**Oklahoma's Nursing Times** 

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Serving Oklahoma Nurses & Health Care Professionals for 24 Years

Kilpatrick Joins Faculty at OCU Kramer School of Nursing

Read her story on page 3

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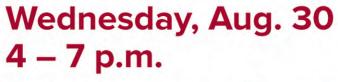


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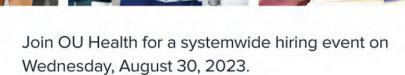
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Can't make it? Join us on September 27, 2023 for our next hiring event at Samis Family Education Center.

### Jamie Kilpatrick, DNP, RN, CENP

### Faculty member at the Oklahoma City University Kramer School of Nursing

Jamie Kilpatrick, a recent graduate of Duquesne University with a Doctor of Nursing Practice, Executive Leadership (through a partnership with the Duquesne Palumbo-Donahue School of Business), says accomplishing her DNP satisfies her desire to obtain the educational opportunities so beneficial for the nursing profession.

Kilpatrick is utilizing those credentials as a new faculty member at the Oklahoma City University Kramer School of Nursing.

"I am new to the faculty at OCU Kramer School of Nursing, after over 30 years of clinical experience through Oklahoma Children's Hospital, most notably within the Neonatal ICU, Women's and Pediatric ICU, and supportive roles," she said. "My last 20 years have been in leadership or system roles, affording me the opportunity to experience various aspects of patient and family care, and the collaboration with the teams required to address those patient goals and needs."

Kilpatrick earned her bachelor's and master's in nursing through the University of Oklahoma, Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing.

"I began my nursing career with an associate degree of nursing from what was known at the time as Oklahoma State University Technical Institute," she said. "Nursing is at the epicenter of patient care. I discovered the benefit of additional academic experiences would complement my clinical skills. The incredible individualized service to students and commitment to academic excellence I experienced at Duquesne, a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, university established in 1878, led me to Oklahoma City University in pursuing my dream as a nursing instructor."

Kilpatrick said the more you know, the more prepared you are to address the healthcare needs of the population.

"Pursuing the doctorate for myself afforded the opportunity to better support the nursing profession through education," she said. "The doctoral degree in nursing enhances care delivery with additional tools for optimal outcomes. Healthcare is becoming increasingly complex; education and experience work hand in hand for improved care."

Kilpatrick said she has long admired the graduates that she has worked with in the clinical setting from OCU. She also said her background in clinical and leadership positions enables her to give students awareness of a variety of educational advantages.

"Overall, they have demonstrated a very developed understanding of nursing practice and nursing care," she said. "Combining my background working strictly in the clinical setting for so many years and sharing this experience with those in pursuit of educational goals should generate a positive experience for both the undergraduate and the graduate nurses. "I am currently serving as faculty for nurses pursuing their bachelor's degree and then also graduate students who, like me, have been practicing and want to continue in their educational journey," she said.

"I've been in leadership positions, focused on the delivery and availability of care through support of the nurse and healthcare environment. One of the greatest challenges for the newer nurse is the transition from school to practice" she said. "After graduation, that transition period can be difficult. But understanding what that clinical piece looks like will provide me the opportunity to help support the nursing student into a smoother transition within the clinical setting."

Kilpatrick said she is embracing the learning side of her new role.

"The academic world is very different, but the university has offered a great deal of support" she said. "They have a great program of online learning perspectives. I took a full week of training classes on how to teach online, the various learner needs and that's been great. I appreciate all the support that they've offered and continue to offer. Teaching is just a different world, but it's an amazing world. I am very happy driving to work."

Kilpatrick is married and the mother of three adult children and five grandchildren. She is a board member of Cavett Kids Foundation, whose purpose is to make available the opportunity for kids with limited abilities to pursue goals and thrive.

Kilpatrick is also a marathon runner.

"I am attempting to run a marathon in all 50 states; to date, I have accomplished 44 states (and 50 marathons), and hoping my body holds out to see the finish," she said.

Kilpatrick said running is a way for her to balance the stress of the world.

"You are more in tune with nature, with God, and most of those marathons have been without earphones; just you and nature! Also, you often meet other people with similar goals," she said. "I think



Jamie S. Kilpatrick, DNP, RN, CENP, serves as Clinical Assistant Professor at the Kramer School of Nursing at Oklahoma City University.

it's beneficial in sharing with others the value of exercise. It is good to balance your work world with a release and fitness is always important. There is so much to appreciate in this crazy little hobby of mine."

