions to

help them get their nursing licenses. Gremillion said she is privileged to help nursing school graduates overcome fears and anxiety.

"I feel so honored because when I help one person — that's really helping thousands of people," she said. "As a result of training with us 99 percent of nursing students pass the NCLEX on their first attempt," Gremillion said. "We help them reduce their anxiety, and we help them dramatically

See NCLEX Page 2

## INTEGRIS Health Boosts Nursing Education



Students at Metro Technology Centers take advantage of free on-site certified nursing assistant (CNA) training for INTEGRIS Health employees.

by Bobby Anderson, RN and staff writer

Creating a direct pipeline to get quality healthcare workers has never been more important than it is today.

The last few years have forced the healthcare industry to compete with other industries for a competent workforce more than ever.

Recently, Metro Technology Centers and Integris Health Southwest Medical Center announced a partnership to provide free on-site certified nursing assistant (CNA) training for existing Integris Health employees.

Partnerships like these just make sense according to Integris Southwest Chief Nursing Officer Jackie Lockett, RN.

"I think it's critical. We all know the nursing shortage is not only in Oklahoma but throughout the nation. We have to be proactive to get in front of it," Lockett said. "Every market is struggling to get people in. We have to do what we can to market (nursing) and show it as an amazing career opportunity."

"That's really what this starts. It's the beginning of their career and we want to help promote them to get them to where they want to be in the long-term. We cannot be pro-active enough."

Sandy Hill MSN, RN, NPD serves as the system's

See TRAINING Page 2



## NCLEX

Continued from Page 1

improve their test scores. We've seen test scores bump up by 30 points in just a day and a half after taking our course and learning our methods."

Students also must take an exit exam after they graduate, she said. Gremillion said she has seen scores improve by 300-400 points by taking the three-day course.

Gremillion is well versed in her nursing career. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at the OU College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Her career has ranged from cardiovascular, respiratory, gastrointestinal, cauterization, and teaching at Innovative Teaching Solutions.

She had a burning desire to become a nurse when she was 5 years old. She recalls helping her friends falling from a tricycle and she has always felt empathetic toward others.

"It was always in me. I truly believe it was a calling that God put in my life, and as far as teaching I believe the same thing," Gremillion said.

She also travels to California once a month to work with nursing students. One of the questions nurses answer in the NCLEX exam focuses on recognizing the symptoms of digitalis

toxicity.

"There are four answers, and each answer has about four or five items. So, by the time they read to the end of that answer, they've read about 20 different symptoms, and they don't even remember what they've read," Gremillion said. "They also might be afraid thinking they forgot to study for the question or have never seen a patient like that during nursing school."

Gremillion teaches how to break down the answers that distract from the correct answer.

"I teach them how to rule out what is not the answer, and then they can be confident. This confidence I build in them really helps them pass," she said.

Most of the classes are during the day but she will accommodate students when there is a need for evening classes.

Nursing school is hard and the students who persevere have a lot of grit, she said. Some students enter the profession as single parents. They may have several children and must work while going to school.

"I admire how they balance that," she said. "They present themselves as caring individuals and prioritize what's important," she said.

She recently connected with students on the West Coast by a Zoom call. One of the students was taking his test the next day and was very

nervous even though he was quite capable. He also lives with periodic panic attacks. She helped him with anti-anxiety strategies.

"I know I made a difference for him for not just (his test) but for his future," she said.

One of the students told her the relaxing breathing techniques she learned not only helped her pass the test but also helped her marriage.

Flexibility makes nursing one of the best professions to enter, Gremillion said. She found her career offers her the freedom of travel, and a lot of people in other professions don't have that luxury of choosing shifts.

"We can work extra shifts and grab extra jobs," she said. "If you get bored with one job, there's a thousand other jobs that you can try in different areas of nursing until you find the fit that's right for you. You are always helping someone."

She often hears from former students when entering a hospital or a clinic. Nurses will say hello. She might not recognize them immediately but has the highest respect for them.

"They are the owner of a hospital or the manager of a clinic or surgery," Gremillion said. "Nurses go on to do so many wonderful things. It's rewarding for me to see that."

For more information about Innovative Teaching Solutions, visit <https://www.itsnclexreview.com/>

## TRAINING

Continued from Page 1

Transition to Practice manager.

Investing in an internal pipeline for employees who believe in the Integris model and mission creates better outcomes and better careers.

"Integris has identified a need for not only nurses but support for nurses in all different kinds of roles," Hill said. "We wanted to support people who are interested in healthcare with the means to get their certified nursing assistant training and certification."

The offer includes full-time employment for one-year, paid class tuition, fees, and books, as well as a paid salary for training hours and a \$1,000 retention bonus. The 18-day course will be taught by Metro Tech Adjunct Instructor, Casey Batson, who says she is excited to be a part of this unique opportunity.

