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ON PAGE 5



Unity of faith Love abounds for all at retirement center

Elizabeth Stephens, LPN, helps to provide a peaceful and compassionate living environment in her role as the resident care director at Saint Ann Retirement Center, located in northwest

by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Elizabeth Stephens, LPN, has a knack for providing love and attention to the elderly.

"I treat them like they are my mother or father. I just feel like they are a family to me," said Stephens, the resident care director for Saint Ann Retirement Center's assisted living.

Saint Ann Retirement Center offers independent living, assisted living and a convent in Oklahoma City. The not-for-profit is owned and operated by the Catholic Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

"I love the atmosphere," she said. "It's a very Christian atmosphere and I'm very close to God. God is my No. 1. If I put Him first

everything else falls into place, and as soon as I came here, I felt like I was at home. I felt the atmosphere of God. I feel the love from the residents."

The love she receives from the staff is a plus, she said. Love abounds in a working environment when staff members know and love God, she said. She admires the strong endurance among the nursing staff. They are resilient and keep pushing for the higher good of the residents, she said. And the residents are very loving and treat her like a daughter, she continued.

See STEPHENS Page 2

SSM Health launches new flexible nursing employment options

Nurses can now shape their careers to fit their lifestyles



SSM Health

"We created our programs for today's caregivers to offer more options, flexibility and earning potential." Seth Lovell

As today's nursing workforce continues to evolve, SSM Health has reshaped its employment approach to create innovative and flexible nursing options. These seven new programs allow nurses the ability to shape their careers, while working with greater freedom and flexibility in a range of PRN and float pool roles.

"We created our programs for today's caregivers to offer more options, flexibility and earning potential," explained Seth Lovell, SSM Health System Vice President of Nursing.

Since each program has slightly different work expectations, nurses are able to select a role that fits their individual and professional preferences. The PRN 1-3 programs let nurses work around their schedule to pick up a few extra shifts every month. With PRN 4, nurses can enjoy the benefits of full-time travel nursing without missing home or experiencing the uncertainty of agency or freelance work. The Float Pool programs give nurses the chance

See SSM Page 3

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STEPHENS

Continued from Page 1

"It's nice to know somebody loves you in return when you give them love," she said.

Familiar faces from various walks of life greet her as she walks down the hallways. Several priests call Saint Ann Retirement Center home.

"It's very interesting to see a fellow nurse that's here who still has a lot of vibe in her," she said.

She has an open-door policy for residents and staff. Stephens loves that both residents and staff can always come and speak with her about anything. The staff is free to share their personal problems or any concern about the facility.

"They feel comfortable to say this is what's going on, and they know that I will take care of it," Stephens said.

Stephens' nature is that of a problem solver with a heart for those in need. Her former husband became ill with diabetes as a child. His disease progressed into adulthood, so he went on dialysis while Stephens cared for him at home.

"I liked how I was taking care of him, and he was appreciative of me taking care of him at that time," she said. "And so, I felt like I had a calling and went into nursing shortly after."

Stephens earned her nursing degree at Platt College in Oklahoma City and has been with Saint Ann Retirement Center since July. Besides assisted living, Stephens has done everything from urgent care, long-term care, worked in retirement centers, dialysis, and rehab nursing.

As the resident care director, she oversees the responsibilities of the nursing staff. The staff helps with the residents' daily needs of getting dressed in the morning so they can make their way to the dining room for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Certified medicine aides

make sure the residents receive their prescription medications. Certified nurse aides assist with showers and make sure the residents have their meals whenever they are not feeling well. The activities director comes up with daily activity ideas to engage the residents.

"We do have some good participation. The other thing I like is when people come and tour," Stephens said. "Everybody comes together."

Stephens' nursing career gives her a daily sense of accomplishment.

"When you are entrusting me with your loved one, you're trusting that I'm going to take care of them as if they are my own family," Stephens explained. "What's very rewarding is the fact that families are appreciative, too. They thank you so much for letting them know things. And, I've even had emails sent to me stating that, 'We feel very comfortable with our mother being under your care because we feel like she's under the best direction of nursing, and we don't have to worry about our mom.'"

