

The Oklahoma City Indian Clinic is one of the nurse after her grandfather was hospitalized on top Indian clinics in the United States because of the oncology floor at SSM St. Anthony Hospital the services they provide. So much of the success in Oklahoma City. is due to the fine staff of caring nurses working there.

City Indian Clinic became a licensed practical nurse does, everything they do behind the scenes

Story and photo by James Coburn, Staff Writer

"I just remember how the nurses took care of him. They took care of us too, as a family," Chanaya Andrews, an LPN at the Oklahoma Andrews said. "And I never realized how much a

after he passed away. It inspired me to get into the medical field."

She graduated from Moore Norman Technology Center.

"I always say that if anybody is looking for a

#### ANDREWS Continued from Page 1

really good LPN school, that's where you should go," Andrews said.

Andrews began her career during the COVID pandemic. She was familiar with the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic from the mock interviews conducted in nursing school. She interviewed with the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic and has worked there for nearly two years.

The Oklahoma City Indian Clinic stood out for her because the staff thrives in their mission of care.

"The vision is to be the national model for American Indian health care. Our mission is to provide excellent care to American Indians. So that's what we prove. We want to be the best in Indian Health Services in the United States," said Tracee Barton, RN, vice president of nursing. Barton earned a Master of Science in Nursing degree from Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

The Oklahoma City Indian Clinic is constantly making improvements reflecting community needs. The clinic recently purchased a building in Oklahoma City off Southwest 44th and Western. It is in the development process to serve as a clinic for women and children. But the clinic's work is not confined to a building. Andrews likes all the volunteer opportunities available with her job.

"We go out into the community. So that was something that really drew me to the Indian Clinic," Andrews continued. "It touches my heart because we are able to give to those that really need it."

American Indians can go to the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic for behavioral health services, health promotion, disease prevention, public health, optometry, dentistry, urgent care, respiratory care, physical therapy, a wellness center, diabetes education classrooms and the expanded Harmon-y Pediatric clinic.

Women can come to the clinic for mammograms without having to worry if they have health insurance, Andrews said.

"Maybe we can catch something early so we can get it treated," she added.

The clinic provides preventative care without the additional stress of the client not having a copay at that moment, Andrews said.

Andrews didn't realize how much of the Oklahoma City homeless community is Native American. The Oklahoma City Indian Clinic helps homeless Native Americans who come there needing clothing and shoes.

"With foot care, you don't realize how much you need your feet and how good of care you need to keep of your feet," she explained. "And, if you're homeless, you're not able to get that care a lot of times if you don't have insurance. With the Indian Clinic and all the things, they can get done.

Andrews works as a float nurse. So, whenever she goes to the Metabolic Clinic she will provide education, especially about diabetes. Her focus depends on where she is in the clinic.

New nurses need not worry about asking questions to the staff. Leadership and staff members take time to listen to concerns, she said. A well-rounded nurse at the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic needs the qualities of integrity and commitment, Andrews said.

"I have to say be a personable person, truthful, and I think having empathy definitely is needed to work Being a nurse helps Andrews not to take what she sees on a surface value. There is a lot more in a person's life happening behind the scenes, she said. She worked in food services before becoming a nurse.

Andrews would encounter people

here," she continued.

with an attitude or anger. "In healthcare they might bring those things, too. But a lot of times, there's a lot of stuff going on behind the scenes," she said. "Maybe you get a call and there is something going on and they're already frustrated," she said. "You didn't do anything, but maybe they are calling about a pap smear result. They want to know because they have a family history of cervical cancer. So, I think nursing has helped me to not just see what I see right now — but understand the picture of it."

For more information about the Oklahoma City Indian Clinic visit: https://www.ihs.gov/oklahomacity/.