"Years ago, hospitals might have promised current employees or new hires to pay for CNA training, but few would actually follow through on that promise," Batson said. "Integris Health is not just paying for CNA training, they're investing in these students, and in return, will have more CNAs and higher retention."

Seven students began the first round of the training on Monday,

Continued on next page

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Sept. 26 and an open house was held in the classroom located on the INTEGRIS Health Southwest Medical Center campus.

The role of a CNA is to work alongside a licensed nurse to enhance the care provided. CNAs take vital signs, assist patients with their activities of daily living such as bathing, oral hygiene, using the restroom, ambulation, turning, transferring from bed to chair, feeding, and more. The CNA also informs and escalates concerns to the nursing staff to ensure the quality of care.

"I love that it is here in-house," Lockett said. "It really gets them indoctrinated into our culture, what we do and why we do it. We want to grow this and for it to get bigger and bigger. If it continues to grow it will grow our pipeline of nursing caregivers as time goes on."

To complete training and earn certification, Integris Health employees will follow the same guidelines, requirements, and curriculum traditionally taught by Metro Tech and regulated by the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

"It really kind of creates the first stepping stone in a career pathway," Hill said. "For someone who has little or no healthcare exposure, it's a good place to start. Once they are out and working with the patients



they will be meeting all kinds of interdisciplinary teammates. If they choose to go to nursing we have a pathway for that. If they chose respiratory, we have a pathway for that. Physical, therapy, radiology - whatever their future plans are - we support them along that pathway."

Chief Hospital Executive at INTEGRIS Health Southwest Medical Center, John Adams attests to the fact that CNAs are an essential part of a health care team and this is only the beginning for the partnership with Metro Tech.

"The decision to physically place a training program on our campus was multifaceted," Adams said. "It extends the reach of Metro Tech's training resources into South Oklahoma City. In the coming months, our goal is to open up the program to include local high school students to be able to graduate with their CNA. Having the class on a hospital campus allows for students to be exposed to the hospital, the culture and establish relationships that can lead to a long career with INTEGRIS Health."

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# CAREERS IN NURSING: ALWAYS LEARNING: MERCY LOGAN INSPIRES EXCEPTIONAL CARE

by James Coburn - staff writer

A lot of the encouragement Jessie Alcorn gets as a licensed practical nurse is watching her patients' progress. Alcorn serves in the Swing Bed program at Mercy Hospital Logan County.

"The biggest thing keeping me here is watching the people that do succeed, knowing that we had a part in that," Alcorn said.

A patient may be recovering from COVID, or a broken hip has made them unable to walk to the restroom. Their illness or injury has left them very weak and unable to care for themselves. As a Medicare provider, a Swing Bed unit provides a therapeutic environment for patients in short-term rehabilitation.

Patients come to Mercy Logan for physical, speech or occupational therapies. Mercy nurses and therapists help their patients regain their strength. But some people may need to go to a nursing home when being discharged from care. Alcorn encourages patients to improve by first taking small steps leading to

recovery.

"We try to teach them little ways they can live at home," she said.

Becoming a nurse was a blessing delivered by God, Alcorn continued. She was working as a cashier in retail when her sister and aunt invited her to take a nurse entrance exam with them.

"I got in, they didn't, and I just kind of fell into it," she said. "I absolutely love it and I'm always learning something new. It keeps my brain working."

In 2000 she trained to be a licensed practical nurse at Meridian Technology Center in Stillwater. She is back in school to become a registered nurse at Oklahoma City Community College. In the spring, Alcorn has plans to attend Southwestern Oklahoma State University to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. She was hired to serve at the Guthrie hospital three years ago.

Alcorn has previously worked as a medical surgical nurse at Hillcrest

Cushing Hospital where she also served in the psychiatric unit. She worked at OSU in student services, clinical work in obstetrics; she ran a clinic for sexual health counseling and then managed a triage clinic for a homeless shelter before coming to Mercy Hospital Logan County. She was received by coworkers who have a heart for what they do.

"They're not here just for money. They're here because they love people, and they want to make a difference. My coworkers — I have to say are the best — all of them."

She learns from her coworkers at the bedside. Mercy nurses respond to patient care and one another with the most compassion she has ever seen, Alcorn said. They are attentive to the needs of humanity. These are the types of people she encourages to become nurses.

The long-standing nationwide nursing shortage exacerbated by COVID remains a huge problem for society and the nursing industry, she said. Not everyone has the stamina.

"What I love, somebody else might hate. If we can find those people that have the calling for it or have a heart for it — I believe those are the ones that are going to stay," she said.

Nursing school graduates can expect to work with every type of person from mentally challenged, to dementia and someone who is highly alert, she continued. To handle body fluids is a normal procedure. All of it keeps nurses on their toes with responsibility, she said.

"We should learn to trust that stomach — like our instincts. When your stomach is telling you there's something wrong, you need to learn how to verbalize that," Alcorn said.

Mercy nurses are continuously getting education.

