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A Dynamic Oklahoma Nursing Association Convention

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Oklahoma Nurses Association 115th Annual ONA Convention - The Nurses Power: Transforming, Adapting and Innovating

Story and photos by Darl DeVault, contributing editor

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More than 500 nurses and nursing students and 30 exhibitors gathered September 27-28th in Oklahoma City to hear many speakers advocating the transformation of their profession at the 115th Annual Oklahoma Nurses Association 2023 Convention.

The Nurse's Power: Transforming, Adapting and Innovating themed event was framed by the organizers offering diverse and inclusive breakout sessions and a dynamic keynote speaker. The Oklahoma Indigenous Nurses Association was well represented with many attendees, booths and speakers. The second day saw the initial filming of a documentary about the association's work.

In kicking off the ONA's 2023 -2025 Strategic Plan, speakers focused on building supportive structures that allow nurses to thrive in the new normal as their challenging work environment evolves. Several nurses addressing the breakout sessions, especially those emphasizing updates on COVID-19, current treatment guidelines, Post-Covid Syndrome and its impact, highlighted the daily difference nurses make in helping patients and their families' lives.

After 22 years at the association's helm, CEO Jane Nelson, CAE, said she is proud of the voices coming forward to speak to their fellow nurses.

"This year's ONA convention demonstrated how important it is to come together, exchanging ideas and sharing innovative best practices," Nelson said. "The changes brought on by COVID-19 proved when nurses focused, they could innovate and change processes to prove to the world there is no health care without

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nurses."

The ONA's Strategic Goals include advancing the profession to improve health through advocacy, philanthropy, practice and innovation. They seek to champion the value of nursing to increase nursing's positive impact on health and society.

The convention is a step toward advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging to improve nursing practice and work environments. The breakout sessions allowed attendees to network to develop the capacity for nurses to innovate and lead in dynamic and complex practice environments.

Several sessions addressed promoting and magnifying nurses' voices and advocating to overcome barriers to personal and professional success.

One of the speakers emphasized how nurses were newly important as world-class healthcare providers during COVID-19 at the clinic she and her team opened in 2018.

"At our Corner Clinic in Holdenville, our staff of six was doing everything we could to help our patients who had mild to moderate COVID-19 infections. They were at a

grave risk for progressing to severe COVID-19, facing hospitalization and death," said Stephanie Keesee, MSN, APRN-CNP, Co-Chair of Advance Practice Nurses Oklahoma - ONA Chapter. "As soon as it was available, we used Regeneron, an experimental antibody cocktail to keep our patients out of an emergency room and hospital. We took advantage of those two therapies by infusing monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) intended to directly neutralize the COVID-19 virus and prevent disease progression. We were proud we could ease our patient's discomfort and help alleviate the burden on our health care system."

Meanwhile, she explains under current law, Oklahoma Advanced Practice Nurses must have а collaborative agreement with supervising physician. This agreement is limited to questions that may arise on medications only, not for reviewing cases or disease processes. Keesee explains, "By law, I can assess your condition, diagnose your disease, interpret lab or radiology results, but not be able to prescribe medications."

This agreement places a significant risk on her patient population as Continued next page

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Oklahoma Nursing Association CEO Jane Nelson, CAE (left) and speaker Stephanie Keesee, MSN, APRN-CNP pose on the first day of their annual convention in Oklahoma City.

ONA Continued from Page 2

well as her business as she must pay thousands of dollars each month to the physician, and if for any reason this agreement dissolves her practice would close instantly. All of this while Oklahoma ranks 49th in physician-patient ratio.

This sparked her interest in advocating for Advanced Practice Nurses to introduce new legislation that Keesee helped push to amend the Oklahoma Nursing Practices Act in Senate Bill 458 during the last session authored by Sen Brenda Stanley, who secured 27 cosponsors.

"SB 458-APRN Transition to Practice Legislation stalled in the House," Keese said. "We had resounding support in both the Senate and House for this legislation to modernize APRN practice by reducing the physician supervision for the prescriptive authority to 6240 hours or three years."

She was proud the new bill passed in the Senate for the first time in history and passed the House committee but sadly did not advance to be heard on the House floor.

In her first year of advocating at the Capitol, she said she wouldn't change anything about the lessons she learned in realizing more than half of the legislators are from rural Oklahoma. She said nurses need to present the improvement this new law would provide to those elected officials. She will be working to help legislators relate to their constituents in a way that will bring home to them the benefits that people away from the major cities have in access to better health care.

