

# 2023

# YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Saying *Thanks* to Those Who Care!

To the organizations taking part in this year's very special section by showing appreciation and expressing gratitude for nurses, nursing educators and their Students, **we salute you!**

# Celebrating National Nurses Month!

 Oklahoma's  
Nursing Times

[WWW.OKNURSINGTIMES.COM](http://WWW.OKNURSINGTIMES.COM)

May 8, 2023 Vol. 24 Issue 17



# THANK YOU NURSES

for your care, compassion and exceeding the expectations of everyone who walks through our doors!



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Attitude is valued.  
Respect is demanded.  
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# CARING FOR THE CAREGIVERS

The sound of ocean waves and the smell of lavender essential oils fills the room as Amy McIntire takes a seat.

She's come to the Wellness Oasis at Valir Health to enjoy a moment of solitude.

"When you walk in you can feel immediately your body begins to relax a little bit," said McIntire, a Senior Accountant at Valir Health. "They did a great job making sure the scents and sounds are very calming."

It is just one of the ways Valir Health has worked to prioritize caring for those who care for their patients.

"Our employees have dedicated their careers to caring for others. In turn, it's important that we care for our employees so that they are best equipped to care for their patients and for participants in our PACE, Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly," said Valir's Chief People and Culture Officer Kelli Adams.

A large massage chair, a yoga mat and reclining chairs await those needing a place to unwind during the workday. There are also healthy

snacks available just outside of the room for employees to enjoy on their way in or out of the room. The Wellness Oasis is open to all Valir employees.

"The Wellness Oasis shows us that Valir really cares about us as employees and our wellbeing," said Brenda Hood, RN, BSN, chief nursing officer at Valir Health's Rehabilitation Hospital.

And Valir Health didn't stop there. On its downtown campus, you will also find a specially curated Mother's Room to welcome those needing a private space to pump and store breastmilk.

"It is a wonderful space where new mothers feel comfortable and don't have to worry about privacy issues," Hood said.

"I love our Mother's Room," said Christina Tilford, a mother of two and site director for Valir's PACE program. "It is a thoughtfully made, quiet, private space with relaxing music, snacks, a refrigerator and lockers for me and the other mothers."

Prioritizing the people who make up the Valir Health team is just



part of the daily culture, explained Adams.

"Our team researched what would be needed for a mother's room and then made sure to find a location that would not have too much traffic, to allow for privacy," she said.

Adams said, in addition to the two rooms, Valir offers employees great benefits, an on-site gym with free classes, giveaways of holiday meals and other items throughout the year, as well as other benefits.

Employees are grateful and definitely notice the special steps Valir's leadership team has taken to show them they care.

"It's just the little things that mean a lot and we appreciate it," said Racheal Hudspeth, a Health Information Management Specialist at Valir Health.

For more information about Valir Health or to join, visit: <https://www.valir.com/careers>

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- REHAB HOSPITAL
- HOSPICE
- PACE

(Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly)





# Personal Touch: NRH celebrates healers

Throughout 30 years in healthcare, a few things have resonated with Keith Minnis when it comes to why people stay at a job.

In a nutshell, it comes down to how people interact with other people.

“As long as I’ve been in healthcare it comes back to the relationship with their peers,” said Minnis, Norman Regional Health System Vice President and Chief People Officer. “It’s about the culture and it’s about purpose and passion and feeling that you’re being able to bring your very best self to work every day.”

Now, as Norman Regional Health System celebrates its healers during National Nurses Month, it has embarked on a campaign to highlight those individuals who have stayed the course.

Chief Nursing Officer Brittni McGill, MSN, RN, CCRN said the hospital’s Why I Stay campaign is giving healers both an opportunity to share their passion and be recognized for their hard work.

“I think it provides personal experiences and gives our people the opportunity to share those on a grander scale,”



Norman Regional Health System Chief Nursing Officer - Brittni McGill, MSN, RN, CCRN.

One charge nurse mentioned how she volunteered at the hospital as a teenager and how many of her friends who did the same would later work with her.

“My fellow coworkers are like my work family and they make coming to work fun and interesting,” she wrote.

The stories are highlighted throughout the system.

“That is now more important than ever that we realize and recognize the importance of the relationship,” Minnis said. “You have to treasure every one of those interactions and those opportunities to coach, laugh, celebrate and at times grieve the difficult situations that occur.”

“From the human resources side, it’s really about maintaining



Norman Regional Health System Vice President and Chief People Office, - Keith Minnis

McGill said. “It’s a recognition piece of the peoples’ hearts. I love that personal touch.”

On posters, TV screens and online throughout the system healers are sharing with others what keeps them where they are.

The stories range.

There is a clinical education specialist who has made the drive back and forth from Ada to Norman for the past 25 years.

One RN talked about how she felt rewarded in being able to build parents’ confidence before they took their newborn child home for the first time.



the human side of healing. There’s a human on both sides of that spectrum.”

McGill said the hospital has created a number of programs to highlight The Norman Way to prospective nurses coming out of school.

Norman Regional’s student nurse partnership allows final semester nursing students to get paid for their clinical hours while working on the floor as a patient care technician.

Norman Regional Health System student nurse partners and externs have consistently passed the NCLEX at a rate of 96 percent since the program began in March of 2021.

Those numbers are impressive, especially considering the state pass rate average is 83 percent. Nationally, those taking the NCLEX have dropped to an 81 percent success rate.

“The intention with all of them is to bridge that gap from the academic experience to the professional setting,” McGill said. “We’ve seen throughout these programs a great success in those students transitioning post-graduation, passing of the NCLEX and being immersed into their new professional role.”

Students are surveyed after each phase of the

program.

“That speaks volumes. Their learning experience and environment is a direct result of our healers providing that positive experience for them,” McGill said. “So our healers know about the importance of tomorrow’s future and they know the purpose of these programs is to invest in the profession of nursing.

“And it speaks to our culture as a health system.”