One of the families living in Tulsa has reached out to say they don't have to worry about their mother's welfare because Stephens is meticulous about reporting what transpires in their mother's life.

"Communication is key. If you can communicate with the families and let them know what is going on with their loved one, their worries are no more a worry because they know somebody is really taking care of their family."

Assisted living means the resident is still ambulatory but needs just a little bit of assistance.

Christian fellowship is representative of many denominations. There is a Sunday service welcoming all denominations.

For more information about Saint Ann Retirement Center visit: www.saintannretirementcenter.com.

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SSM

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to experience different SSM Health regions or specialties.

As more companies are offering enticing alternatives to traditional employment, SSM Health saw the need to develop a lucrative program for today's caregivers. Lovell shared, "RNs in a flexible nursing role qualify for pay practices that are rarely offered to that segment of the workforce, including shift

differentials, critical shift bonuses and premiums. We are proud to offer these unique programs to all SSM Health nurses."

Nurses can discover new ways of working while doing what they love. SSM Health Recruiters are ready to chat and create a schedule that fits their lifestyle. Learn more about SSM Health's Flexible Nursing Options by visiting <https://jobs.ssmhealth.com/career-areas/flexiblenursing>

Lakeside Women's Hospital Celebrates 25 Years of Service



Lakeside Women's Hospital celebrates birthdays almost every single day. More than 30,000 babies have been born at the facility since it opened in 1997. But this October, the hospital will recognize it's own birthday by marking 25 years of service.

"The founding physicians of Lakeside Women's Hospital felt like there had to be an easier, more efficient way for women to get health care," says Stacey Decker, the chief hospital executive of Lakeside Women's Hospital. "Knowing women have very specific and specialized needs, their dream was to open a hospital designed exclusively for women. Their overall goal was simple. They wanted to provide everything a woman needed in one convenient location."

Lakeside Women's Hospital was the first free-standing, female focused facility in the state of Oklahoma. From routine well-woman visits, to pregnancy and childbirth, gynecological surgery or menopausal care, the hospital offers specialized services for every stage in a woman's life.

The full-service women's hospital, located at 11200 N. Portland Avenue in Oklahoma City, was one of the first to house diagnostic laboratories, radiology equipment, surgery suites, labor and delivery rooms and doctor's offices all under one roof. It was an innovative approach that was quickly accepted and appreciated by women of all ages.

In 2013, Lakeside physician owners made the decision to partner with INTEGRIS Health in order to have access to many of the best specialty care physicians in the region. As Lakeside Women's Hospital marks this milestone anniversary, they look forward to the next 25 years and all the advanced treatments and technologies that will be discovered along the way.



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CAREERS IN NURSING: PROTECTORS OF LIFE: SURGICAL ICU HANDLE COMPLEX CASES

by James Coburn - staff writer

There are always opportunities for continuing education at OU Medical Center with classes and workshops to attend. But continuing education happens every day at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City.

Critical care keeps Sydney McNelley, RN, intrigued in her career as the interim supervisor for the surgical ICU at OU Medical Center.

"There is always something new you can learn," McNelley said. "We do work in the surgical ICU with a subset of ICU population but in the end, we see everything. We get complex surgical patients. We take care of pancreas, kidney and liver transplant patients before and after they receive their transplant."

The surgical ICU nurses work with the ICU teams and every single surgical specialty in one form or another.

"We learn from them. They learn from us," she said.

They formulate plans for certain

types of patients that require special care. And they are constantly updating what they think are the best practices for patients, based on their learning. Nursing managers have fostered that specific challenge.

Surgical ICU nurses at OU Medical Center on NE 13th Street can bring their questions forward, McNelley said.

"We are able to champion things we think are important because each of us have certain passions we really are drawn to," she said. "In this unit we are able to continue that, and able to keep our fires growing."

Within the span of a few months, nurses do procedures in their unit that don't occur in any other situation, she said. Every day brings a new challenge.

"We are a unit that was started just a year and a half ago. So, there is always room for growth," she said.