Learn more about Kramer School of Nursing here: https://www.okcu.edu/nursing/home

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### SHOP THE TEA: A Shopping Experience With a TWIST!

story and photo submitted Vernelia McKnight

We are thrilled to host another Shop The Tea experience! Join us on Saturday, September 9th at the Wellness & Community Outreach Center on 1600 Springlake Drive in Oklahoma City, OK.

Shop The Tea is A POP-UP Shop with a twist! This unique and inspiring retail experience is focused on cancer awareness and supporting those affect by cancer. It is a one of a kind pop-up-shop that will bring together a community of advocates, survivors, community partners and small businesses to offer hope and empowerment.

Some community supporters are OU Stephenson Cancer Center, Lynn Institute and Tenaciously Teal. This event will have food trucks, 15 minute giveaways and a free gift for each cancer fighters/survivors! Several vendors are available featuring small businesses, non-profits, associations, and local supporters providing valuable information and resources that help impact our communities.



A group of vendors from June's Shop The Tea is A POP-UP Shop event at the Wellness & Community Outreach Center on 1600 Springlake Drive in Oklahoma City.

Whether you're a survivor, a caregiver, an advocate, or someone who wants to make a positive and sponsored by Share The Tea, impact, Shop The Tea welcomes you LLC and Metro Technology Centers

experience.

Shop The Tea is organized to be a part of this extraordinary (Wellness & Community Outreach Insightful, & IMPACTful.

Center). Share The Tea's mission is to build and empower the community through advocacy, networking, and resources by being Intentional,



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# New Employment Program Helps Launch Careers in Long-Term Care



Oklahomans looking to jumpstart a career in long-term care can receive help finding a job and getting their training paid for through *Care Careers Oklahoma*, a new employment program. Care Careers helps applicants find job openings at skilled nursing facilities near them and reimburses the cost of Certified Nursing Aide (CNA) and Certified Medication Aide (CMA) training. Potential applicants are urged to learn more and apply at https://carecareersok.com/.

Program Ambassador Tanecia Davis, who oversees Care Careers, said that she views her role as helping to put other Oklahomans on a career path for advancement and stable employment for many years.

"We aren't just helping people find 'a job," said Davis. "We are helping Oklahomans develop new and marketable skills while they work and earn a living. The on-the-job training they receive is setting the stage for a lengthy and rewarding career. Working in long-term care means knowing that you are using your skillset and training to make a real and positive difference in the lives of some of the most vulnerable members of our community."

Care Careers Oklahoma is a project of Care Providers Oklahoma and LeadingAge Oklahoma, associations representing the interests of the residents, staff and ownership of Oklahoma's long-term care facilities, including nursing homes, assisted living homes and intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Care Careers

is funded through money made available by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). In 2022, the State Legislature appropriated \$4.5 million in ARPA money to Care Providers for "the purpose of recruiting, educating, and stabilizing Oklahoma's health care workforce." Using those dollars, Care Providers Oklahoma and Leading Age launched Care Careers, which also receives oversight from the Oklahoma Health Care Workforce Training Commission.

Care Providers Oklahoma President Steven Buck said the Legislature acted wisely by investing in workforce development.

"Our profession is facing a real crisis, and that is a lack of qualified long-term care personnel here in Oklahoma," said Buck. "That crisis has already forced multiple facilities to close. It is also directly related to the quality and consistency of care that our residents receive. My thanks go out to our lawmakers, particularly the authors of our appropriation, Sen. John Haste and Rep. Kyle Hilbert, for recognizing the severity of this challenge and taking steps to address it."

Leading Age Oklahoma Director of Member Services Leanna Vasquez said she was grateful for the opportunity to help address Oklahoma's health care workforce shortage.

"We see the significant workforce needs in the long-term care facilities across Oklahoma and we want to do all we can to help provide a better quality of care to its residents through this program," said Vasquez.