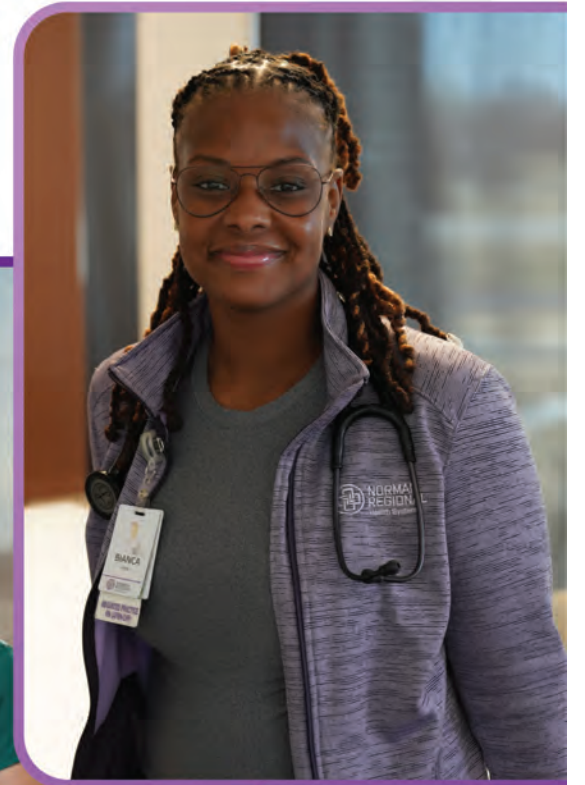
Putting words to faces helps Minnis and his mission.

“It’s absolutely critical. We work in a relationship business and to reflect the faces of the healers who work here and give the care to the patients and families I believe it symbolically represents, recognizes and celebrates those individual healers,” he said. “That individual healing and caring is a very personal experience. For us to be able to showcase that healer whether it be a patient care tech or a nurse ... means all the world.”





# Thank you, Norman Regional Nurses!



Thank you for standing in the gap between the  
hurt and the healing and providing lifesaving care.

**Norman Regional joins you in celebrating nursing!**

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# OU College of Nursing continues mission

*For 21 straight years now the nursing profession has been named the most trustworthy in America.*

Quite simple, nursing is the lifeblood of healthcare.

And for those charged with training the next generation of nurses, the responsibility for the future is held sacred.

Faculty at the University of Oklahoma's Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing stand in the gap when it comes to nursing education.

Each has their own unique story, but all share a passion for nursing education.

Stacy Frisbie, DNP, RN, CNE serves as the BSN Track Coordinator and Curriculum Chair for the college.

"Nursing is the absolute oxygen of the health system," Frisbie said. "Nurses advocate for their patients on a daily basis and are often the first to notice a change in a patient's condition. Decades of research not only supports the value of nurses regarding patient satisfaction, but also their impact on morbidity and mortality."

Unfortunately, Oklahoma has fewer nurses per capita than 48 other states. That's a crisis in care for our state.

"The importance of nursing care has been increasingly recognized across the world," Frisbie said. "By vastly increasing the number of nurses we are able to educate across our five sites in the past year, and again for this year, the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing is making a difference to Oklahomans



The University of Oklahoma's Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing is preparing tomorrow's nurses today.

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needing care across the state."

"I am confident the students we graduate will continue the tradition of nursing excellence we are known for, and my hope is that our partners across the state who are supporting our new graduates in healthy work environments will be able to keep them here for years to come."

Lori McElroy, DNP, RN, CNE is an assistant professor and ABSN and degree completion track coordinator.

She's proud of the college's mission and its results.

"It is a bit cliché to say that nursing education is attempting to make changes to keep up with the rapidly changing healthcare landscape because we have been saying this for decades," she said. "At the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing, located in the heart of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, we truly believe that nurses are the oxygen of the healthcare system and they are educated to adapt and make changes continuously to improve health outcomes with a holistic approach while considering self-care and a healthy work environment."

"We are growing by leaps and bounds, which happens when you provide more oxygen. We have doubled student enrollment in the undergraduate programs, tripled the number of student affairs staff to offer more student resources and student support, and expanded clinical partnerships across the state. We are working to expand and enhance our facilities to accommodate more students and create consistency across the state at each teaching site."

With that, McElroy noted the school continues to hire more faculty and staff to support the incoming students.

"This exciting time of change, innovation, and reenvisioning of teaching, learning, and clinical experiences provides infinite possibilities to improve nursing education, patient care, and outcomes for our Oklahoma communities," she said.

Brayton J. Amidon, MSN, RN, CHSE is a clinical instructor at the college. Primarily teaching in the college's Experiential Learning Center, Amidon helps students apply what they learn in the classroom to real-life patient scenarios.

It's this type of learning that closes the gap between classroom and the patient room.

"Our primary mechanism for this instruction is simulation – whether that be skills education or realistic patient scenarios," he said. "Our goal in the Experiential Learning Center is to narrow the theory-to-practice gap and prepare our students to excel as newly licensed RNs. We have created a safe place for students to learn and practice their critical thinking and clinical judgment. Our Experiential Learning Team across the state works together closely to ensure that our students have the best possible learning experience."

For more information about Oklahoma's Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing, visit: <https://nursing.ouhsc.edu/>.



# OU Nursing Advancing Health Sooner

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- Expanded clinical simulation experiences with state-of-the-art lab – anticipated opening fall 2023
- Student Success Center

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## *Happy Nurses Month*



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# Nursing Pioneers:

## WOSC a leader in SW Oklahoma



Diane Fairchild, MSN, RN had a recent conversation with a former graduate.

A smile crossed her face as the graduate related heartfelt thanks for the learning opportunities he had received at Western Oklahoma State College.

And by the time the school's nursing program director finished the conversation, she had a volunteer for IV skills lab day walking down the hall to meet with their former instructor.

"He wanted to be a part of that because he felt like he had received an excellent education here and he loved nursing and wanted to give back to the students by letting them stick his arm," Fairchild said. "He appreciated the relationship that he had developed with his instructors and they were so caring and kind to him that he just wanted to give back."

"It's a wonderful feeling, very fulfilling."

It's stories like these that keep Fairchild and her faculty going.

