

Oklahoma's Nursing Times

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LPN Brightens Residents' Days

Read her story on page 2

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PAGE 2

Amber Shinault, LPN

Wound Care Nurse at The Fairmont Skilled Nursing & Therapy in Oklahoma City.

story and photo by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Amber Shinault is a breath of fresh air for people in need. She enjoys brightening their days as an LPN, and wound care nurse at The Fairmont Skilled Nursing & Therapy, located in Oklahoma City.

"I ask them how they are. They'll let me know if they're okay or if they're not, and we'll talk about it," Shinault said. "I just kind of try to change the narrative. I'll try to find something positive from the situation."

Her career teaches her that small things in life can brighten someone's day. Helping people to feel better physically and mentally is what keeps Shinault going, she said.

The Fairmont Skilled Nursing & Therapy offers cardiac care, catheter and colostomy care, diabetes management, discharge planning, incontinence care, IV therapy, mobile

lab services and mobile X-rays, respiratory services, enteral feeding and dining assistance, and wound care.

She hears from residents a sweep of history through the decades. Military veterans like to tell her about their war experiences. And mothers and wives often tell her about their children and family life, if they worked and if they were single, how they kept their family together. They talk about their success in life.

"Everybody is different. There's always something new every day," she said. "You'd be surprised about the things women did back then. You'd never imagine."

One lady in her nineties had been the only female at the time doing maintenance on aircraft at Tinker Air Force Base. She did not have children. Her focus was on her career, Shinault said. Occasionally she will meet a resident who had a

long nursing career.

"They know what they know, and they compare the things now to back then with the changes," she said.

Shinault is appreciative to learn of the many advances in health care and is thankful for being able to learn more each day. She grew up accompanying her mother and grandmother as they did service projects for the community. When her mother contracted cancer, Shinault wanted to learn more about helping people facing health care challenges.

Shinault became a licensed practical nurse two years ago after graduating from Central Oklahoma College in Oklahoma City.

She has served in an adult daycare center and was involved in skilled nursing prior to joining The Fairmont Skilled Nursing & Therapy. She continues to press on by advocating for life.

"I feel like I am a positive light anywhere that I go," Shinault said. "So, I just feel like if I am here, then they have a chance of being taken care of a little bit better."

She is impressed by the nursing staff's ability to connect with the residents. Shinault commends the

nurses for their drive in performing their best. Nurses offer respect and help preserve the dignity of the residents.

"If they are here, we realize they are still people with feelings and rights," she continued.

Shinault recalled a gentleman she met when working at the adult daycare center. He didn't like to be touched or to be around people he did not know. It had been a challenge to motivate him to dance with staff or others.

"One day he came out and started dancing with me. Everybody was dancing on the floor. That just made my whole entire week" she said. "He was able to reach out and be comfortable doing that with us. That was pretty cool."

She currently has a new resident at Fairmont Skilled Nursing & Therapy who is warming up to his new home.

"It takes a little time. New face, new place," she explained. "It just depends on what's going on with them and what they've been through," she said.

See SHINAULT Page 3

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Amber Shinault’s smile and dedication to care brings comfort to residents living at The Fairmont Skilled Nursing & Therapy, located in Oklahoma City.

SHINAULT
Continued from Page 2

Shinault greets new residents with a nice mellow voice, she said. It’s all about making new residents as comfortable as she can.

“I try to bring positive energy to them,” she said.

Long-term care nurses need to be patient with their residents.

“You have to have motivation and strength, too,” Shinault said. “All of it weighs on you, too. Seeing people go through these things and their trials and tribulations kind of wears on your mind. We’re counselors, we’re nurses, we’re everything sometimes.

You definitely need to have a passion to do this.”

Her job requires her to be prompt, knowledgeable and efficient, she said. Ask questions if you don’t know the answer, Shinault said.

She will do her rounds with a physician, looking for all the wounds patients have. She dresses each wound while making sure they are getting better and not worse.