She will be ramping up new strategies to improve the provision for independent prescriptive authority of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses who meet specific requirements, modifying various provisions of the Oklahoma Pharmacy Act and the Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act in the next legislature.

Keesee said it is essential to be able to design and implement solutions to meet the needs and priorities of nurses. Adding emphasis to changing how laws govern the profession helps create holistic approaches to nurses' well-being directly with and through their new strategic partners, the Oklahoma Legislature.

This will be in keeping with the progress made since 1976 when Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist recognition was incorporated into the

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See ONA Page 5

EDUCATION IN NURSING: OCU NURSING STUDENT WANTS TO HAVE IMPACT ON PATIENTS

Lily Kate Clayton said her own medical injury, as well as medical issues with several family members helped cement her desire to become a nurse.

Clayton is in her second year of an accelerated bachelors of science in nursing degree at Oklahoma City University's Kramer School of Nursing.

"Very early on, I knew even when I was just a little girl, that I wanted to help people," Clayton said. "The older I got, the more I realized I want to have a relationship with the people I'm medically helping. I started to steer more toward nursing, and then I had an orthopedic surgery. My brother had an orthopedic surgery. My family lost a child. And then my grandma and my grandpa have had a lot of bouts in the hospital with amazing nurses, and I realized that I want to have the same impact on others that those nurses have had on my family."

Story Van Mitchell, Staff Writer

Clayton is part of the new Saints & Stars scholarship program with SSM Health St. Anthony.

The Saints & Stars program is a five-year agreement between SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital and OCU's Kramer School of Nursing. It is aimed at helping stem the critical shortage of nursing professionals in the state.

The partnership allows students to work part-time with SSM Health while they complete their nursing degree, while also receiving a \$3,500 annual scholarship from SSM Health and a \$5,000 annual discount from OCU.

Clayton is working at St. Anthony as an extern and patient care technician. She is originally from Fort Worth Texas, and earned her first bachelor's degree in public health from Austin College.

Clayton said she came to OCU because Austin College has a matriculation agreement with OCU. "So, myself and a couple other of my old Austin College classmates are here and we love it because it's just as small as Austin College, and the professors are very eager to help us," she said. "And, for me personally, I have to work very, very hard for the grades that I get. And, having the small, intimate class sizes allows me to get the help that I need when I need it. I would not trade this school for the world."

Clayton said she met a group of friends that helps feel at home at OCU.

"Coming out of state, I didn't think that I would make all that many friends other than the friends I had from Austin College," she said. "I've really gained a wonderful group of friends and many awesome faculty relationships that I will fall back on I know when I'm a nurse myself, and it's really giving me the opportunities to become the nurse I want to be."

Clayton said she is getting

valuable learning experience working as an extern.

"I'm basically in a nurse's shadow and I see what a nurse does day to day and get all the fun little tips and tricks," she said. "It's like clinicals, but much more intimate and I don't have to worry about paperwork and I really get to focus on patient care dialogue and charting and putting together medication bags for nurses and learning. It has given me the opportunity to figure out actually what kind of nursing I want to go into."

Clayton said she originally wanted to do the NICU, but realized she really enjoyed pediatric psychology.

"I think I could really make an impact there," she said. "My first job out of high school was a YMCA camp counselor, and I've been babysitting since I was 14, so kids have always had a special continued next page



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Lily Kate Clayton is in her second year of an accelerated bachelors of science in nursing degree at Oklahoma City University's Kramer School of Nursing.

CLAYTON Continued from Page 4

place in my heart. I'm an older sister, so when I got a little brother, it was like having a living baby doll that I got to help my mom with. And, I see that there is a need for a lot of intervention in child psychology and I know I would be a little piece of help in a kid's life. I could really be a source of good change and hope."

Clayton is a member of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority at OCU.

"It (sorority) keeps me level, keeps me grounded, allows me to have a little bit of fun while I'm navigating through nursing school, which for any student at any school would be pretty tough," she said. "I get to go do the little silly events and philanthropic work and the fun formals with my girls and it makes me feel like a normal 20-year-old."

Clayton said her family is a strong believer in academics.

"Growing up, my family was very adamant about if there's one thing that people can't take away from you in life, that's your education," she said. "I would not be where I am if my family hadn't have told me to go out and explore and to follow my heart and really listen to the little voice inside you that's like, hey, maybe I should be a nurse and maybe I should move out of state and all of these things."

Clayton plans to graduate from OCU in May 2024.