"Whenever you think your continuing education is done, they give you 20 more (learning opportunities), which is great because it keeps everybody informed," Alcorn said.

See LEARNING Page 5



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Jessie Alcorn enjoys watching people succeed and knowing nurses at Mercy Hospital Logan County were part of it.

## LEARNING

Continued from Page 4

"Everything has changed from 20 years ago. I see brand new nurses coming in and they're doing something differently. It's not that I was doing it wrong. It's that they found a better way."

Mercy also pays nurses' tuition to go back to school. Mercy will match the percentage of student loan percentage payments made by nurses, she said.

"They're very, very big on education, wanting to make sure we have everything done," she said. "If we see something here on the floor

that is a concern that not everybody is educated on, they'll take us around and do an in-service."

Mercy is a welcoming experience for nurses, she said. Travel nurses have told her that the Mercy Logan environment is their best working environment and they're not afraid to ask questions.

Alcorn recalls coming to work on her first day at Mercy Logan. It gave her a wonderful feeling when a nurse waved at her and said, "Hey, we've been waiting for you."

To learn more about Mercy Hospital Logan County or become a part of the team, visit: <https://careers.mercy.net/>

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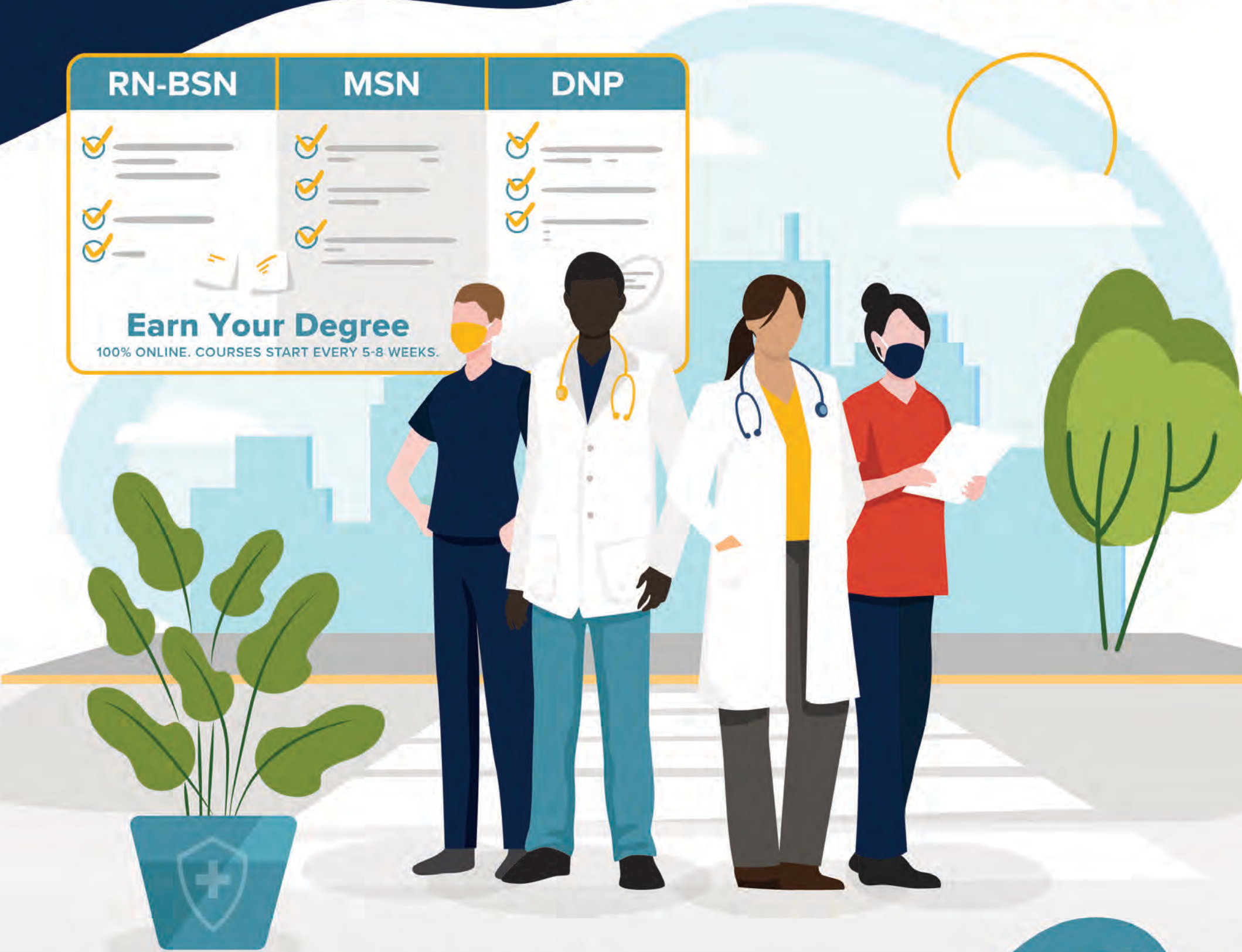




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Rosa Ketchum, DNP, RN is an associate professor and director of the school of nursing's new DNP program.