“I care for them when they need me. I don’t mind doing anything. And when I’m here, my goal is for us to have a good time.”

For more information about The Fairmont Skilled Nursing & Therapy in Oklahoma City [CLICK HERE](#).



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CAREERS IN NURSING: HELPING PATIENTS FEEL BETTER - APRN BUILDS RAPPORT

story and photo by Van Mitchell, Staff Writer

Beth Miller, APRN, is a board-certified nurse practitioner with INTEGRIS Health Medical Group Edmond Women's Health.

She has been a registered nurse for 18 years and a women's health nurse practitioner for three of those years.

Miller said she loves to treat women of all ages and has a passion for helping her patients feel better, both physically and psychologically.

"When coming to see me, a patient can expect someone who is going to listen to them, address their concerns and provide appropriate education," she said. "I want them to feel like they're coming to see a friend."

Miller earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, and a Master of Science in nursing from the University of Cincinnati in Ohio.

She said didn't initially plan on becoming a women's health nurse practitioner.

"I had a careers class where we had to shadow somebody for a whole day, and I chose my cousin who was an OR manager, and I just was like, this is what I want to do."

Miller came to work at INTEGRIS Health after a tenure at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

She said INTEGRIS Health offered her a great opportunity.

"It was the benefits that drew me to INTEGRIS Health" she said.

"My husband and I struggled with fertility and INTEGRIS Health had really good fertility benefits and they had an opening in the OR, and I had put in for it. We did two rounds of in-vitro that had failed, and we thought if we were to keep going, I would get the job at INTEGRIS Health. I did get the job, and that's honestly what led me to be working at INTEGRIS Health."

Miller said she enjoys working with her INTEGRIS Health family.

"I want to make sure that they feel like they are heard," she said. "Sometimes you just need somebody to talk to, and it's not just the physical aspect of what's going on, it's the mental health part of it. They can talk to me about anything."

Beth Miller, APRN

"I was a robotics coordinator and I pretty much did the gynecology part, and I just fell in love with it and I would've never thought that," Miller said. "If you'd told me 20 years ago this is what I'd be doing, I'd have laughed at you."

Miller sees patients of all ages.

"I see patients from all walks of life from the time that women start their periods all the way through menopause," she said. "I'll do annual exams, I do problem visits, talk about birth control, and menopausal symptoms. You name it, anything that has to do with the reproductive system, breast exams, breast lumps."

Miller knew at an early age that she wanted a career in the medical field.

"It was in high school," she said.

"I've really been blessed with good people," she said. "I've had wonderful leadership and I've been placed with people who've always been great mentors and have been extremely supportive of everything in every facet."

Miller tries to relay that support to building good rapport with her patients.

"I want to make sure that they feel like they are heard," she said. "Sometimes you just need somebody to talk to, and it's not just the physical aspect of what's going on, it's the mental health part of it. They can talk to me about anything."

Miller said being an extrovert helps in communicating with her patients.

"I've always been an extrovert, so that really helps me out," she said.



Beth Miller, APRN has passion for helping patients feel better, physically and psychologically.

Giving back is also part of Miller's DNA.

Miller and her husband are members of Oakdale Church of Christ in Edmond, and she previously served as a volunteer nurse practitioner at the Lighthouse Medical Clinic in Oklahoma City.

The clinic provides free health care services provided by volunteers that want to help those in their community. Appointments are given first come first serve at the time of the clinic. Currently, they try to see new patients on Tuesday mornings.

"There's so many people that are underprivileged, they're uninsured, and they need healthcare too," she said.

Miller said she stopped volunteering at the clinic due to a busy professional and personal schedule.

She hopes to return to volunteering at the Lighthouse Medical Clinic soon.

"I want to get back to it," she said. "I've just recently talked to the clinic manager, and we are trying to get a timeframe that we can do this, so that I can work on my Thursday afternoons and get back down there as a nurse practitioner."