Western Oklahoma State has one of the only ADN programs in southwest Oklahoma and has three campuses.

Established as Altus Junior College in 1926, it is the oldest original municipal two-year college still in existence in Oklahoma.

The Nursing Program at Western Oklahoma State College was established in 1981 and has an outstanding success rate for preparing qualified nurses.

The WOSC nursing program is offered at three campus sites: Altus, Lawton, and Elk City. Western's ADN program has several program tracks.

Face-to-face classes for both general and advanced standing entry students are available as well as online classes with a face-to-face clinical component for advanced standing students. Students in the face-to-face track are able to take daytime classes at all three campuses.

"One of our major goals is to meet the needs of Altus and the surrounding areas by having a high-quality nursing program and having nurses go into our communities and stay and help with the nursing needs of the people in that community," Fairchild said.

One of the school's most popular programs is the online LPN-to-RN track.

"We even have students coming from Texas and Oklahoma City," she said. "With this program and testing you can complete the program in one year and still be able to work as an LPN while you are completing the program."

NCLEX pass rates for the LPN to RN have exceeded the national average for the past two years.

"I feel like we have excellent support with our clinical sites, the different hospitals in the area that allow us to do clinicals there," Fairchild said. "We have excellent clinical adjunct instructors that provide very good clinical teaching to our students where they can really build on their bedside skills and bedside interaction with patients. They really build upon their ability to care and give compassion to patients."

Fairchild said oftentimes clinical instructors are employed at the facilities where clinicals occur which only adds to the learning

experience.

"They know what they need and are able to teach that to the students. A lot of our hospitals do nurse intern programs during the summer and it's very beneficial to the student and it's beneficial to the school because they're continuing their education through work in the summer," Fairchild said. "The students are getting to know the nurses there and developing relationships and when they graduate and become nurses a lot of times they are hired in those facilities and help with the nursing shortage."

Springtime is always an exciting time for healthcare facilities in and around campus.

"I know they say it's very difficult to find RNs to come to southwest Oklahoma so they're always thankful when it comes to graduation time and they know some of those RNs are going to be able to stay in that area," Fairchild said.

And some even come back to their alma mater to pay it forward.

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Visit <http://www.wosc.edu/nursing> for more information.





# Murray State Offers Paramedic to RN Career Mobility Program

Murray State College offers a hybrid online fast track program that is Murray State College offers a hybrid online fast track program that is designed for Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs,) Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) and Licensed Paramedics. It allows them to advance their careers by earning a registered nursing (RN) degree.

This Nursing Paramedic to RN Career Mobility track was ranked number one as the best in the nation for 2023, according to <https://www.registerednursing.org>.

Certified paramedics who have been licensed within the last three years do not have to take the challenge exam prior to applying for the program. The hybrid online track includes a nursing role transition course to address the responsibilities of a nurse versus a

paramedic.

"This pathway has been a very successful program for us and our students," said DeAnn Priddy, RN, Murray State College Nursing Program Director. "Our goal is to guide each learner and assist them in rising to his or her maximum potential."

Graduates of this program are eligible to apply for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). At the completion of the program, students will graduate with an Associates of Applied Science (A.A.S) degree. From there, students have the opportunity to continue their education toward earning a bachelor's and master's degrees, and doctorate.

Murray State's nursing faculty are dedicated to helping their students achieve their personal best in all areas of nursing. The



nursing program's mission is to provide exemplary nursing education to a diverse student population for the development of tomorrow's healthcare leaders who focus on the unique needs of patients, families and communities.

"This program truly represents Murray's motto, "From Here, Go Anywhere," said Dr. Tim Faltyn, Murray State College president. "To have the opportunity to provide a resource that can help current professionals advance their career

is what makes Murray State the nursing education provider for southern Oklahoma."

Murray State College, located in Ardmore, Oklahoma, and Tishomingo, Oklahoma, provides opportunities for student learning, personal growth, professional success and community enhancement. Murray State serves more than 3,000 students annually. The College offers associate degrees in arts, science and applied science.

**Come visit us at either of our locations** or check us out online at <https://www.msoc.edu/academics/departments/nursing>. You can also contact Cindra St. Clair at [cstclair@msoc.edu](mailto:cstclair@msoc.edu).

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PARAMEDICS**

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# Continued Education for Nurses at MNTC



Franklin Road Campus, 4701 12th Ave NW in Norman.



South Penn Campus, 13301 S. Pennsylvania in OKC.

Patients deserve high-quality, evidence-based care. It is imperative nurses stay informed and trained in the most up-to-date techniques and practices. Continued nursing education can contribute to pay increases, renewed job satisfaction, resistance to burnout, and most importantly, the ability to offer the best care to your patients.

Moore Norman Technology Center, and other CareerTech institutions, provide advanced training for nurses at every step of their career. Our instructors know to train nurses - because they are nurses. Between our two campuses in Norman and South Oklahoma City, we currently have 18 Registered Nurses on staff, helping create relevant, fast-paced curriculums and hands-on technical training to best develop the skillsets needed to advance within a nursing career. From a variety of continuing education classes to renew certification like CPR BLS for HealthCare Providers, to skill-building classes like Opioid Education for Healthcare Providers, MNTC offers 30+ unique both online and in-person evening courses to enhance nursing careers and diversify healthcare skillsets.

"We are only one of two schools in Oklahoma who are approved by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing for over sixty different topics," said Katie Reynolds, MNTC Training Coordinator. "We provide re-training for nurses (AUA, RN, LPN, and Advanced Practice Nurses) who have been required by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing to complete one or more classes to receive or reinstate their licenses."

In addition to Nurse Review classes, MNTC always offers an Advanced Unlicensed Assistant course that prepares students to perform an assistive role to licensed nurses in acute care settings. Through classroom instruction, extensive lab demonstrations, and clinical experience, this course prepares students to apply for AUA certification issued by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing. In collaboration with the University of Oklahoma, MNTC also offers a Nurse Refresher course which will meet the requirements for the Oklahoma Board of Nursing as an approved Nurse Refresher course.