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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2023 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

### RSU Building Legacy of Compassionate Nurses

The RSU Department of Health Sciences offers programs in nursing and pre-allied health fields. Nursing programs include the traditional BSN in nursing, leading to RN licensure; the RN2BSN online program which allows registered nurses with an associate degree to complete a bachelor's degree; and the bridge to traditional BSN entry for LPNs or paramedics to earn their bachelor's degree. Allied health sciences options include pre-athletic training, prephysical therapy and pre-occupational therapy. The Master of Business Administration (MBA) program at RSU now offers a concentration in Healthcare Management.

With a history of over 40 years of academic excellence, RSU's nursing program provides academic rigor and a reputation that gives RSU graduates an edge in the competitive job market. Upon graduation, RSU nursing graduate NCLEX pass rates exceed the state and national average. Approximately 95% of students report having obtained an RN position before graduation. These outcomes are credited to a quality curriculum, outstanding students, and a caring and dedicated faculty. RSU's nursing

faculty have more than 130 years of experience in both academic teaching and practical experience. Several low and high-fidelity laboratories are utilized to provide hands-on learning so that students are well prepared to deliver safe, highquality nursing care in a variety of settings.

Students interested in attending medical school complete their undergraduate studies in medical/ molecular biology. RSU's biology program has seen more than 150 students move on to professional schools pursuing medical and healthcare careers.

RSU consistently earns national recognition for affordability, both for traditional classes and its online programs. The university is routinely recognized for having one of the region's lowest student debt loads with nearly half of its graduating class earning a diploma without any student loan assistance.

The traditional BSN and RN2BSN nursing program is fully accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Being the only public residential university in the metropolitan



Tulsa area, RSU gives students a traditional college experience. With the university's proximity Tulsa, RSU is strategically positioned geographically, fiscally and reputationally to be Oklahoma's first choice in BSN education.

RSU is committed to building a

legacy of compassionate and virtuous nurses who advocate for their patients and serve the community for years to come. For more information about RSU's nursing programs or to schedule a campus tour, visit https://www.rsu.edu/nursing or call 918-343-7631.



## RN2BSN

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW Starts in January & August

- ✓ Nursing program courses completed in 2-3 semesters\*
- Each nursing course 5 weeks, one at a time
- Fully online
- Corequisite courses may be taken before, during or after nursing program courses
- No written exams
- Must have valid RN license
- Pay-as-you-go option available

\*Length of time required to complete degree will vary depending upon student's transfer credits.

### CONTACT INFO

Dr. Amy Richards | arichards@rsu.edu | 918-343-7641 Dr. Marla Smith | marlasmith@rsu.edu | 918-343-6887





(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2023 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

### Half-century success

### Northern Oklahoma College going strong

Northern Oklahoma College nursing turns half a century this year and the success keeps coming.

Northern Oklahoma College, the State's first public community college is a multi-campus, land-grant institution that provides high quality, accessible, and affordable educational opportunities and services which create life-changing experiences and develop students as effective learners and leaders within their communities in a connected, ever-changing world.

Northern offers a two-year Associate of Applied Science Degree for the RN. A two-year RN's focus is providing care at the bedside regardless of whether the bedside is located in the hospital, clinic, doctor's office, hospice, nursing home or community.

The program also focuses on how to manage care for groups of patients.

To celebrate the 50-year milestone, a two-day event at NOC Tonkawa's Renfro Center was held where faculty, staff, and nursing alums gathered to share their experiences.

The event included time with NOC President Dr. Clark Harris, attendance at a campus jazz concert, and campus tours culminating in a dinner for the attendees.

NOC is also participating in The Daisy Award, an award that recognizes extraordinary faculty. Students, faculty, staff, and alums may nominate anyone deemed worthy of the prestigious award

NOC instructor Kim Brewer earned the award in 2022, the first year for the program at NOC.

Fifty years of success include more than a few accolades including:

- Top 10 Nursing Program in the state, according to Nursing Hub
- RN Associate Degree Program (Traditional Pathway or LPN to RN Pathway)
- Partnerships with RN-BSN Programs
- Academic Practice Partnerships with Paid Clinical Internships in Final Semester
- High NCLEX Pass Rates
- High Employment Rates and Employer Satisfaction

• The associate degree nursing program at Northern Oklahoma College is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).

NOC offers programs at the Tonkawa, Enid, and Stillwater campuses.

Under the direction of Dr. Nikole Hicks, NOC Nursing Division Chair, the program is rigorous and innovative.