A great team allows for that growth and allows nurses to challenge things with room for improvement. The team challenges themselves to learn and grow.

"That is something I feel is really unique in this unit. So, I have no problem feeling energized every time I come into work to know this is where I'm meant to be," McNelley said.

The first week of October marked her first year in the surgical ICU. Previously, she served as a staff RN for the surgical ICU and a charge nurse.

She did her nursing education in the state of Washington and her undergraduate work at Oklahoma State University before deciding to become a nurse. While she was completing her master's degree, McNelley served in a COVID clinic.

As with many nurses, she wanted to be in the medical field at a young age. She first

considered becoming a veterinarian until she began seeing her own family members being cared for by nurses in different settings.

"It always kind of intrigued me. In the end, I don't know where I will end up, but right now I love nursing and when I decided to go to nursing school something just felt right," McNelley continued.

During nursing school, she worked as a nurse tech in a cardiovascular ICU. When she finished school, she knew she wanted a nursing career.

"I know that it's difficult, but I want to be an ICU nurse," McNelley said. "I don't want to do anything else. This is where my heart is and I'm going to work as hard as I can."

In her experience, she likes seeing how different nurses interact with each other in different teams.

What is special about the surgical ICU is how the nurses have made

See MCNELLEY Page 5



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The surgical intensive care unit at OU Medical Center in Oklahoma City fights against obstacles to save critically ill patients, says Sydney McNelley, RN, interim supervisor.

MCNELLEY

Continued from Page 4

it a top priority to maintain a positive work environment, she said. Nurses know they can come and be supported.

"When I come to work and any time throughout my day, I never feel like I am doing anything alone — that I need to do anything alone," she said. "I never feel like I don't have someone to go to because no one is going to know everything, and I have never once with this team seen someone be put down by their peers when asking for help. That's special. That's absolutely vital to being a good nursing unit and being able to take care of your patients in the best

way you can."

OU Medical Center on the campus of the OU Health Sciences Center is the only level 1 trauma center for the state of Oklahoma. Her unit is on the same floor as the trauma ICU and assists in care.

"We do take trauma patients coming from hundreds of miles for the care that they need," she said. "Between us and the trauma ICU, we specifically take care of them. And, we also get very, very sick patients who are waiting or hoping to get a transplant."

Nurses in the surgical ICU may witness the worst or best day in a patient's life.

"Either way, all we can do is to try to make everything better for them," she said.

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OMRF scientists find potential life-saving use for aspirin

The solution to a rare but debilitating and often fatal blood disease may be as close as your medicine cabinet, Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientists have discovered.

Researchers in the lab of OMRF scientist Lijun Xia, M.D., Ph.D., found that low-dosage aspirin could prevent acute attacks of thrombotic thrombocytopenic purpura, or TTP, in mouse models. The findings were published in the journal *Blood*.

TTP is thought to affect between 1 and 4 per 100,000 people. In it, blood clots form in small blood vessels throughout the body. These clots can block blood flow, often resulting in organ damage or stroke. In most patients, the disease is an autoimmune disorder in which the body destroys an enzyme that controls blood clotting. Without it, the body makes too many blood clots, said Xia, who leads OMRF's Cardiovascular Biology Research Program.