"One thing that is exciting is just the role of the DNP," Ketchum said. "It's becoming more evident in view of the pandemic that nurses have a very important voice in health care and they are a huge piece of the puzzle and their experience and value and perspective on health care is needed to help address practice and policy development."

Designed for working adults, this program offers two doctoral learning pathways: a Post Master's DNP and the BSN to DNP.

The Post Master's Pathway enables Advanced Practice Nurses, Nurse Informaticists, Nurse Educators, Nurse Administrators, and other master's prepared specialty nurses to obtain a DNP in Executive Leadership. Additionally, BSN-prepared nurses with a master's degree in a related

field may also enter this pathway.

Similarly, the BSN to DNP Pathway allows bachelor's prepared nurses to earn their doctorate of nursing practice.

Within this pathway, students choose a focus in either Nursing Administration or Nursing Education. OKWU has designed this curriculum for experienced nurses seeking terminal degrees in practice-focused areas. Moreover, OKWU prepares nurses to function as an advocate and leader, improving healthcare and patient outcomes through innovation and involvement in practice and policy.

Most importantly, both pathways provide graduates with advanced practice skills to serve as providers and organizers of the healthcare delivery process, or as faculty members in a nursing education program.

Translating that bedside knowledge and pairing it with evidence-based practice is the focus of the DNP program.

Ketchum completed her DNP in 2019.

"I wanted a degree that focused on patient outcomes. That's where my nursing heart is, helping the



patient whether it's one patient or a population, I wanted to impact patient outcomes," Ketchum said.

"That is part of the focus of the DNP and I wanted a piece of that. I wanted to be better able to do that whether it be through teaching students or through direct patient care."

OKWU's Doctor of Nursing Practice in Executive Leadership program is designed to equip nurses to serve at the highest level of nursing practice. The DNP program develops nurse leaders who improve patient outcomes and health systems by translating research into practice, all from a Christian worldview.

Enrollment for the program began last fall. A new group of students begins each semester, three times a year.

The initial 15 students came from a variety of backgrounds. While most programs only accept advanced practice nurses, Oklahoma Wesleyan accepts any kind of master's prepared nurse.

"Their ideas and perspectives may be a little broader because we have nurses that are coming

from an administration background, or education background or advanced practice background so we're getting to see them all together," she said. "The perspective is broader than some programs but they all want to impact health care and they all want to make our health care system a little bit better."

Delivery of the program is 100-percent online with no required visits to campus. Classes are delivered one at a time, eight weeks in length.

"Our program is designed for the working adult and that's better facilitated because they are only taking one class at a time. For eight weeks they can focus on one class at a time and I think that helps them be able to balance life, work, family, school better than if they were in a more traditional semester setting," Ketchum said.

The BSN to DNP program is 54 credit hours with anticipation of three years to graduate. The post-master's DNP is 36 hours allowing for completion in roughly two years.

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# Outreach for seniors

## AllFaith HomeCare sets health fair

by James Coburn - staff writer

Tara Cory is fine tuned for the opportunities she has as a licensed practical nurse for AllFaith HomeCare. In fact, AllFaith HomeCare is sponsoring the AllFaith HomeCare Health Fair from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 27 at the Wesley Village Community, a senior living apartment center located at 300 NW 12th Street, Oklahoma City.

The goal of the health fair is to give better health related opportunities to the residents and the surrounding community. Many educational materials will be handed out. Opportunities will abound to learn more about the outreach of AllFaith HomeCare and other vendors invited to the health fair.

Among the vendors will be FDIS (Family Development Intervention Specialists), Physicians House Calls, Oxford Pharmacy, Mike's Medical mobility company, and the Salvation Army. AllFaith HomeCare is sponsoring a community dinner after the health fair from 2-4 p.m. The event is inspired by AllFaith HomeCare owner Lisa Wariboko-Alali, and her loving staff.

"This will be the fourth time that AllFaith has had it there," said Michael G., AllFaith spokesman.

On Tuesdays, Cory visits the Wesley Village Retirement Community for senior independent living. She assists patients with any questions about their health, including if they need to see a doctor. She usually checks their blood pressure. For example, she provides medication for a blind woman each week.

"They are patients I need to see for medication planners or just general nursing assessments," Cory said.

Some people live with hypertension or diabetes. A few individuals need help with mental health issues, she said.

Residents of Wesley Village have taught her about humanity. They are good people, she said, and are very appreciative of her visits. She works more than one job as a nurse and homeschools three children. But when she considers cutting back on her work for some time for herself, Cory said she can't cut back the six hours a week at Wesley Village.

"The people there really latch on, and they appreciate the help," she explained. "They want that connection and it's nice. It's part of nursing that I love."