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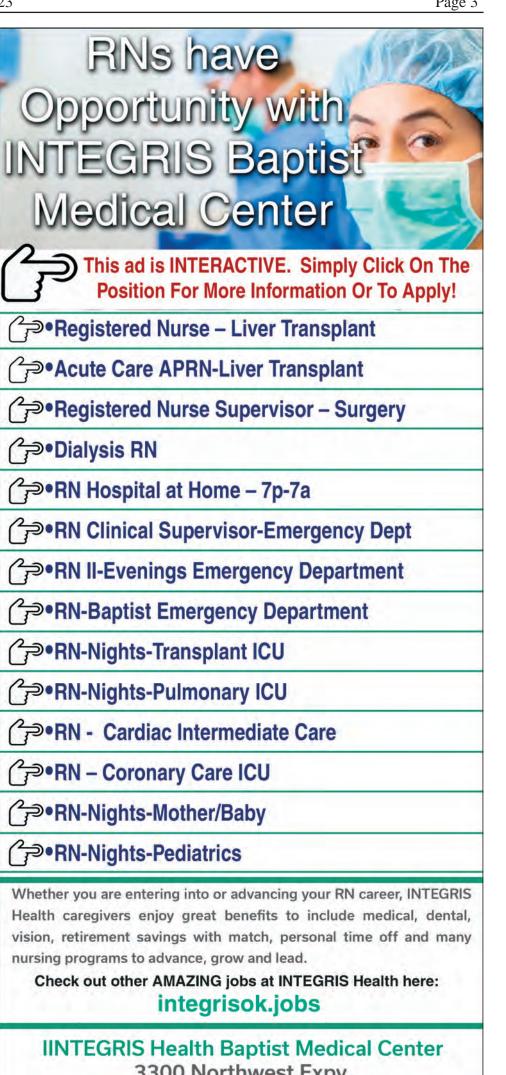
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## **CAREERS IN NURSING:** SACRED MOMENTS - GOOD SHEPHERD HOSPICE RENDERS LOVE

#### by James Coburn - staff writer

sacred moments of life, says Heather Perkins, RN, executive director of Good Shepherd Hospice.

When Perkins came to Good Shepherd Hospice in October, she found a compassionate nursing staff who cared for the patients, families and communities they serve.

"This is the kind of work that you have to have a passion for," Perkins said. "And to have a hospice heart is different from other types of nursing. I think God did a good job with nurses."

Nurses can choose from a vast array of career choices but should have a heart for their selective niche, she said. Good Shepherd nurses ensure that each person is treated with compassion and dignity.

"If there are any ways that we can meet needs that are not met, ways we can love and support families, they bend over backwards to do it," Perkins continued. "They care very much for their teammates.

Birth and death are the most They care for one another just like a family. I think they are excellent role models in what it looks like to give compassionate care and live by the mission and values that Good Shepherd has."

> Her nursing career was a response to human need. On the morning of April 19, 1995, Perkins worked as a medical assistant in the infirmary of the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office when Timothy McVeigh exploded a bomb at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City. The act of domestic terrorism killed 168 men, women and children. There were 680 non-fatal injuries.

> Perkins had joined the county's search and rescue team in February with the opportunity to do swiftwater rescue, repelling, but nothing that would prepare her for April 19, she said. Perkins spent almost three days with her team from the sheriff's office recovering people from the devastation.

> > "You see the amount of goodness

that can come from something so terrible," Perkins recalled. "People from every walk of life - it didn't matter your race, your religion. It didn't matter if yesterday you didn't agree and see eye to eye. Everyone in this whole community in this state just came together. And I saw the most generous versions of humankind that probably I'll only see once in my lifetime."

Being able to render care during such a traumatic event sealed the deal for her to become a nurse.

Perkins earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Presentation College in South Dakota. She came to know hospice as a new nurse 23 years ago when starting her career in a medical surgical intensive care unit.

Life limiting injuries would cause some patients to transition into hospice care. In 2003 Perkins left the ICU to become an on-call hospice nurse. She was intrigued by the compassion. Today, love delivers a circle of care at Good Shepherd Hospice as it serves Oklahoma City, Hinton and Norman.

"Hospice care is not possible without every spoke of the wheel," she said.

Hospice care includes a holistic approach to the emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects of end of life for the patient and their family members in grief. Care spreads to caregivers in nursing facilities who have grown to love their patients. Facilities become emotionally attached to their residents, Perkins said.

"They suffer with grief and loss the same way family members and even hospice staff do," she explained.

Good Shepherd Hospice provides support from RN case managers and LPNs supporting them. Home health aides are the hands and feet of hospice care, Perkins added.

"They spend the most time in

See PERKINS Page 5



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Heather Perkins, RN, brings empathy, love, and skill to her role as executive vice president of Good Shepherd Hospice.