"People with this disorder live in

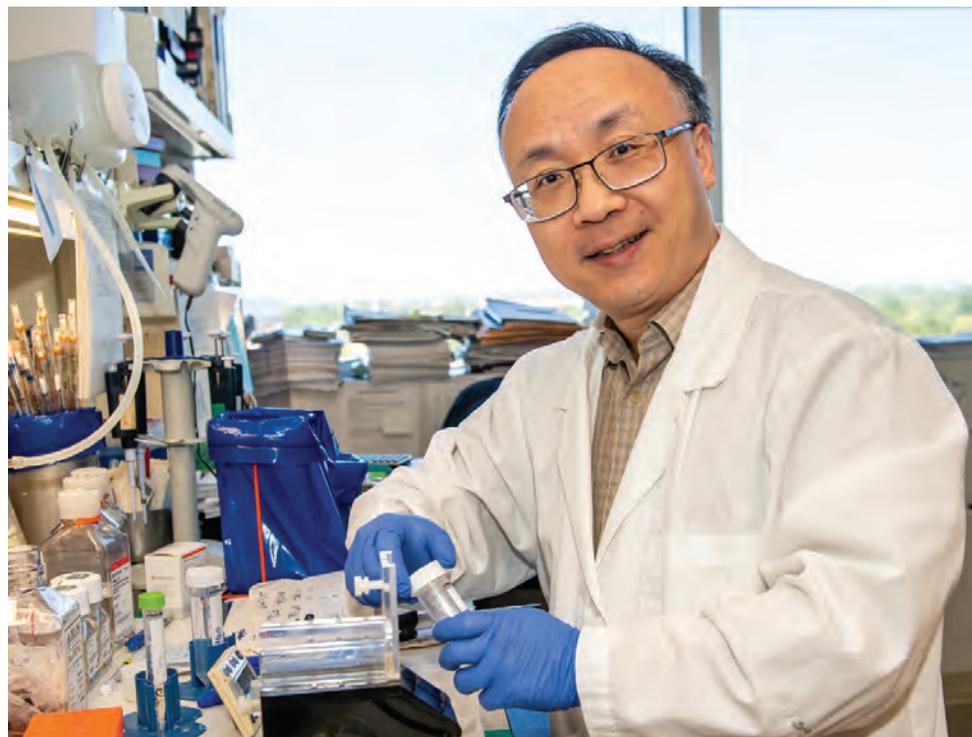
fear of the next attack," said OMRF Vice President of Research Rod McEver, M.D., a hematologist and physician-scientist. "This research gives those patients the possibility of living their lives free from that specter."

Doctors have lacked viable options for preventing TTP attacks. As a result, the condition can prove fatal.

OMRF scientist Bojing Shao, Ph.D., who initiated the study, said although aspirin has long been known to prevent blood clots that cause a stroke, researchers believed this solution wasn't applicable to TTP. Shao's previous research regarding blood platelet adhesion prompted him to test that belief in mouse models of the disease.

"Often, our research can take decades to go through the process of multiple clinical trials before it is approved for use by patients," he said. "What is particularly rewarding about this finding is the prospect of immediate applicability."

Among those contributing to the research was James George, M.D.,



OMRF scientist Bojing Shao, Ph.D.

a University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center physician-scientist and TTP expert.

"Dr. Shao's observations suggest that daily use of low-dose aspirin may prevent these critical episodes, similarly to how it can prevent a heart attack or stroke," George said. "This could be an amazing benefit for patients with TTP."

Because the study was done in mice, George and Xia noted that

people with TTP should consult their physician before altering their current treatment plan.

This research was supported by National Institutes of Health grant No. R01HL149860 and American Heart Association grant No. 18CDA34120009. Scientists at the University of North Carolina, Bloodworks Research Institute in Seattle, and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium contributed to the research.