AllFaith HomeCare allows her flexibility with her time. Even when she was seeing COVID patients, it was recognized that she had a life beyond her work and it was valued, she said.

"Some visits are timed. But most of the time you can call your patients and set them up according to what works for you and the patient," she said.

Cory has been a nurse for 13 years since graduating from Platt College in Oklahoma City. She has been with AllFaith HomeCare for three years. Nursing is not about politics at AllFaith, Cory said.

"They really treat people like people and seem to really care about the patients," she said.

She followed her heart calling her to become a nurse. She credits nurses for saving her own life when she was a patient. Being accessible, nurses are the familiar ones she relates to in medicine. Cory likes making connections and feels like that is what nursing is all about, she said.

Cory's compassion in life has expanded as a nurse. She is gratified when learning more about her patients' lives and who they are. Her deeper-found compassion brought an awareness that nobody knows what somebody could be enduring in life behind closed doors. They could be experiencing something profoundly unsettling in life.

She recalls a young man in his 30s with four children. He was dying of pancreatic cancer. Both he and his wife were nothing but kind to Cory at each visit. One day she went to the grocery store. If his wife became short tempered nobody would know what was truly bothering her at that moment. So, kindness and tolerance to other matters, Cory said.

"And I love patient education. I love educating a to where they don't need me and can take care of themselves," she continued. "That's what I love about home health nursing specifically. We're providing a skill, but also we're teaching them about how to be healthy," she said.

Every home is different, and they all have distinct personalities with a range of residents. One of her patients prays with her at every opportunity.

"She always takes the time to pray, and it always ends up being something that I needed to hear," she said. "I've been doing home health



AllFaith HomeCare is sponsoring the AllFaith HomeCare Health Fair from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 27 at the Wesley Village Retirement Community, 300 NW 12th Street, Oklahoma City, says Tara Cory, LPN with AllFaith.

for 10 years, and most of them are appreciative. They really look to the nurses for comfort. There's so much anxiety — they're confident being in their home and not in the hospital, but they're also kind of nervous. If they're post-op or have a new diagnosis, then they're scared. And

so, there is a sense of relief when the nurse walks in."

All the concerns that have kept them up at night or they forgot to ask their doctor can be addressed, Cory said. There is relief.

"That's why I became a nurse," she said.



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ANSWERS ON PAGE 13



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5. occurs when the water level in the water seal chamber rises and falls with respirations

7. this is where the drainage is measured

8. pleur evac should be kept \_\_\_\_\_ the chest level

10. this should never been done to a chest tube

11. bubbling in this chamber indicates an air leak

12. accumulation of fluid in the pleral space

Down

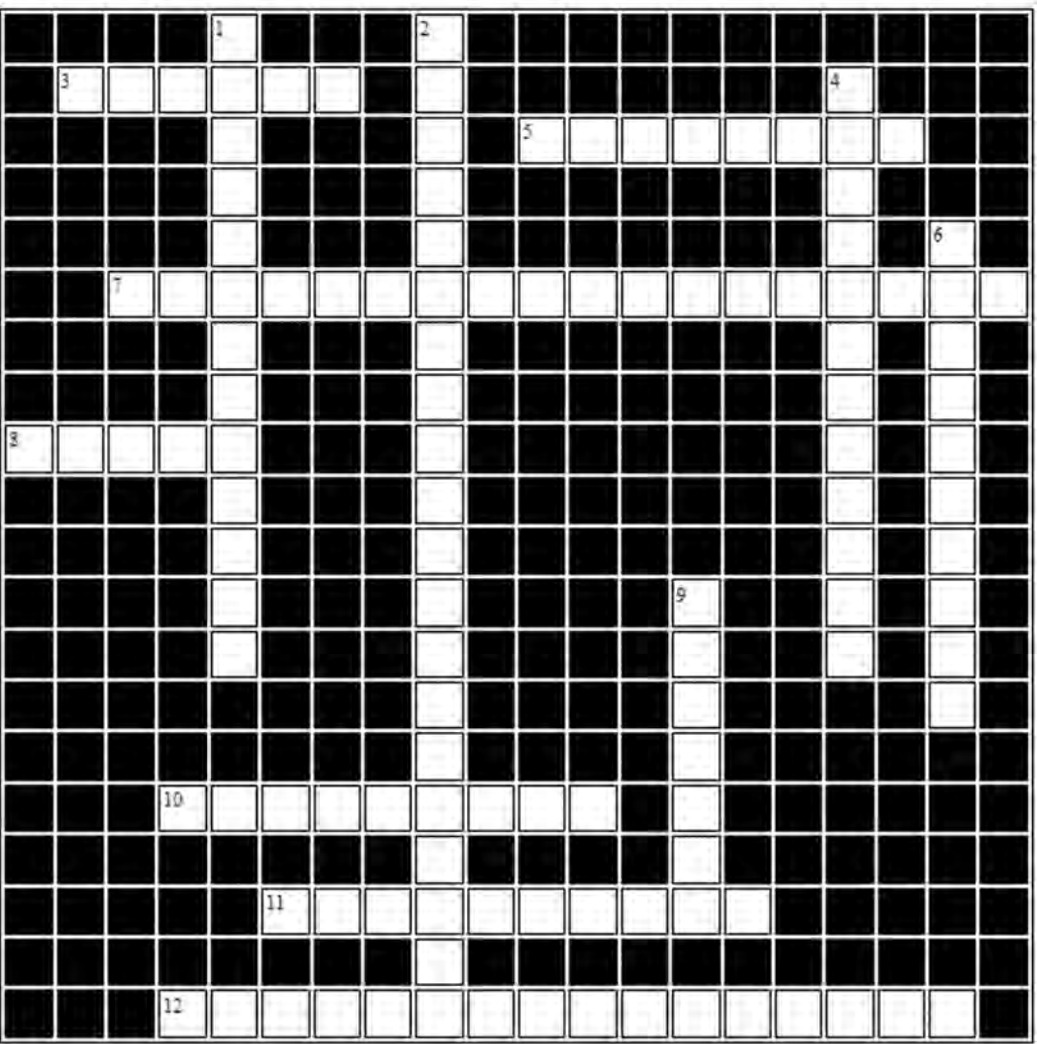
1. this should be used to set fill the water seal chamber