Miller said nursing has provided her with a variety of opportunities and experiences.

"The beautiful part about nursing is that if you don't like what you're doing, go do something else," she said. "There's something that you can find in nursing that you will absolutely love."

To learn more about INTEGRIS Health or join the team visit <https://integrityok.com/careers>

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Special Note - Norman Regional Careers



Meet our Fall 2023 OU College of Nursing at Norman Regional students! Each year we're happy to help train the future of healthcare and bridge the nursing shortage gap by partnering with the [The University of Oklahoma College of Nursing](#).

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Norman Regional, Feed the Children Supports 800 Cleveland County Families

As the holiday season approaches, an increasing number of people will find themselves facing impossible choices about basic needs and living without essential resources. A recent report from the USDA revealed that one in five children are food insecure. Norman Regional Health System and Feed the Children are partnering to bring No Hunger Holidays to 800 Cleveland County families during the season of giving.

The organizations will hold two events this week – one in Moore and one in Norman – each serving 400 families. Each family has been pre-identified by a local school and will receive a 25-pound box of food; a 10-pound box of daily essentials such as shampoo, conditioner, lotion and personal-care items as well as toys, books, and additional products. These items will help to provide children and families with much-needed food and essentials as well as a brighter holiday season.

“Norman Regional’s mission is to be the leader in health and wellness care for our community and we strive to fulfill this mission inside and outside our hospital doors,” said Richie Splitt,

President & CEO of Norman Regional Health System. “Chronic hunger is a major health issue for children and adults. We are partnering with Feed the Children to remove hunger as a barrier to overall health and well-being. Working together we want to ensure a happy, and healthy holiday season for families living in the communities Norman Regional serves.”

Price hikes at the grocery store have made food itself less affordable for lower-income families. Since 2021, food prices have increased by nearly 17 percent according to the USDA, and average rent costs were reported to rise by 8.6% between 2022 and 2023. Along with reduced federal SNAP benefits, these extra pressures put struggling families even closer to the edge. With nearly 17 percent of Norman residents and more than 10 percent in Moore residents living below the poverty line, holidays can be a stressful time for families. It can be especially difficult once school is out for the holidays, leaving children food insecure- without a source for consistent meals.

Feed the Children, a leading nonprofit focused on alleviating



childhood hunger is holding its No Hunger Holidays campaign in order to help children and families during the holidays, as well as bring awareness to the important issue of childhood hunger.

“It is only through partnership that we can reach at-risk families during the holiday season,” said Travis Arnold, president and CEO of Feed the Children. “No child should go without, and Feed the Children is thankful for our partnerships that can help ease the burden many families are facing. If you are fortunate enough to experience joy

and generosity around your own holiday table, you can make a tremendous difference when you give from your heart.”