#### PERKINS Continued from Page 4

intimate ways with patients. They often know patients better than anybody," she explained.

Social workers provide emotional support and care planning with advanced directives. Chaplains provide spiritual care that doesn't necessarily mean religious care when not everyone wants that.

"Hospice chaplains are specially trained to meet people where they are if they don't have faith," Perkins pointed out.

Office staff is essential. The office manager makes sure the staff is taken care of and the payroll is

#### done.

She described a beautiful event that happened that involved a dying patient. The next day a letter praising God was taped to the patient's door. It stated the patient was no longer there.

"It was a praise to God that this person was now home with Jesus, free of pain, free of any worries, experiencing the ultimate joy," Perkins said. "And it thanked all of the people from Good Shepherd Hospice that came and provided that care to make it smooth."

The memory of death can bring people a sense of peace, knowing there is comfort, love and support in their final moments, she said.



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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2022 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

# UCO prepares tomorrow's leaders



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Leann Laubach, Ph.D., is an assistant professor and the baccalaureate program coordinator in the Department of Nursing at the University of Central Oklahoma.

She has been teaching at UCO since 2005 and has 22 years of experience as a nurse in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

"They set their own goals so it's a more personalized experience. It's not the goals I set for you as the instructor," Laubach said of the program's online offerings. "They are related to your ultimate goal for your degree. I think that's really where we pride ourselves both in our RN to BSN and our master's program is the personalization of the degree and maintaining that close contact with our students so we can help you be successful in our programs."

The master's degree directly addresses the University of Central Oklahoma's mission to contribute to the intellectual, cultural, economic, and social advancement of the communities and individuals it serves.

The inclusion of 100 practicum hours facilitates the participation of students in transformative educational experiences that directly benefit the Oklahoma City metro community.

Nursing graduate students can choose from two-course pathways: nursing leadership or nursing education. A master's degree in nursing education will prepare students for academic positions in nursing education or positions in clinical staff education. The leadership pathway allows students to meet individual goals in areas such as health care leadership or administration.

The program is offered at a \$15,000 flat fee, even if a student is out of state.

"It's protecting students against inflation," Laubach said.

Laubach noted the flexibility of the program benefits students in ways



A UCO nursing degree opens up a myriad of possibilities.

that make it possible to advance their degrees.

"There's great value in that for someone who maybe is working full time and or has a family, they can carve those hours out in a time frame that works for them. I see that as very valuable for both programs. It makes it so students can do the work when they need to do the work and not at a time that works better for me."

The recent pandemic has created a divide for many nurses who enjoy their chosen careers but may feel burnt out in their current roles.

"I think now has challenged people to think outside of being at the bedside that whole time," Laubach said. "I think they are seeking education because they want that change. I think that's the future of where nursing is going that nurses are realizing they want to stay in nursing but they don't know if they want to stay at the bedside the whole time."

There is a definite opportunity for nurses to use their experiences to better the next generation of nursing through education or mentorship.