2. air pockets under the skin


4. collapsed lung

6. accumulation of blood in the pleural cavity

9. accumulation of pus in the pleural cavity



By Krystal Herrington



7 out of 10 adults who use tobacco have expressed interest in quitting ...  
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# A Foundation of Faith While Fighting Breast Cancer



Linda and Dave Jones, pictured with their daughter, Tiffani Tolle and her family shirts Tiffani had made to raise money for Linda's treatment.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness about the impact of breast cancer. All month long, INTEGRIS Health will share inspiring stories of women in different stages of their battle. Today we recognize Linda Jones of Waukomis.

Dave and Linda Jones are the A group of people posing for a photo Description automatically generated type of couple who can, and do, finish one another's sentences. They have been married for 45 years, and the bond they share is evident. Their faith is the foundation of their marriage, and both their relationship and belief in God have become stronger as they have faced Linda's breast cancer diagnosis and treatment as a team.

Just a few short months ago, Linda believed she had stage IV cancer, both in her breast and in her lungs. But, as you will learn, God had other plans for Linda.

"In 2020, when COVID hit, we did what a lot of people did, and we skipped our regular doctor appointments and our preventive care tests and scans," Linda said.

In early 2022, Dave and Linda established care with INTEGRIS Health family physician, Chris Shearer, D.O., who wanted to make sure they both went through all the recommended tests and scans they missed over the last two years.

"I went in for my mammogram in April, and within two hours I received a call back from INTEGRIS Bass radiology," Linda said. "I was told they saw something suspicious, and I needed to undergo a second test."

That was followed up with an ultrasound and then a biopsy of the mass. The test came back positive for cancer.

"It happened quickly, and it was overwhelming," Linda said. "My sister had breast cancer thirty years ago." Fortunately, she beat it and has been cancer-free for decades. Linda's mother, however, died of pancreatic cancer and liver cancer.

Linda's cancer was found to be triple positive, meaning hormone positive (both estrogen and progesterone) and HER2 positive. HER2 positive cancers are considered more aggressive and are often treated with chemotherapy. Linda was recommended to undergo chemotherapy before surgery.

She also underwent genetic testing, which showed she carries a high-risk of breast cancer due to a mutation on her PALB2 gene, which places her at increased risk for breast cancer.

Linda was referred to INTEGRIS Health general surgeon John Goulart, D.O., to discuss her options. Goulart ordered additional tests to determine if the cancer had spread to other areas of her body. A PET scan showed nodules in her lungs, which took her cancer diagnosis from stage I to stage IV. "That was a really hard time," Linda reflected. "I was ready to start treating the cancer that I knew was killing me, but the doctors needed more information before

we could move forward with treatment."

"Dr. Goulart referred me to INTEGRIS Health Breast Surgery in Oklahoma City and surgical oncologist Nicole Sharp," Linda said. "Dr. Sharp meticulously went through every single test that had been done."

Before starting treatment with Sumbal Nabi, M.D., at the INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute in Enid, the doctors needed to find out if nodules in Linda's lungs were cancerous. "I had the lung biopsy in June," Linda said. They prayed as a family, along with prayer warriors from across the nation.

"We have a faith, and I am not afraid of dying," she said. "With a stage IV cancer diagnosis, I was sad about everything I thought I was going to miss."

Again, God had other plans.

The biopsy results were negative, and Linda's cancer diagnosis was recategorized to stage I, with cancer only located in her breast.