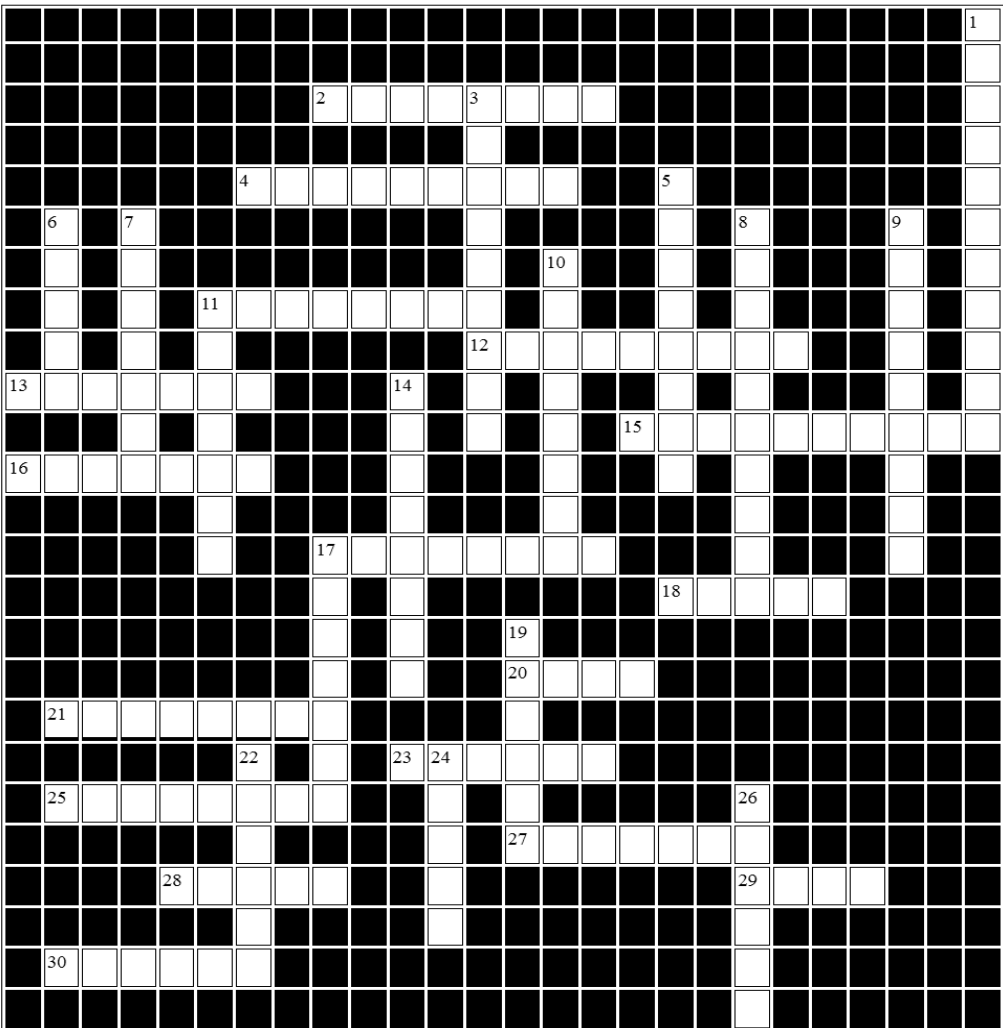
Feed the Children and Norman Regional Healthy System have partnered for five years to provide hope and resources to families in Cleveland County. Together, the organizations have served more than 4,000 families.

Visit Feed the Children here: feedthechildren.org/nohungerholidays to learn more about the No Hunger Holidays campaign and find out how you can participate.

OKNT

CROSSWORD: Bones of the Head, Face and Neck

- Across
2. bones that form the sides of the head
4. cheek bones
11. collar bone
12. bone that forms the back of the skull
13. bone that forms the forehead
15. another name for the cheek bones
16. bone of the cranium between the eyes
17. largest and strongest bone of the face
18. forms the bridge of the nose
20. inner and larger bone of the forearm
21. bones that form the sides and crown of the cranium
23. chest bones
25. forms the hard palate of the mouth
27. shoulder blade
28. connection between two or more bones
29. 12 pairs of bones in the chest
30. smaller bone of the forearm
- Down
1. 14 bones of the face
3. study of the bones
5. vertebrae in the neck region
6. forms part of the nasal septum
7. breastbone
8. bones of the palm
9. bones of the fingers (14)
10. small tin bones that supports tear ducts
11. oval, bony case that protects the brain
14. joins the bones of the cranium
17. upper jaw bones
19. large bone of the upper arm
22. fingers
24. bone that supports the tongue
26. wrist ; 8 flexible guiding bones



ANSWERS ON PAGE 12

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Healthcare is changing and nurses are at the forefront.

That's why Oklahoma Wesleyan University is proud to offer a doctoral program designed to help create tomorrow's nursing leaders today.

Rosa Ketchum, DNP, RN is an associate professor and director of the school of nursing's new DNP program.