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ANSWERS ON PAGE 13

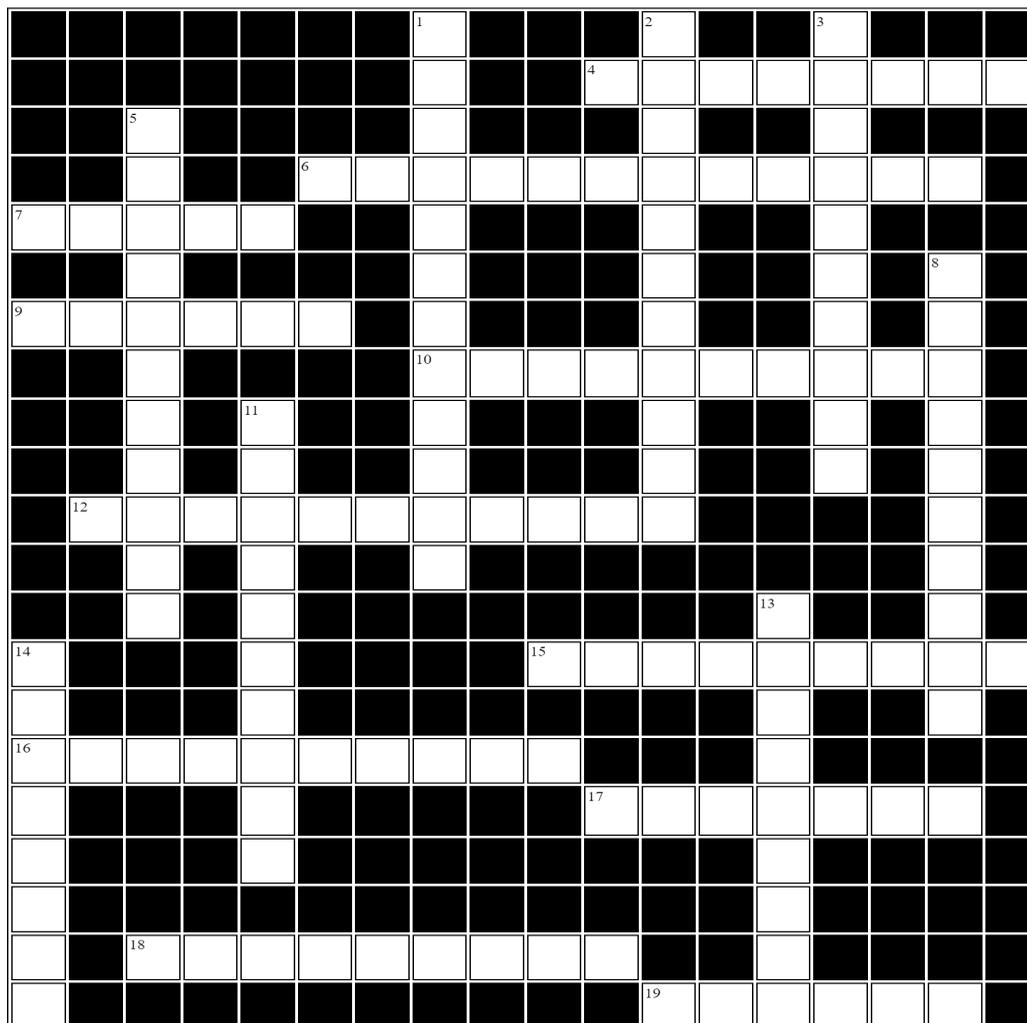


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By RG RN

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TSET Health Promotion Research Center and Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline Seek Pregnant Women for Smoking Cessation Study

Dr. Darla Kendzor, Co-Director of the TSET Health Promotion Research Center (HPRC) and Dr. Jon Hart, Director of the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline (OTH), both on the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, are working to address smoking cessation among pregnant women with Medicaid insurance.

Studies have shown that while many women initially quit smoking during pregnancy, they often begin smoking again during the postpartum period. The findings from a number of independent studies have shown that incentivizing smoking cessation is an effective way to promote continued smoking abstinence among pregnant women.

A new study will combine Kendzor's expertise in incentive-based interventions with the standard treatment offered through the OTH directed by Hart. The goal of the study is to evaluate whether the incentives-based OTH intervention will increase smoking cessation rates in comparison with standard OTH treatment, which includes counseling and nicotine replacement therapy (with physician approval).

Eligible pregnant women may earn incentives for completing counseling calls and for providing evidence of smoking abstinence. Pregnant women 18 years of age or older who are less than or equal to 25 weeks pregnant are eligible for this study. Participants enrolled in this study will be followed for approximately three months postpartum. For more information about this study, call 1-800-QUIT NOW or visit OKhelpline.com.

The HPRC is an integral component of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program of the NCI-Designated OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center. Over the past seven years, the HPRC has become a nationally recognized tobacco research center. Modifiable health risk factors that substantially impact the health of Oklahomans, such as sedentary lifestyle, risky alcohol, and other substance use, have increasingly become a research focus of center

investigators.