Moore Norman Technology Center also works directly with health organizations through our Workforce and Economic Development programs. MNTC Workforce and Economic

Development training covers everything from certification maintenance to staff education on emerging technologies within this field. Group training can be conducted on site at your facility, or in one of our health labs. Continued investment in healthcare employees directly correlates with retention and career satisfaction.

"Moore Norman Technology Center has state of the art training facilities with advanced technology in nursing simulation equipment and curriculum," said Dr. Wendy Perry, Director of Health Programs at MNTC. In addition to supporting nurses through advanced training opportunities, MNTC is also working to combat the current nursing shortage which provides additional complications to an already demanding career. "MNTC is working to impact the nursing shortage by offering a pathway for high school seniors to become licensed practical nurses approximately 6-7 months after they graduate from high school. Our adult LPN track is only 10 months long," added Wendy.

Moore Norman Technology Center recognizes the value in committed nursing professionals.

From direct patient care, to case management, to public education and development of complex nursing care systems - Nurses are an indispensable component in public health.

For more information on continued nursing education, certification renewal, or Workplace and Economic Development training visit <https://www.mntc.edu/>.





# Thank you to the Moore Norman Technology Center Nursing Staff.



*South Penn Nursing Staff left to right: Francine Johnson, Katie Reynolds and Tiffany Herndon*



*Franklin Road Nursing Staff left to right: Tracie Singletary, Veretta Parker and Nikki Martinez*



*Franklin Road Nursing Staff left to right: Julie Daniels, Mia Sweetman, Jennifer Clements, Cindy Minor and Crystal Conner*



*Franklin Road Nursing Staff left to right: Kim Anderson, Hilary Bays, Lauren Duroy, Susan McLaughlin, Lorain McKay and Jeff Jordon*



**MOORE NORMAN**  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER



[mntc.edu](http://mntc.edu)



# Oklahoma Nurses Association Celebrates Nurses Month in May And You Can, Too!

The Oklahoma Nurses Association (ONA) is excited to celebrate National Nurses Month in May! Nurses provide an unwavering commitment to patients, their communities, and our health care system. The Nurses Month theme, "You Make A Difference," includes weekly themes encouraging nurses to prioritize self-care, be recognized for the critical work they do, excel in their nursing careers, and educate the community on the vital role of nurses.

Each week in May, ONA will share via email and social media the theme of the week along with activities nurses can do to participate in the theme. The first week focuses on self-care, the second on recognition, the third on professional development, and the final week on community engagement.

### Governor's Proclamation

ONA is proud to have received a proclamation from the Oklahoma Governor, Kevin Stitt, declaring the

month of May officially Nurses Month in Oklahoma!

### Nurse Participation

Oklahoma nurses can participate each week throughout the month by sharing photos of themselves and colleagues participating in weekly theme activities on social media, tagging ONA [[LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#)], and using #NursesMonth2023! Each time a nurse shares a photo online and tags ONA, they will be entered to win \$50 off the next ONA event, one of two Kendra Scott gifts, or a gift certificate for Bala Shoes!

### Thank A Nurse!

Members of the public are encouraged to celebrate nurses in May by recognizing nurses they have met through hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices, and more. Here are a few ways you can thank a nurse:

- Share the #NursesMonth2023 and #ThankANurse on your social media during the month thanking

the nurses for their dedication and hard work

- Send a note or gift to a nurse who made a difference to you or a family member

- If you have school-aged children, send your school's nurse a gift of gratitude such as a gift card to a local coffee shop

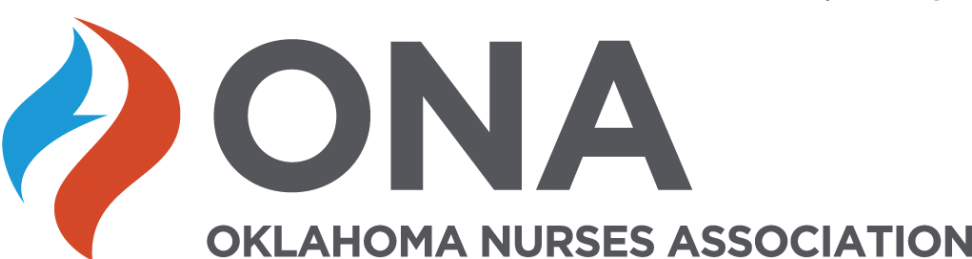
- If you own or work at a business, see if you could offer a discount to nurses during May, and then be sure to let area nurses know by posting a sign, sharing on social media, and more

To learn more about the

Oklahoma Nurses Association, visit: <https://www.oklahomanurses.org/>

The Oklahoma Nurses Association is the professional association for all registered nurses in Oklahoma. We work as a community of professional nurses across all specialties and practice settings to address the issues that face nurses on a daily basis. These issues include – nurse-force numbers, workplace violence, standards of care, scope of practice and patient safety. ONA focuses on practice, educational, political and professional issues that impact registered nurses in Oklahoma. ONA does this by Engaging nurses to make a difference!

*Let's celebrate Oklahoma Nurses all May long!*



**Turning 65 this year? – Retiring with or without a healthcare plan in place? A Veteran with VA care or Tricare for Life? Are eligible for Medicare and Medicaid? Have questions about your Medicare plan? Please call us for the information you need to know. There's no charge, no pressure, just help.**

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**Christina Sibley, EMT/RMA**  
Medicare Specialist  
405-655-6098  
[csibleyinsures@gmail.com](mailto:csibleyinsures@gmail.com)  
BS Health Studies-Gerontology

**Steven Sibley, RET/DAV**  
Life, Health, LTC, & Disability  
405-850-1569  
[ssibleyinsures@gmail.com](mailto:ssibleyinsures@gmail.com)  
MBA - Healthcare Administration

Steven and Christina Sibley are licensed, independent Insurance Brokers. Steven is finding the best products to insure their client's Life, Health, Long Term Care, and Medicare insurance needs are fully and affordably met, both now and in the future. With her 20 years of healthcare experience and his 20 years of financial planning experience, they are ready to offer you the information and personal service you expect and deserve. There's never any pressure, or any charge, just help.