"Hopefully I will be working at St. Anthony if I'm offered a job or if not at St. Anthony's, then I would be working on a psychiatric unit with kids' post-grad before my boyfriend and I move back to Texas," she said. "We'll be out here for a little bit longer and get our roots and we both get our professional experience."

For more information about the Oklahoma City University Kramer School of Nursing **CLICK HERE**.



Norman Regional Health System Professional HealthCare Recruiter Paul Vogel poses at their booth on the second day of the Oklahoma Nursing Association annual convention in Oklahoma City.

ONA Continued from Page 3

Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act. In 1980, recognition of the Certified Nurse Practitioner and Certified Nurse Midwife were added. Clinical Nurse Specialists were added in 1994. In 2019, Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists saw the law change from direct supervision to a collaborative practice.

The ONA community of nurses has become more strident in becoming advocates in the legislative process to express their concerns about how healthcare is offered in Oklahoma. Each year, at the beginning of the

legislative session, they prepare at a meeting and go to the capitol to express to their legislators how vital high-quality nursing health care is to their constituents.

The next Nurses Day at the Capitol will be March 5, 2024. "Nurses need to be engaged and involved in advocating for the profession every day," Nelson said. "Coming to Nurses Day at the Capitol is a great way to learn about what is happening there. If you are not at the table, you are on the menu."

To learn more about the Oklahoma Nurses Association, or to join **CLICK HERE**.

41st Annual EPIC Educational Conference Set, 6 Continuing Education Hours Provided

The Epidemiologists and Professional in Infection Control (EPIC) conference will be held Friday, November 3rd, 2023 at the Petroleum Club Event Center, 4040 N Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK. 73105.

Nurses will be provided 6 hours of continuing education credits by the Oklahoma Board of Nursing.

The 2023 EPIC Conference Speakers:

Bryan Spradley, training director, Arkansas Oklahoma Carpenters Apprenticeship and Training Program ICRA Awareness.

Kathleen McMullen, MPH, CIC, FAPIC, Mercy Health Director of Infection Prevention Critical Access Hospital IP Program Standards.

Dr. Izzy Justice, Chief Neuroscientist, NEURO580, Mental Health in Healthcare Workers.

Jolianne Stone, MPH, OSDH State Epidemiologist, State Disease Update.

Registration Deadline is October 15th, 2023. REGISTER HERE:

(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2023 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

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ANA Officially Recognizes Cannabis Nursing as a Specialty Nursing Practice

(ANA), representing the interests of the nation's more than 5 million nurses, announces the formal recognition of cannabis nursing as a nursing specialty. Cannabis nursing is identified by the American Cannabis Nurses Association (ACNA) as a specialty nursing practice focused on the care of health care consumers seeking education and guidance in the therapeutic use of cannabis.

"ANA is pleased to officially recognize cannabis nursing practice as a nursing specialty," said ANA President Jennifer Mensik Kennedy, PhD, MBA, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN. "This recognition highlights the essential role and special contribution of cannabis nurses to the health care system and promotes enhanced integration of cannabis therapies for health care consumers across diverse health care settings."

ACNA's mission is to advance excellence in cannabis nursing practice advocacy, collaboration, through

The American Nurses Association education, research, and policy development. These efforts support the ACNA vision to improve health care outcomes by empowering pathways for cannabis education and competency through wisdom, compassion, integrity, and social justice principles.

"We are deeply gratified by the groundbreaking establishment of cannabis nursing as an ANArecognized nursing specialty. Nurses are the largest group of health professionals, providing an opportunity to change the health care paradigm and include diverse wellness modalities beyond traditional Western medicine. Cannabis nursing requires specialized knowledge and competencies to navigate care and address the stigma associated with medical cannabis use to support a healthy society. We seek to create lasting, transformative change that enriches both specialized and general nursing practices, ultimately serving the well-being of patients nationwide," said ACNA President Rachel Parmelee MSN, RN, CNE,

AHN-BC.

ACNA is committed not only to pioneering the cannabis nursing field, but also to contributing to the broader landscape of nursing practice and patient care. ANA is the sole reviewing body of specialty nursing scope of practice and standards of practice, requests for specialty recognition, and affirmation of focused practice competencies.

ANA supports the urgency of clinical research to inform patients and providers on the efficacy of marijuana and related cannabinoids. In an official position, ANA addresses the roles and responsibilities of nurses related to the use of cannabinoids for health care and recognizes the potential for cannabinoids to be used in disease treatment and symptom management.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) is the premier organization representing the interests of the nation's 5 million registered nurses. ANA advances the nursing profession



ACNA President Rachel Parmelee MSN, RN, CNE, AHN-BC.

by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting a safe and ethical work environment, bolstering the health and wellness of nurses, and advocating on health care issues that affect nurses and the public. ANA is at the forefront of improving the quality of health care for all. For more information, visit

https://www.nursingworld.org/.