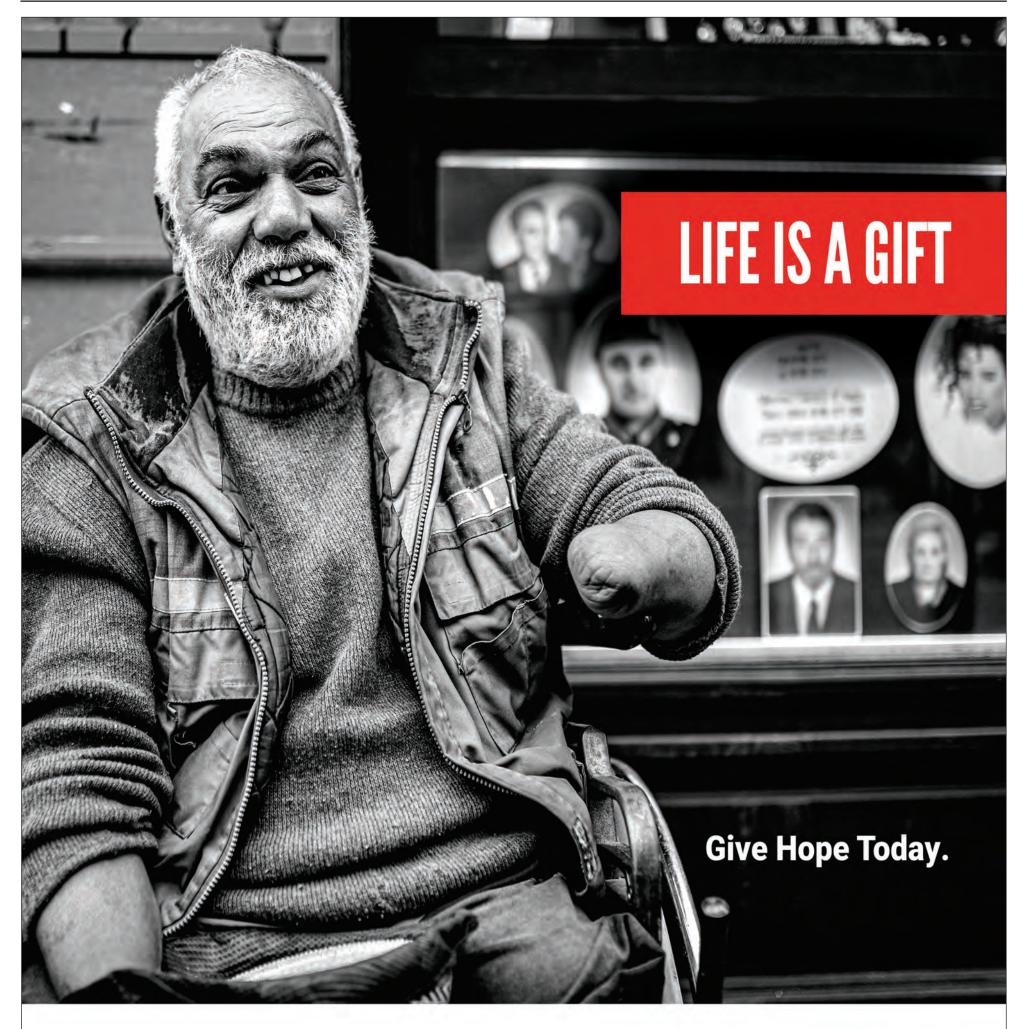
"I think for nurses who find they are passionate about teaching new nurses it's an advantage to come back and get an education or leadership degree," Laubach said. "A leadership degree would allow students to be the clinical leaders, the charge nurse and give them the skillset they need to be successful."

"The advantage of coming back to get your master's degree or even your bachelor's degree is expanding the way you think. The biggest thing is the growth mindset that occurs from the next degree to the next degree."

The first nursing class from the nursing department at the University of Central Oklahoma graduated in 1972. Since that time, more than 3,500 well-qualified graduate nurses have entered the workforce.

Graduates of this program are known for being some of the best nurses in the state of Oklahoma. For more information visit:

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What is something you have learned about yourself as a hospice nurse?



### Good Shepherd Hospice

"I've learned a little more compassion, and I've learned how to break hard news to people as gently as possible."



Kayli Strain, LPN

*"It's definitely a God calling. We're able to give back to the patient in their homes and to their families."* 



Jorja Stevenson, RN

"It has taught me that giving is way more meaningful and fulfilling than receiving."