**Thank you Nurses**  
*you are appreciated*

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MAY 2023

# Celebrate

## NURSES MONTH



YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE



# OSU's RN to BSN program offers convenience, flexibility

*Oklahoma State University RN to BSN student Sage Holder had long known she was interested in a healthcare career. When two of the most important people in her life – her grandfather and mother – received a cancer diagnosis in the same week during her first year of college, her career path came into focus.*

“I knew I wanted to be in the healthcare system. I just didn’t know exactly where or what that was going to look like when I started college. I knew I wanted to be successful, a person that others needed, and to care for the sick,” Holder recalls.

Holder began taking pre-medicine classes but during the second semester of her freshman year, she had what she calls an “aha” moment.

“I was either in class or in the hospital, spending time with my family during my grandpa’s chemo treatments or my mom’s cancer appointments. I began to notice the nurses. I wanted to be the person that the patient could look to for a smile, a laugh, or a shoulder to cry on.”

Confident in her decision to pursue nursing, Holder completed prerequisite courses and went on to earn an associate degree in May 2021 and become a Registered Nurse (RN). She landed a job at the Emergency Room at Stillwater Medical Center.

Ready to continue her education by pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Holder found the perfect fit in OSU’s fully online RN to BSN program.

“I knew the program would offer flexibility with my lifestyle and allow me to continue working as an RN while taking classes,” Holder said. “The faculty have been approachable and easy to reach and to communicate with. I feel like they want me to succeed.”

OSU’s RN to BSN program, which launched in Fall 2017 and is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), provides students with a convenient and flexible option to complete their bachelor’s degree in as little as one year.

OSU students expand their professional nursing knowledge from practical, foundational skills they learned during their associate degree, learning the why behind past education.

“Our students are challenged with a wide array of topics that range from leadership and current trends in nursing to global, cultural and public health, as well as nursing theory,” RN to BSN program director Dr. Alana Cluck said.

Ultimately, the mission of the RN to BSN program is to prepare nurses to practice professional nursing that meets the dynamic



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health care needs of individuals, families, groups, communities and global populations. With this degree, graduates are qualified for leadership roles in a variety of healthcare environments.

OSU’s RN to BSN program enjoys a 100 percent satisfaction rate among its graduates. Faculty offer personalized attention and are committed to student success.

“Faculty communicate extremely well, especially considering it’s an online program. They offer a variety of ways to share information and foster relationships with our peers, which allows us to be successful. It’s easy to have a positive experience when you feel your efforts are not only noticed, but also celebrated,” RN to BSN graduate Lacy Smith said.

Kobey Trower, a 2019 graduate of the program, appreciated the experience of his peers and the collaborative nature of courses.

“All of the students were working full-time jobs,” Trower said. “We had some people who worked in ICU, some in labor and delivery, others in clinic and research settings. The accessibility of the coursework helped us keep on the same page for group projects. It was super convenient for me to work full time and still have a life without being tied down. That aspect of it helped keep my attention and keep me moving through the program.”

Holder’s experience as a student in the program has been first rate. She encourages any RN considering a four-year degree to explore OSU’s program.

“Set up a meeting or a zoom call with a faculty or administrative member and give them the chance to provide information and answer questions that are of concern. That is what I did and it sold me. The faculty were so welcoming and flexible.”

Applications for the BSN program for Summer and Fall 2023 are now open. Visit [nursing.okstate.edu](https://nursing.okstate.edu) for more information, to schedule a meeting with program administrators or to apply today.





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# STATE OF OKLAHOMA



## EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

### Proclamation

**Whereas**, the week of May 14<sup>th</sup> through May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, has been designated as National Skilled Nursing Care Week, which provides an opportunity to honor the essential role of skilled nursing care professionals in caring for our elderly and disabled citizens; and

**Whereas**, Oklahoma's skilled nursing care professionals are a critical part of our healthcare system, providing compassionate care to our most vulnerable populations, helping them to maintain their health, independence, and dignity; and

**Whereas**, this years theme, "Cultivating Kindness," recognizes the many acts of kindness that happen in skilled nursing care centers every day which contribute to better health, well-being and happiness of skilled nursing care residents; and

**Whereas**, Oklahoma's skilled nursing care professionals have gone above and beyond during the COVID-19 pandemic, risking their own health and safety to care for others, and have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the well-being of their patients;

**Now Therefore**, I, Governor J. Kevin Stitt, do hereby proclaim May 14<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 as

**"Skilled Nursing Care Week"**

in the State of Oklahoma.

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma to be affixed.*



*Done at the Capitol, in the City of Oklahoma City, this twelfth day of May, in the Year of Our Lord two thousand and twenty-three, and of the State of Oklahoma in the one-hundred and fifteenth year.*

*Brian Blum* *K Stitt*  
SECRETARY OF STATE GOVERNOR



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# Dressing for Success: Uniform Shoppe Prepares Nurses

In all walks of life, starting off on the right foot can put you on the path to success.

Nursing is no different.

With the help of the Uniform Shoppe, students across Oklahoma have been starting their careers off on the right foot for more than 60 years.

For half a century, The Uniform Shoppe has had nurses' back - and their front - literally bringing a professional look to their doorstep.

Green Country Technology Center Director of Nursing Darlene Baker, RN, MSN, has seen it firsthand for more than two decades.

There's a special day every semester at the Okmulgee nursing school.

It occurs right after LPN students finish their Introduction to Nursing course and just before their Anatomy and Physiology course.

It's the day Jody Weise from The Uniform Shoppe comes to visit and no one ever misses.

"They are so excited. They feel like they're real nurses," Baker said. "They're trying things on, looking at the stethoscopes and picking out their colors."

Baker has been at Green Country Technology Center for 22 years now. The school uses The Uniform Shoppe for all its LPN and CNA uniforms.

No one goes to clinicals until they've visited Weise.

"We're very strict with our dress code when they go into the clinical setting," Baker said. "Jody kind of knows what we like. She does the groundwork."

"Obviously, they are dependable. It helps us out because instead of us having to load students up or send students one at a time they actually come to our facility. If there are any changes they let me know well in advance."