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OKNT CROSSWORD: Nursing History

Across

- 3. Publishes The Red Cross in Peace and War.
- 5. She is still honored today as nurses in the Philadelphia area hold an
- annual procession to the Cemetery where she is buried 8. Was appointed to the newly established (first in the nation) New York
- State Board of Nurse Examiners
- 12. Developed the Code of Ethics for Professional Nurses
- 16. Wrote History of Nursing with Adelaide Nutting
- 18. She wrote A Sound Economic Basis for Nursing **Down**
- In 1954 authored the classic "The Child, His Parents, and the Nurse"
 A national leader in nursing she served as president of National
- League for Nursing Education from 1917-20
- 4. Above Nurse that is Is buried in Corunna, Michigan
- 6. Started the "American Journal of Nursing" in 1900
- 7. This nurse was driving force behind rural health-care in America
- 9. This nurse was executed by firing squad for nursing enemy soldiers
- 10. This nurse was best known best known as the author of the book Little Women
- 11. The first African American trained nurse.
- 13. In 1922 published "Textbook of the Principles and Practices of Nursing"
- 14. 1909 Became chair of National Committee of the Red Cross Nursing Service
- 15. gained national and international recognition for her efforts to upgrade nursing education and promote sound legislation for nursing practice.
- 17. The mother of Anesthesia
- ANSWERS ON PAGE 12

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Researchers Discover Disease-Causing Stem Cells in Lungs of Cystic Fibrosis Patients



Scientists with the University of Houston, Wa Xian and Frank McKeo.

Two nationally recognized experts in cloning and stem cell science from the University of Houston, Wa Xian and Frank McKeon, are reporting that five lung stem cell variants dominate the lungs of patients with advanced cystic fibrosis (CF), and that these variants drive key aspects of CF pathology including inflammation, fibrosis and mucin secretion.

Cystic fibrosis is an inherited and progressive disease that causes long-lasting lung infections and limits the ability to breathe. It is caused by a defect in a gene called the cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator (CFTR) and affects nearly 40,000 people in the United States. Defects in the CFTR gene lead to the production of abnormally sticky and thick mucus that clogs organs, particularly lungs, causing chronic lung disease marked by infections and inflammation.

Recently introduced drugs known as CFTR modulators act to rescue the function to the mutant CFTR gene and yield remarkable improvements in lung function of CF patients. However, in patients with established lung disease, lung inflammation remains despite treatment with CFTR modulators. This persistence is concerning as inflammation is thought to be a key factor in the progression of CF lung disease.

This gap in CFTR modulator efficacy renders the work of the Xian-McKeon laboratory particularly relevant.

"Using single cell cloning technology that detailed stem cell heterogeneity in lungs from patients with COPD and idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF), we identified five stem cell variants common to lungs of patients with advanced CF, including three that show hyperinflammatory gene expression profiles and drive neutrophilic inflammation upon xenografting to immunodeficient mice," said Xian, research professor in biology and biochemistry.

"We found that CFTR-modulating drugs did not suppress the proinflammatory activity or gene expression of the three CF variants that drive inflammation," reports McKeon, professor of biology and biochemistry and director of the Stem Cell Center, in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine. "These findings raise the possibility that these inflammatory stem cell variants are the source of the persistent inflammation in patients treated with CFTR modulators."

If true, their findings suggest that the inflammatory stem cell variants are key targets for drug discovery to augment the major therapeutic advances brought by CFTR modulators. Identifying such lead drugs is a major effort in the Xian-McKeon laboratory, in collaboration with the Center for Drug Discovery, the UH Sequencing Center and colleagues in the Department of Chemistry and the Center for Biotechnology at Texas A&M in the Texas Medical Center.



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OU College of Nursing Receives \$10.5 Million Grant to Partner With Indigenous Communities on Maternal Health Research

FRAN AND EARL ZIEGLER COLLEGE OF NURSING The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

In Oklahoma and across the United States, Indigenous women have the highest rates of death and health complications during and following pregnancy. However, data shows that more than 90% of those deaths are preventable and that contributing factors like hemorrhage and mental health conditions can be better addressed.

To study the causes of increased death and disease, and to ultimately reduce their prevalence, the Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center has been awarded a seven-year, \$10.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health. Central to the grant is that researchers will work in partnership with Indigenous communities and organizations to examine maternal health inequities and maternal well-being, using an approach that recognizes Indigenous culture as a health-giving factor in itself.