Academic Practice Partnership opportunities are available for select students in Tonkawa, Enid, Stillwater, and Tulsa with paid clinical internships in the final semester of the nursing program.

Graduates of NOC's nursing program earn an Associate degree in Applied Science and are eligible to apply for licensure as a registered nurse. There is an entry pathway for current LPNs to enter the program with advanced standing.

NOC partners with several RN-BSN programs to provide graduates with opportunities for advanced education. Additional majors include the Associate in Science Pre-Baccalaureate/Pre-



Dr. Nikole A. Hicks, PhD, RNC, CNE, Nursing Division Chair - Northern Oklahoma College

Professional Program.

Nursing students are also a part of the Student Nurses Association and Alpha Delta Nu National Associate Degree Nursing Honor Society.

NOC also received grant funding that will improve technology in the nursing practice and simulation labs to provide state-of-the-art equipment to prepare practice-ready graduates.

For more information, please contact the nursing program at nursing@noc.edu or 580.628.6679 or at NOC's web site at:

https://www.noc.edu.



Apply online: www.noc.edu/nursing



### **TOP 10 NURSING PROGRAMS IN OKLAHOMA!**

by Nursing School Hub



**ACEN Accreditation** 



RN Associate Degree Program

- Traditional Pathway or LPN to RN Pathway

Partnerships with RN-BSN Programs

Academic Practice Partnerships with Paid Clinical Internships in Final Semester

**High NCLEX Pass Rates** 

High Employment Rates and Employer Satisfaction







NOC Nursing. Just Exceptional.

### 2023 Infection Prevention **Educational Conference** Set for November 3rd

by Debbie Dahl, MSN, RN, CIC, Infection Prevention and Control Manager - OKC Indian Clinic

Infection Prevention is more than just hand hygiene, covering your cough or getting a flu/COVID-19 vaccine. Infection Preventionist save lives every day by working within all disciplines throughout health care settings to keep you healthy.

You may know us as Infection Control, but we changed our name in 2008 to more clearly define our practice.

The Epidemiologists and Preventionists in Infection Control (EPIC) organization began in 1974 in Oklahoma City. The organization works to provide a collective voice for epidemiologists and preventionists for whom infection prevention issues relate to improving quality patient care and promoting patient safety.

Oklahoma EPIC members are nurses, physicians, public health professionals, epidemiologists, microbiologists, pharmacists or medical technologists. The EPIC educational meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month.

Every November, EPIC hosts the "Oklahoma Educational Conference on Infection Prevention" where guest speakers are brought in from around the country for a full day of learning.

This is our 41st annual conference and we are pleased to have presentations on "ICRA Awareness", "IP Program Standards", "Mental Health for Healthcare Workers" and an "Overview of Infectious Diseases in Oklahoma".

The conference will be held on November 3, 2023 at the



Past President Sam Goza from Mercy Hospital presented her honorary award for 2022-2023 Presidency service as she hands over the gavel to the new EPIC President, Tandy Warren from Lindsay Hospital.

Petroleum Club in Oklahoma City. The conference includes 6 hours of is now open. For more information, CEU's, networking, and exhibitors with current supplies (products President HERE: or Debbie Dahl, utilizing best practices) to prevent Treasure the spread of infections.

Registration for the conference please contact Tandy Warren, Debbie.D@OKCIC.com 405.623.9888

### **CROSSWORD: Central Nervous System**

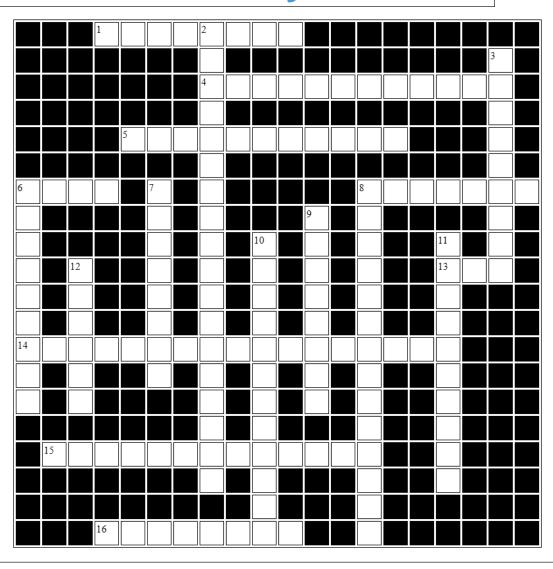
by Carolyn Scott-Pal, RN

#### Across

- 1. quiets and relaxes
- 4. if below 12, hold med, call nurse
- 5. stops itching
- 6. first part of a seizure
- 8. depressant
- 13. similar to Parkinson's disease
- 14. classic sign of TD
- 15. must be gradually reduced to prevent withdrawl
- 16. can not be cured