"The news changed everything," Linda said. "I had already planned my funeral songs before we found out the lung nodules were benign. It was truly a blessing from God."

In August, Linda began six rounds of chemotherapy treatments with Dr. Nabi at the INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute in Enid. As of the first week in October, Linda has completed three rounds and is more than halfway done.

"We just keep praying," Linda said. "I know the tumor is reduced. I can already feel it. I know I am in good hands."

## OSDH Names New Regional Area Directors

OSDH has announced Maggie Jackson and Chris Munn as new Regional Area Directors (RADs) for District 2 and District 8, respectively.

Located in north-central Oklahoma, District 2 includes Alfalfa, Grant, Major, Garfield, Blaine, Kingfisher, Canadian and Logan Counties. District 8, in south-central Oklahoma, includes Carter, Garvin, Jefferson, Johnston, Love, Marshall, Murray, Pontotoc and Stephens Counties.

Jackson earned a bachelor's degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Spanish from Oklahoma State University and a Master's in Public Health from the University of Oklahoma. She has served as the District 2 Director of Community Engagement and Health Planning since 2019 and has been with OSDH since 2012.

Jackson replaces Jan Fox who left District 2 in Fall 2021 to serve as the OSDH Deputy Commissioner of Health Preparedness.

Munn is a graduate of East Central University in Ada, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental service. He is currently completing an MBA at Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant. He has held the position of interim RAD for District 8 since Oct. 2021. Originally from Pauls Valley, he served Stephens County residents as a public health specialist for 24 years.

Munn takes over the role previously held by Mendy Spohn who was named OSDH Deputy Commissioner of Community Health Services late last year.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) protects and improves public health through its system of local health services and strategies focused on preventing disease. OSDH provides technical support and guidance to 68 county health departments in Oklahoma, as well as guidance and consultation to the two independent city-county health departments in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Learn more at <https://oklahoma.gov/health.html>.

The 2023 Education Guide is coming! To Be Included in this year's issue send an email to [advertising@okcnursingtimes.com](mailto:advertising@okcnursingtimes.com) or call Amanda at 405-631-5100



# OMRF joins global research alliance for rare disease



Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist Courtney Montgomery, Ph.D.

The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation is joining 31 other research institutions, hospitals and clinics as a founding member of the Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research's Global Sarcoidosis Clinic Alliance.

Sarcoidosis is a poorly understood, painful condition where cells in the immune system that cause inflammation overreact and cluster together to form tiny lumps. These cell clumps can develop in the eyes, liver, skin and brain but most often are found in the lungs. If too many form in a single organ, they can cause it to malfunction or even fail.

People of African descent are three times more likely to be diagnosed with sarcoidosis than Caucasians and tend to have more severe symptoms. The condition affects as many as 200,000 Americans but is often misdiagnosed. One goal of the new alliance is to make diagnosis easier.

"This alliance will help patients find the care they need as well as opportunities to participate in research that allows scientists to better understand their condition," said OMRF scientist Courtney Montgomery, Ph.D., who leads OMRF's Sarcoidosis Research Unit. "It also allows clinicians and researchers to interact, which inevitably will improve care for people with this rare, neglected disease."

Scientists, physicians and nurses dedicated to improving sarcoidosis treatment make up OMRF's research unit. Montgomery's lab is focused on understanding genetic and environmental risk factors for sarcoidosis, while OMRF's Umesh Deshmukh, Ph.D., is working to develop new research models to understand how the disease first develops and progresses.

Montgomery noted the alliance will also enable extensive research collaborations among fellow founding member institutions like Cleveland Clinic, Johns Hopkins Medicine and Stanford Medicine.

"The quality of life of approximately 1.2 million sarcoidosis patients impacted by sarcoidosis worldwide depends on a true global collaborative," said Mary McGowan, CEO of the Foundation for Sarcoidosis Research. "That's exactly what this alliance is all about."

For information about OMRF's sarcoidosis research, visit:

[www.omrf.org/sarc](http://www.omrf.org/sarc).

## DOL Announces \$80M to Address Nursing Shortage

The U.S. Department of Labor announced an \$80 million funding opportunity through its Nursing Expansion Grant Program to support nursing training programs designed to expand the pipeline of nursing professionals. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, it is projected that more than 275,000 additional nurses are needed from 2020 to 2030, and that employment opportunities for nurses will grow at nine percent, faster than all other occupations from 2016 through 2026.

More specifically, this funding is aimed at addressing bottlenecks in training the U.S. nursing workforce and expand and diversify the pipeline of qualified nursing professionals through two training tracks. The first track (Nurse Education Professional Track) will increase the number of clinical and vocational nursing instructors and educators by training new or upskilling experienced current or former nurses (including retired nurses) into advanced postsecondary credentialing necessary for nurses to become clinical and vocational nursing instructors and educators. The second track (Nursing Career Pathway Track) will train frontline health care professionals and paraprofessionals, including direct care workers, to advance along a career pathway and attain postsecondary credentials needed for middle- to high-skilled nursing occupations during the grant period of performance.