The work of the grant will be the creation of CIRCLE — the Center for Indigenous Resilience, Culture, and Maternal Health Equity — to serve Oklahoma and the Southern Plains. The acronym CIRCLE symbolizes Indigenous knowledge that honors the interdependence and interconnectedness of all living things.

"Maternal health research helps to promote the well-being of women during pregnancy and childbirth, reduces maternal mortality, and improves infant health and development. Our goals with this work are to improve health outcomes and promote health equity for Indigenous women and children who are most at risk and, ultimately, to save lives," said Karina Shreffler, Ph.D., associate dean for research and a professor in the OU College of Nursing, who is directing the work of the grant.

Because Indigenous women face different risks according to where they live and what resources they have, more information is needed about the biological, social and behavioral factors affecting health. But what researchers know now is grim: Indigenous women (those who identify as American Indian, Alaska Native or Native American) are three times more likely to die during or following pregnancy than white mothers. In addition, Indigenous women are three to four times as likely as white women to experience severe health problems during pregnancy, with rural Indigenous women at particularly high risk.

To delve into the root causes, the OU Health Sciences Center research team will work closely with the Southern Plains Tribal Health Board, which represents 43 tribal nations in Oklahoma, Texas and Kansas. Also key to the work is an external advisory committee comprised of Indigenous mothers and patients, leaders from various tribal nations, health care providers, health system leaders and Indian Health Service policymakers. Together, they will establish research protocols to build upon existing knowledge, then use that information to develop interventions focused on eliminating health disparities.

One such intervention is already being studied in partnership with the Southern Plains Tribal Health Board. The FLOURISH study (Food for Lifecourse Equity In Maternal Security and Health) is evaluating a "food as medicine" intervention for Indigenous women who have been identified as facing food insecurity, toxic stress and risk for severe health problems. FLOURISH aims to correct nutrient gaps and support socioemotional well-being. The project is led by Emily Jones, Ph.D., R.N., professor in the OU College of Nursing, and **Continued on next page**



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GRANT Continued from Page 12

Marianna Wetherill, Ph.D., MPH, associate professor in the OU Hudson College of Public Health.

The grant will also fund an education component for the training and development of early career researchers and practitioners. CIRCLE Scholars will be named, and pilot grants will be awarded for the creation of additional research projects in maternal health. Graduate research assistants and postdoctoral fellows will be engaged in the work of the grant as well.

The CIRCLE project also dovetails with the OU College of Nursing's plans to develop a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner program. Across the college's mission of education, research and patient care, women's health is a major focus.

"Congratulations to Dr. Shreffler and her team for their visionary effort to establish a

Maternal Health Research Center of Excellence in Oklahoma," said OU College of Nursing Dean and Professor Julie Hoff, Ph.D., MPH. "This center will strengthen vital community connections and pave the way for evidence-based advancements and training to positively impact Indigenous maternal health equity. This funding also acknowledges the advancing expertise of the OU Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing in the field of health equity research."



Dr. Karina Shreffler, Ph.D., associate dean for research and a professor in the OU College of Nursing.

The CIRCLE research team involves many research and health care disciplines across OU's campuses in Oklahoma City, Norman and Tulsa. Leading the administration of CIRCLE with Shreffler is Jed Friedman, Ph.D., associate vice provost for diabetes programs at the OU Health Sciences Center and director of OU Health Harold Hamm Diabetes Center at the OU Health Sciences Center. Leading the training and development arm of the grant is Tim VanWagoner, Ph.D., associate professor of pediatrics in the OU College of Medicine and associate director of the Oklahoma Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the OU Health Sciences Center. Heading the community partnership and engagement arm is Paul Spicer, Ph.D., a professor of anthropology on OU's Norman campus and director of community engagement and outreach for the Oklahoma Clinical and Translational Science Institute.

Several members of the research team have already been engaged in research into Indigenous maternal health. Last fall, Shreffler and Jones received a \$250,000 grant from the Eugene Washington PCORI Engagement Awards, an initiative of the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute. That grant allowed researchers to establish relationships with the Southern Plains Tribal Health Board and laid the groundwork for the new NIH grant.

The grant is part of NIH's IMPROVE (Implementing a Maternal Health and Pregnancy Outcomes Vision for Everyone) initiative. NIH funding established 10 Maternal Health Research Centers of Excellence across the nation.

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For more information about Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center visit https://nursing.ouhsc.edu/.

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