Since 1962, The Uniform Shoppe has been a family affair.

Albert and Elaine Weise opened the Uniform Shoppe in Tulsa.

They traversed the Oklahoma highways and backroads bringing comfortable, affordable quality to nurses at their facilities.

Riding in the back seat was their daughter, Jody.

She learned the business from the best and now co-owns and manages the Tulsa location.

While the styles on the rack may change, little else has changed about this Oklahoma institution.

The Tulsa location moved around the corner to **6044 S. Sheridan Road** a while back but the Oklahoma City store is still located at **10503 N. May Avenue**.

The Uniform Shoppe has hands-down always had the largest stock of scrubs for nurses, health care workers, and daycare workers - every profession that requires durable-yet-professional attire while working with people.

Service has always been the focus.

"We work with many schools to get their students started on the right track - nursing, dental, cosmetology, culinary, veterinary, physician assistants, physical therapy, chemistry, health careers and information, paramedics, lab tech, nutrition, occupational therapy, pharmacy, radiography, respiratory and surgical," Weise said. "We've even had quite a few adolescent classes of 'future leaders' going into scrubs and lab coats."

"Most schools want their students to look professional which lends to acting professional."

Starting a new career is exciting. Looking like you belong is important, too, that's why Green Country students love it when Weise comes to campus.

The Uniform Shoppe also provides students with monogrammed lab



coats, their first stethoscope, hemostat, and bandage scissors.

"It's a very convenient, one-stop-shop for us," Baker said.

Baker relies on Weise to keep Green Valley students and faculty in comfort and fashion.

"When you're online you don't know how it's going to fit," Baker said. "So when they come here they have the opportunity to actually try them on so you know. Not everyone's body looks exactly the same so Jody makes sure we have different fits so that everyone is able to be satisfied."

The Uniform Shoppe helps students present a professional and polished look while working clinical rotations in hospitals and offices, representing the student and the schools in the best light.

"Cheap uniforms tend to look that way, and when out in public, it reflects on the student as well as the school," Weise said. "There are many well-made, quality uniforms that are **very budget-friendly**, and working with a local uniform store supports the very community that supports the students and schools in the real world."

Baker said as graduation nears, students go up to The Uniform Shoppe as a group to select their first set of white scrubs as well as a new pair of white shoes.

The staff are very knowledgeable about fabrics, fit, and size availability and make it their business to learn the positive features of various brands so they can work with school administration and students regarding fit, wear, and care.

It's more than a product, it's a relationship.

"They're just like family," Baker said. "They seem to be as excited as the students are so it's pretty cool."

And for more than half a century, the Uniform Shoppe has been there helping nurses put their best foot forward. Visit us in OKC, Tulsa or online at <https://theuniformshoppe.com>.





# Graduates Among Best in State, Nation

For more than 50 years, the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) has provided Oklahoma with highly skilled and educated nurses. Graduates of UCO's nursing programs are among the best prepared and most sought after in the state and the nation.

Fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), UCO bachelor's and master's programs prepare tomorrow's leaders in nursing through a variety of settings, which helps meet the demand at all levels of nursing services needed in Oklahoma. Central offers traditional and nontraditional programs to support any student who wants to pursue a career in nursing or further their nursing education.