#### Down

- 2. antipsychotic side effect
- 3. loss of contact with reality
- 6. relieves pain
- 7. narcotic analgesic
- 8. depakene
- 9. produces sleep
- 10. CNS stimulant
- 11. feeling of extreme sadness
- 12. NSAID



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# Restro life Prestro life Prestr

What type of music do you listen to?

Valir

Rehabilitation

Hospital

"All genres of music but I listen to classic rock and hiphop the most."



Lacey Brennan, RN

"I love all kinds of music. I like classic rock, rap, R&B, and hiphop."



Darien Kwiatkowski, RN

"I like to listen to 90s and 2000s alternative. I listen to a lot of everything."



Chase Ellis, RN

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### Norman Regional Health System Boasts First-in-State **Accredited Nurse Residency Program**

Norman Regional Health System has another first-in-state accreditation. This time, the Nurse Residency Program has received accreditation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center Practice Transition Accreditation Program (PTAP), becoming the first in the state of Oklahoma to achieve this status. The PTAP sets the global standard for residency programs that transition nurses into new practice settings. What is the Accredited Residency Program?

The nurse residency program at Norman Regional began in 2017. The program partners with Vizient, a nationwide organization that provides solutions and services that improve the delivery of high-value care for hospitals and health systems.

Norman Regional's Accredited Residency Program includes an evidence-based curriculum that offers residents a collaborative learning environment to successfully transition into clinical practice. Residents are given the opportunity to work alongside experienced staff and learn in real-life settings to be better prepared and more confident as they enter the workforce.

With the PTAP accreditation, the Norman Regional Nurse Residency Program has demonstrated and continues to ensure quality of residency program content, knowledge and experience of faculty, evidence-based practice, satisfaction of residents and improved patient care and

As a resident, nurses have the chance to refine their clinical abilities, explore specialized areas of nursing, and engage in continuous professional development. Norman Regional's program is accredited, assuring of its quality and commitment to excellence.

Why Choose Norman Regional's Accredited Nurse Residency?

It's important to look for an accredited residency because it

tells hospitals that to have achieved an accreditation, they met certain high-quality standards and have the structure to get the defined outcomes that they want. Norman Regional will be on its sixth year of



residencies in August, which will be the 16th cohort.

"The nurses come once a month to residency seminars. We have three different cohorts that go year-round with different start dates and they get skills and curriculum, they are still getting oriented on their unit by a preceptor. We are looking in the seminars and the residency to give them that foundation and help continue to grow and develop them as a professional nurse," said Cassie Chaffin, BSN, RN-CCRN-K, Norman Regional's nurse residency supervisor.

Our Accredited Residency Program provides advanced clinical training which allows residents to enhance their proficiency in specific nursing specialties. Whether in the ICU or the OR, our residents will gain valuable expertise under the guidance of our skilled nurses. The sites that are included in this accreditation designation are the Norman Regional Hospital on Porter Avenue and Norman Regional HealthPlex Heart Hospital, with settings that include Med/Surg, Critical Care, Labor & Delivery and more.

Applications for the Accredited Residency Program are open. For more information and to apply for our Accredited Residency Program, visit our Nursing Careers website or email Julia Burleson, senior healthcare recruiter or **Cassie Chaffin**, nurse residency supervisor.

Take the next step in your nursing career with Norman Regional Health System's Accredited Nurse Residency Program!