The deadline to apply for the grant funding is January 6, 2023. For further information – including eligibility criteria – Click the Button Below.

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=341995>

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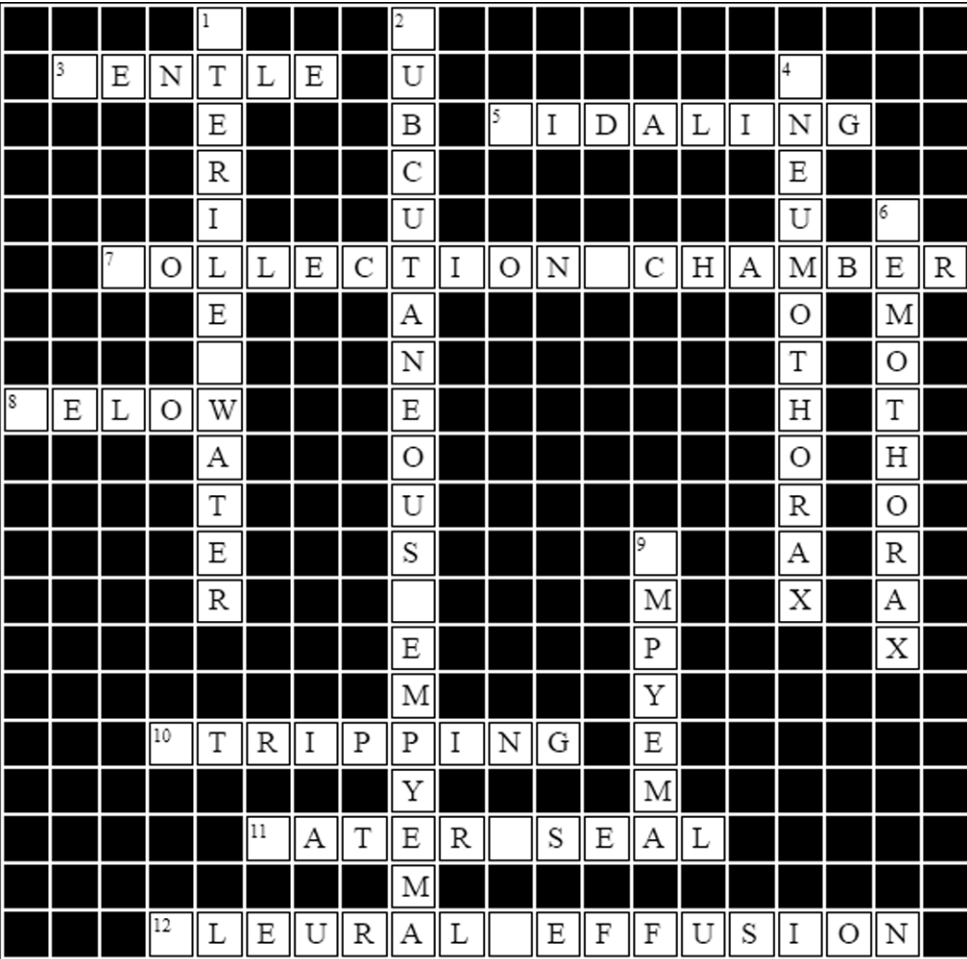
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Situation Update: COVID-19	
New Cases 7 Day Average	308
New Cases Week of 10/02/22 - 10/08/22	2,156
Active Cases	4,665
Total Cases	1,202,398
CDC/NCHS Provisional Deaths	16,999
Acute Care OSDH Licensed Facilities/Location**	Recent 3 day Ave. Hospitalizations
	Cases (ICU)
Region 1 (NW)	4 (0)
Region 2 (NE)	11 (1)
Region 3 (SW)	15 (0)
Region 4 (EC)	10 (3)
Region 5 (SE)	4 (0)
Region 6 (Central)	14 (1)
Region 7 (Tulsa)	49 (26)
Region 8 (OKC)	42 (6)
Total	149* (37)
Other Types of Facilities	
Focus Facilities	7 (3)
Rehabilitation Facilities	0 (0)
Tribal Facilities	3 (0)
Other Facilities Total	10 (3)
*Includes 10 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 2022-10-13 at 7:00 a.m.	



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- Sensitivity to touch
- Loss of balance or coordination
- Numbness, prickling, or tingling
- Sleep loss from leg pain
- Post surgical pain
- Chronic intractable pain

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Neuropathy has many different causes. The most common metabolic cause are patients with diabetes. Nearly 60% of all patients with diabetes develop neuropathy. This can commonly present as pain, numbness, swelling, burning, tingling, sleepless nights, balance issues.

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- Chemotherapy
- Alcoholism
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- Battlefield toxins, industrial toxins
- Vitamin deficiencies
- Acute physical Trauma
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