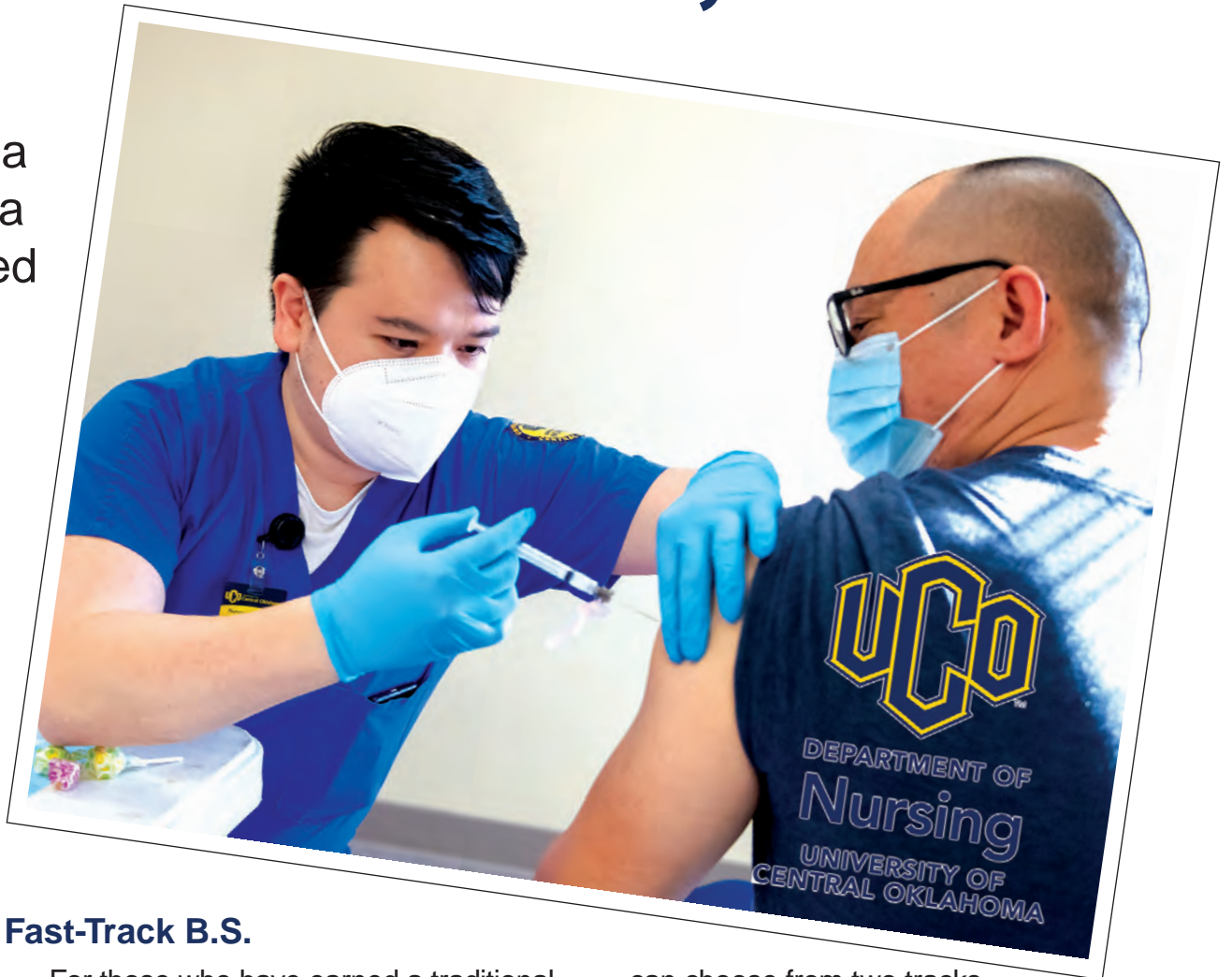
## Traditional Nursing Program

Central's traditional, on-campus nursing program is for students who are not yet licensed to practice nursing as an RN.

## Online RN to B.S. in Nursing Track

Central's RN to B.S. track is available 100% online for RNs who want to further their nursing education. Upon successful completion, nurses earn a Bachelor of Science in nursing. With both part and full-time options available and for as low as \$8,500, Central's program is designed to provide flexibility for students, with the option to complete the track in as little as 10 months.

When Rachel Jones, nurse manager for IMC at Integris Baptist, knew she wanted to pursue nursing she would need a program that was focused on flexibility and the success of students. "I appreciated the flexibility of the online program – I was running a COVID-19 + only unit in the middle of a pandemic, working two jobs and raising two kids while trying to get my B.S.," she said. "The online program at UCO provided the flexibility I need that allowed me to work when I could. At UCO, I knew the standards I would be held to would help make me a better nurse and stronger leader."



## Fast-Track B.S.

For those who have earned a traditional bachelor's degree in another field and are ready for a career in nursing, Central's Fast Track in nursing is for them. Upon successful completion, students will have earned a B.S. in nursing. The fast-track program can be completed in just 16 months and provides the flexibility of hybrid courses.

Garrett Collins graduated from Central's fast-track program in 2022, he currently works as a nurse resident at Integris Baptist in the transplant ICU. For Collins, the clinical opportunities available gave him first-hand insight into hospital culture and specialties. "Having the opportunity to do clinical hours at different hospitals across the metro prepared me for deciding where to apply for work," he said. The clinical rotations also helped me learn how to apply the skills I was learning in class to real life."

## Online M.S. in Nursing

The Master of Science in nursing degree program at UCO offers working RNs flexibility through fully online courses with both part- and full-time options available. The program can be completed in as little as 16 months, if pursued full time. The online Master of Science in nursing can be completed for as little as \$15,000. Nursing graduate students

can choose from two tracks – nursing education or nursing leadership.

Kiersten Snider is a registered nurse at OU Children's Hospital in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. After receiving her B.S. in nursing from UCO in 2020, she began pursuing her master's in nursing at UCO in nursing education. To Snider, the passion the faculty have for success is unparalleled. "You are more than just another student to the faculty members in this program," she said. "They strive every day to think of different methods they can use to improve the content they are providing to ensure that each student holds a high standard of knowledge that will be used in their careers."

## The Future of Nursing

All UCO nursing programs offer real-world instruction from supportive nursing faculty who are experts in their field of nursing. Graduates from UCO nursing programs are recognized within the health care community for their knowledge, professionalism and leadership potential. Central prides itself as a smart investment for success and for preparing future leaders in an opportunity-rich environment. For more information about Central's nursing programs, visit: <https://www.uco.edu/nursing>.





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# Tulsa Nurse Creates Dosage Calculation App

Latoya Smith has been a practicing Registered Nurse for 15 years, and saw a need to help nursing students with correctly doing their medication dosage calculations in school.

As a result, Smith, who works as a RN in Tulsa, wrote an ebook "The Trap Guide To Nursing Dosage Calculation with Latoya, RN," that shows nursing students how to break down and solve dosage calculation problems and pass dosage calculation class.

"I was helping out in a student nurse Facebook group, and I saw they were struggling with dose calculation," she said. "A lot of our Facebook students were failing and not being able to go on to become nurses because they were failing this critical thing because you need to know how to calculate dose appropriately. Nursing costs students a lot of money and time. It is costing us bodies in the nursing profession.

We need these people to graduate and come to work."

Smith said her book has been successful in helping nursing students.

"It has done really well, and has helped hundreds of students to pass dosage calculations," she said. "One thing they kept asking for was an app to practice anytime, anywhere. Over the last couple of years, I have been working to develop that. This is all something that we can benefit from, both practicing nurses and nursing students."

Smith worked with app co-founder Carmen Bournon on developing the Dose Calc App which will be available starting May 6

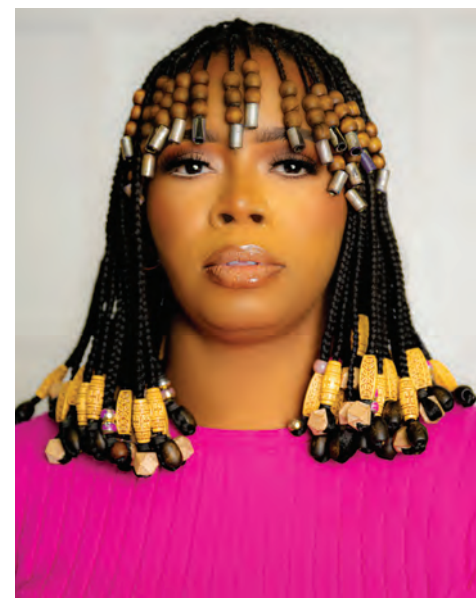
"I do all of the questions and the video for the app, and she is the one who actually builds it," Smith said. "We are really excited about it, and I think nursing students will be excited about it and be successful in nursing school. This is one of the

most crucial and foundational things you need to have to be a successful nurse. You can practice dosage calculation anytime and anywhere with this app."