### Have Questions? New to Medicare? Start With Us

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# Weekly

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### **Norman Regional Health Foundation Receives Donation** from Oklahoma Natural Gas and the ONE Gas Foundation to Educate Healthcare Professionals



### FOUNDATION

In a significant move highlighting the importance of community growth and healthcare education, Oklahoma Natural Gas, in collaboration with the ONE Gas Foundation, is set to present a check of \$50,000 to the Norman Regional Health Foundation for renovations to the Norman Regional Health System (NRHS) Education Center at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 30 in the Norman Regional Education

Richie Splitt, president and CEO of Norman Regional Health System, will be welcoming distinguished guests, including David Nimmo, president of Chickasaw Nation Industries & Norman Regional Health Foundation



board president; David Williams, managing director of field operations for Oklahoma Natural Gas; Erin Barnhart, director of Norman Regional Health Foundation; Steve Wood, a retiree from Oklahoma Natural Gas and current board member of the Norman Regional Health Foundation; and Sherri Coale, NRHF Equipped for Tomorrow Campaign Chair and former University of Oklahoma women's basketball head coach.

The donation aims to provide nonprofits, community organizations and, notably, the next generation of nurses with state-of-the-art technology and a conducive environment for learning and growth. Oklahoma Natural Gas' commitment to service shines through this endeavor, emphasizing their dedication to not just their customers but also the

better tomorrow.

In the words of a representative from Oklahoma Natural Gas, "Norman Regional Hospital, with its dedicated doctors, nurses and staff, remains a pillar of the community. We are both excited and honored to play

institutions paving the way for a a role in propelling its legacy well into the future. Norman is a special community for us, one of the largest we serve and it's where many of our employees call home."

> Learn more about the Equipped for Tomorrow Campaign on the Foundation's website **HERE**

### 2023 ONA ANNUAL CONVENTION ANNOUNCED

The Oklahoma Nurses Association will be hosting the 2023 annual convention in Oklahoma City September 27th through the 28th.

The goal of the convention is to focus on supporting nurses and building supportive structures for



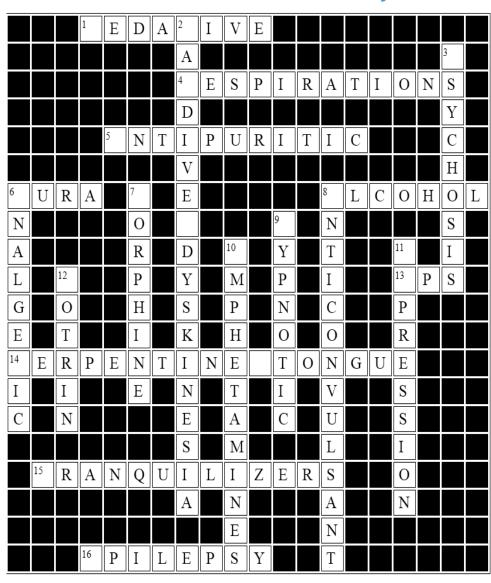
nurses' new normal as the work environment evolves and highlight the difference nurses make every day in the life of patients.

This year, the convention will take place at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Oklahoma City Northwest, 3233 Northwest Expy in Oklahoma City. Register for the convention here: https://www.oklahomanurses.org/event-5288406



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### **Puzzle Answers: Central Nervous System**



# 46TH ANNUAL SENIOR DAY Wednesday, September 20

Free admission for Seniors 55+ (proof of age required)





### OUIL

### SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

| EXHIBITORS, PHOTO BOOTH & FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS      | 10 a.m 7 p.m.  |
|---|--|
| DOOR PRIZES   | Session 1: 10 a.m 1 p.m.<br>Session 2: 1 - 3:30 p.m.<br>Session 3: 3:30 - 6 p.m. |
| OUT & ABOUT: SPACE WALK                               | 10 a.m 2 p.m.  |
| SENIORS IN MOTION VIDEO VOTING                        | 10 a.m 5 p.m.  |
| OKIE STOMPERS   | 10:05 a.m. & 11 a.m.   |
| BLACK HOLE TOSS                                       | 10:35 a.m.   |
| THE MILKY WAY - EXPANSIVE UNIVERSE OR DELICIOUS CANDY | 11:30 a.m.   |
| YMCA COMMUNITY TEAM                                   | 12 p.m.  |
| LOVE YOU TO THE MOON AND BACK COUPLES CHALLENGE.      | 12:50 p.m.   |
| OUT OF THIS WORLD KARAOKE CONTEST                     | 1:20 p.m.  |
| IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE                               | 2:20 p.m.  |
| THE BIG BANG GAME SHOW                                | 3:05 p.m.  |
| SAVE THE FROZEN PLANET                                | 4:30 p.m.  |
| JIM GARLING   | 5 p.m.   |
| OKLAHOMA CITY SWING DANCE CLUB                        | 5:20 p.m.  |
| ALIEN INVASION  | 5:55 p.m.  |
| VOCAL SOUNDS OF OKLAHOMA                              | 6:10 p.m.  |
| ELVIS VISITS THE SPACE STATION                        | 6:30 p.m.  |
| SHAWN KLUSH - TRIBUTE TO ELVIS                        | 7:30 p.m.  |

For more detailed information visit the Senior Day page on the Oklahoma State Fair website.