Heather Perkins, RN, executive director



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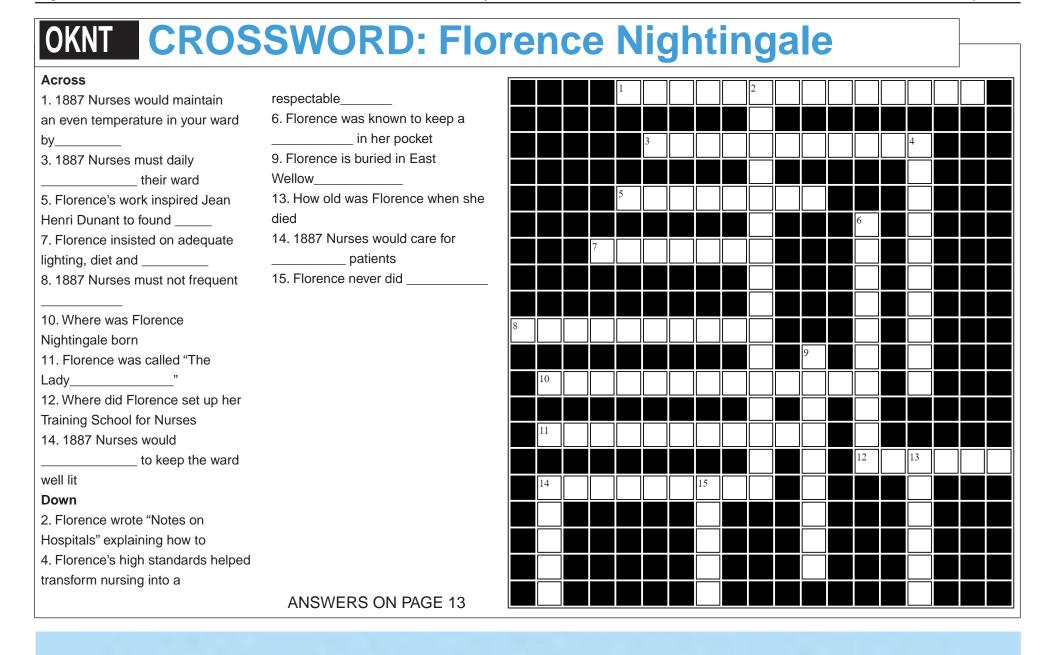
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## OKC Rehabilitation Hospital open for business

Oklahoma City and the surrounding metro area now have more inpatient rehabilitation services available for people who have debilitating illnesses and injuries such as stroke, brain injury, and other complex medical, neurological, and orthopedic diseases and injuries.

Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital is a 40-bed inpatient rehabilitation hospital that opened in December at 10240 Broadway Extension.

The Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital's design is a one-story medical rehabilitation hospital with 40 private rooms, a rehab therapy gym with state-of-the-art equipment and technologies, an outdoor courtyard that facilitates additional therapy on different surfaces, a dining cafıı and a mini home like suite for the patient to complete activities of daily living with the support and expertise of the rehab team before returning to their own environment.

Nobis Rehabilitation Partners is the operating company of the inpatient rehab hospital. Nobis currently operates nine other rehab hospitals across the country with another six inpatient rehab hospitals opening this year and four more under development.

Nobis brings together hospitals, developers, and investment partners to develop, operate, and manage inpatient rehabilitation hospitals, hospital-based rehab units and Nobis also partners with local hospitals and health systems around their rehab service line.

'Patients are already raving about the care at the Oklahoma Rehabilitation Hospital according to the 5 Star Google Reviews,' said Gina Thomas, Chief Development Officer, Nobis Rehabilitation Partners.



"An absolutely incredible facility," said Meagan Black, daughter-in-law of a former patient, in a Google Review. "Staff, quality of care, and most importantly the PT staff goes above and beyond to get you stronger every day. Truly the only place to go for rehabilitation needs in the metro area. If I could give them more than five stars I would."

The inpatient medical rehab team consists of physicians, therapists (Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Speech Language Pathologists), and rehab trained nurses.

Continued on page 12

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#### **OPEN** Continued from Page 11

The Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital's medical rehab team customizes each patient's intensive rehab program (with a minimum of 15 hours of rehab therapy a week) during their inpatient stay with the goal of returning the patient back to their community at the highest function possible.

Recent medical studies definitively show that inpatient rehabilitation settings result in substantial improvement in the patient's physical mobility and ability to care for themselves.

Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital is led by Stacie Goyne, CEO.

Goyne has over 20 years of healthcare expertise, initially trained as a medical social worker in Oklahoma and then at THR Harris Methodist Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas. Her experience spans several leadership roles in business development, marketing, and social work across inpatient rehab hospitals, LTACHs, and skilled nursing facilities in Oklahoma, Texas, and Colorado.

Dr. Nathaniel Harris is the Medical Director for the inpatient



The Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital's design is a beautiful onestory medical rehabilitation hospital with 40 private rooms, a rehab therapy gym with state-of-the-art equipment and technologies.

rehabilitation hospital.

Dr. Harris is a specialized physical medicine rehabilitation physician who collaborates with and leads the medical staff and therapy teams to provide quality patient care and rehabilitation to the patients needing these services in the Oklahoma City and surrounding Oklahoma City communities.

For more information about Oklahoma City Rehabilitation Hospital visit:

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