Smith attended and graduated from Ponca City Senior High School. She graduated from Northern Oklahoma College with a Degree in Applied Science in Nursing in 2008. While Attending Northern Oklahoma College, Smith was on the Dean's Honor Roll, the President's Honor Roll, and a member of Phi Theta Kappa. She was the Nurse of the Day at the Oklahoma State Legislature in March of 2020.

Smith said she hopes the new app will help improve the skills of practicing nurses and nursing school students.

"My goal is to have a safer healthcare place, a better world for our patients, and a better world for nurses," she said. **The goal is to help make patients safer and**




Latoya Smith, developer of RN Dose Calc App.

**improve medication safety."**

Smith is hopeful the new app will be as successful as her book in helping nursing students passing their dosage calculation classes.

"We really need those signups because the more signups we have it will really push the app in the right direction to show there really is a need for this app, and it will help us secure funding to keep building this thing," she said.

For more information visit <https://dosecalcapp.com/>



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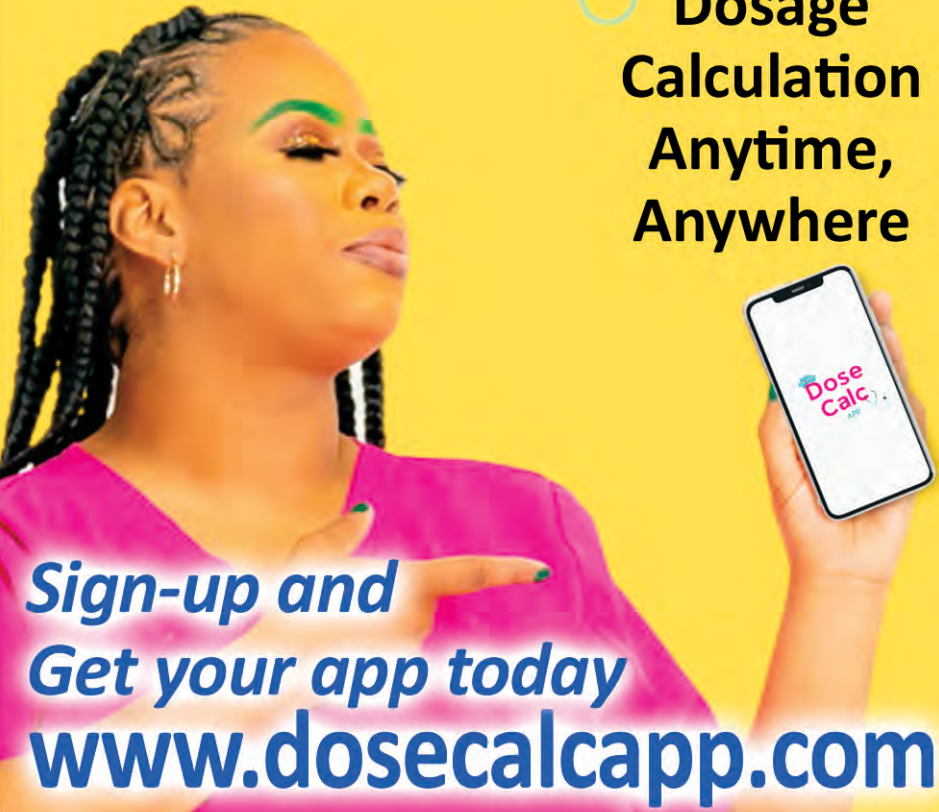
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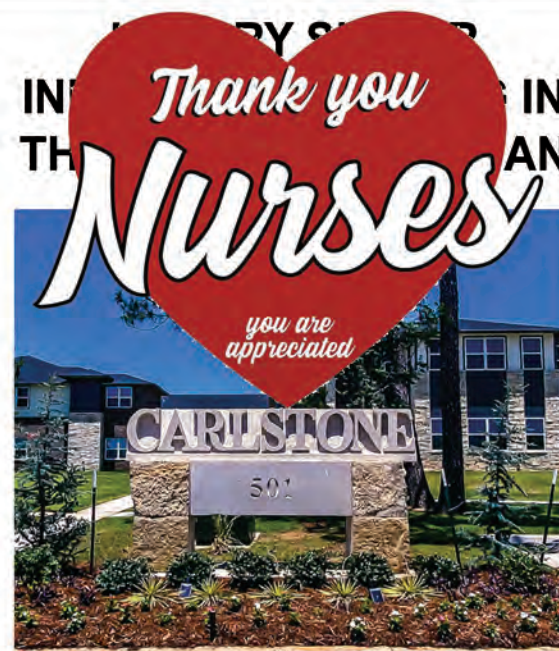
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# STATE OF OKLAHOMA



## EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

# Proclamation

**Whereas**, registered nurses in Oklahoma and the United States constitute our nation's largest health care profession, and

**Whereas**, the depth and breadth of the registered nursing profession meets the different and emerging health care needs of the American population in a wide range of settings; and

**Whereas**, professional nursing is an indispensable component of the safety and quality of care of hospitalized and non-hospitalized patients, and

**Whereas**, the demand for registered nursing services will be greater than ever because of the aging American population, emerging health challenges, the continuing expansion of life-sustaining technologies, and the explosive growth of home health care services, and

**Whereas**, more qualified registered nurses are needed in the future to meet the increasingly complex needs of health care consumers in the community, and

**Whereas**, the cost-effective, safe, and high-quality health care services provided by registered nurses will be an increasingly important component of the United States health care delivery system in the future, and

**Now Therefore**, I, Governor J. Kevin Stitt, do hereby proclaim May 2023 as

**"Nurses Month"**

in the State of Oklahoma.

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Oklahoma to be affixed.*



ATTEST:

*Done at the Capitol, in the City of Oklahoma City, this twenty-second day of February, in the Year of Our Lord two thousand and twenty-three, and of the State of Oklahoma in the One-hundred and Fifteenth year.*

*Brian B. B. B.*  
SECRETARY OF STATE

*Kevin Stitt*  
GOVERNOR





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