### Wichita and Austin RNs demand Ascension address crises

### Rally and bargaining update following historic strikes

Nurses at Ascension hospitals in Wichita, Kansas and Austin, Texas are demanding that Ascension, multi-billion dollar health giant, make contractual commitments to address the dual crises of workplace violence and short staffing, which are threatening patient care at the hospitals, chain's announced National Nurses Organizing Committee/National Nurses United (NNOC/NNU).

On Thursday, August 31, nurses at Ascension Via Christi St. Francis and Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph in Wichita, Kansas held a rally and nurses at Ascension Seton Medical Center in Austin, Texas made themselves available to provide a bargaining update, the first since the end of the 1-day strike and 3-day lockout in June.

"Again and again, we have seen Ascension formulate race-

to-the-bottom strategies, such as placing patients in the hallway, instead of doing the right thing by staffing appropriately," said Lindsay Spinney, RN and member of the bargaining team at Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin. "Right now as Ascension is building a new women's services tower, we are watching management inappropriately staff our perinatal units in a way that threatens to undermine the safety of our patients."

Nurses in Wichita say they are extremely disappointed that Ascension has failed to address the workplace violence issues that put both staff and patients at risk on a daily basis. Some of these incidents of violence were so egregious they garnered media attention.

"The nurses have put forward simple solutions, such as fixing broken doors that do not lock



and staffing entry points with appropriate personnel who can screen visitors," said Laura Day, RN at Ascension Via Christi St. Francis and a member of the bargaining team. "While administrators say they will act on these proposals, these simple steps have not been implemented. The hospital has a moral obligation to keep staff and patients safe, but they are failing to do the bare minimum."

Wichita nurses also charge that Ascension is unduly surveilling nurses through the use of artificial intelligence software. The use of these software algorithms have led to investigations of nurses, some of whom have been unjustly disciplined.

"Nurses must have the ability to use their clinical judgment and expertise at the bedside," said Courtney Callum, RN in the emergency department at Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph. "Computer software does not take into account the human experience of the actual patient. Nurses should not be judged by an artificial intelligence system based on big data, but rather on their expertise at the bedside."

Nurses in Austin say they were appalled when Ascension instituted a new policy that led to patients being left in the hallways for up to an hour as crews cleaned their rooms. Ascension put the policy in place to avoid adequate staffing of both cleaning crews and nurses who could assist with discharges.

"We were absolutely appalled

'dedicated to spiritually-centered, holistic care, which sustains and improves the health of individuals and communities.' Well, let me ask you, do you think lying in a bed in the hallway without the dignity of privacy and in view of anyone walking by is in line with spiritually centered holistic care? It is obvious that it is not."

when Ascension forced our patients, many bedbound and frail, into the hallways to wait for a bed instead of hiring more nurses,"

said Taylor Critendon, RN and member of the RN Bargaining Team at Ascension Seton Medical Center

Austin. "Ascension's own mission statement claims that they are

A snapshot of Ascension's financials show that, despite Ascension's stated benevolent mission and non-profit status, it acts like a for-profit corporation putting dollars over patient care:

• \$19.5 billion: cash reserved by Ascension as of June 2022 • \$41 billion: managed by Ascension's investment arm as of 2021 • \$1 billion: value of Ascension's private equity operation • 1.9: percent of operating expenses that go to charity care, far below the 2.6 percent that is the national average.

Ascension is the second-largest Catholic nonprofit health system in the country. In fiscal year 2021, Ascension reported a net income of more than \$6.4 billion, and the system's CEO took home a compensation package worth more than \$13 million.

National Nurses Organizing Committee represents more than 900 nurses at Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin, 650 nurses at Ascension via Christi St. Francis Hospital (Wichita), and 300 nurses at Ascension via Christi St. Joseph Hospital (Wichita).



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