The HPRC receives funding from the OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center via an NCI Cancer Center Support Grant (P30CA225520) and the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust contract number R23-02.

OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center is Oklahoma's only National Cancer Institute-Designated Cancer Center. Stephenson Cancer Center is one of the nation's elite centers, representing the top 2% of cancer centers in the country. It is the largest and most comprehensive oncology practice in the state, delivering patient-centered, multidisciplinary care for every type of cancer. As one of the nation's leading research organizations, Stephenson Cancer Center uses the latest innovations to fight and eliminate cancer, and is currently ranked No. 1 among all cancer centers in the nation for the number of patients participating in clinical trials sponsored by the NCI's National Clinical Trials Network. For more information, visit <https://www.ouhealth.com/stephenson-cancer-center/>.



Dr. Darla Kendzor, Co-Director of the TSET Health Promotion Research Center.



Dr. Jon Hart, Director of the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline.

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The Saints Santa Run is Back in Midtown

Registration for Downtown OKC's Most Festive Run is Now Open



Downtown Oklahoma City Partnership is excited to announce that registration for this year's Saints Santa Run is now open. This annual family-friendly winter run brings all ages, and even pets, to the streets of downtown for the city's most festive 5K and costume contest.

The run, which is one of Downtown in December's signature events, will take place on Saturday, Dec. 3 and include a 5K Run/Walk Race, 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk, and a free 50-yard Kids' Dash. The 5K route takes runners through the Midtown district and historic Heritage Hills neighborhood and begins and ends on the campus of its presenting sponsor, SSM Health - St. Anthony Hospital.

"SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital values all of the exceptional work done by Downtown OKC Partnership to support revitalization and growth in Midtown," said Sandra Payne, Regional Director at SSM Health St. Anthony. "We have especially enjoyed participating in events such as the Santa Run which supports a healthy lifestyle for families as well as provides an opportunity to highlight all that downtown Oklahoma City has to offer."

Participants in the 5K race or 1-Mile Fun Run receive a commemorative Saints Santa Run t-shirt and finisher medal, as well as access to the official Santa Run playlist to help keep them in the holiday spirit. All registrants are invited to enjoy free activities before and after they run like face painting, balloon art, complimentary snacks and drinks, holiday music, and more at the start/finish line celebration.

It wouldn't be the Saints Santa Run without a costume contest! Participants are encouraged to dress up like Santa or their most festive holiday costume for a chance to win cash prizes immediately following the race. Cash prizes will also be awarded to the top overall male, female, and non-binary 5K race winners.

The registration fee is currently \$20 for the 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk and \$35 for the 5K Run/Walk. Registration is open online at [DowntownInDecember.com/Santa-Run](https://downtownindecember.com/santa-run) and will continue through the morning of the race, when prices increase by \$5, with on-site registration opening at 8 a.m.

Day of packet pick up will begin at 8 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 3 at the SSM Health - St. Anthony campus located at 1000 N. Lee Avenue. Runners can also retrieve their packets early on Friday, Dec. 2 at the drive-thru pick up at SSM Health from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. or the walk-up pick up at OK Runner (708 N Broadway Ave.) from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Schedule for race day is as follows:

- 8 a.m. - Day-Of Registration, Packet Pick Up & Festivities
- 8:45 a.m. - Free Kids' Dash begins (ages 8 and under)
- 9 a.m. - 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk begins



9:30 a.m. - 5K Run/Walk begins

10:15 a.m. - Race Results & Awards

10:30 a.m. - Costume Contest

All proceeds from the Saints Santa Run benefit Downtown Oklahoma City Partnership, which provides services to the downtown area that include keeping the streets clean, safe and friendly services, marketing our downtown and its districts, and activating the core with community events and public art.

The event is produced by Downtown OKC Partnership, presented by SSM Health - St. Anthony Hospital, and supported by Midtown OKC, TTCU Federal Credit Union, Lopez Foods, West Shore Home, and Tinker Federal Credit Union.

For more information and a list of holiday activities happening in downtown Oklahoma City, visit <https://downtownindecember.com/>.



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