"One thing that is exciting is just the role of the DNP," Ketchum said. "It's becoming more evident in view of the pandemic that nurses have a very important voice in health care and they are a huge piece of the puzzle and their experience and value and perspective on health care is needed to help address practice and policy development."

Designed for working adults, this program offers two doctoral learning pathways: a Post Master's DNP and the BSN to DNP.

The **Post Master's Pathway** enables Advanced Practice Nurses, Nurse Informaticists, Nurse Educators, Nurse Administrators, and other master's prepared specialty nurses to obtain a DNP in Executive Leadership. Additionally, BSN-prepared nurses with a master's degree in a related field may also enter this pathway.

Similarly, the **BSN to DNP Pathway** allows bachelor's prepared nurses to earn their doctorate of nursing practice.

Within this pathway, students choose a focus in either Nursing Administration or Nursing Education. OKWU has designed this curriculum for experienced nurses seeking terminal degrees in practice-focused areas. Moreover, OKWU prepares nurses to function as an advocate and leader, improving healthcare and patient outcomes through innovation and involvement in practice and policy.

Most importantly, both pathways provide graduates with advanced practice skills to serve as providers and organizers of the healthcare delivery process, or as faculty members in a nursing education

Translating that bedside knowledge and pairing it with evidence-based practice is the focus of the DNP program.

Ketchum completed her DNP in 2019.

"I wanted a degree that focused on patient outcomes. That's where my nursing heart is, helping the patient whether it's one patient or a population, I wanted to impact patient outcomes," Ketchum said.

"That is part of the focus of the DNP and I wanted a piece of that. I wanted to be better able to do that whether it be through teaching students or through direct patient care."

OKWU's Doctor of Nursing Practice in Executive Leadership program is designed to equip nurses to serve at the highest level of nursing practice. The DNP program develops nurse leaders who improve patient outcomes and health systems by translating research into practice, all from a Christian worldview.

A new group of students begins each semester, three times a year. While most programs only accept advanced practice nurses, Oklahoma Wesleyan accepts any kind of master's prepared nurse.

"Their ideas and perspectives may be a little broader because we have nurses that are coming from an administration background, or education background or advanced practice background so we're getting to see them all together," she said. "The perspective is broader than some programs but they all want to impact health care and they all want to make our health care system a little bit better."

Delivery of the **program is 100-percent online** with no required visits to campus. Classes are delivered one at a time, eight weeks in length.

"Our program is designed for the working adult and that's better facilitated because they are only taking one class at a time. For eight weeks they can focus on one class at a time and I think that helps them be able to balance life, work, family, school better than if they were in a more traditional semester setting," Ketchum said.

The **BSN to DNP program is 54 credit hours** with anticipation of three years to graduate. The post-master's DNP is 36 hours allowing for completion in roughly two years.

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The Oklahoma Wesleyan University's degree programs in Nursing at Oklahoma Wesleyan University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Doctor of Nursing Practice program is pursuing initial accreditation by the CCNE. Applying for accreditation does not guarantee that accreditation will be granted. (www.ccneaccreditation.org)



Mercy OKC co-workers throw birthday party for Positive Tomorrows kids.

Mercy Co-workers Volunteer Nearly \$500,000 of Service in 2023

At the conclusion of its second year, Mercy's Volunteer Time Off (VTO) program continues to positively impact and support local communities. Over 2,171 co-workers donated a total of 12,790 work hours across a four-state area while participating in this program. By the end of 2023, Mercy estimates 2,300 co-workers will have served more than 13,500 hours.

Mercy's VTO program began in January 2022 and allows co-workers time to volunteer during work hours at local nonprofits or community events and still get paid their normal salary.

"It's wonderful to see how our co-workers value their VTO hours," said Ayanna Pierce, Mercy vice president of benefits and talent relations. "Mercy is full of diverse individuals who are dedicated to their work and community, which is the true spirit of Mercy. We know it can be challenging to find time to do traditional volunteer service and we're excited to support our co-workers by providing them this additional benefit."

In Oklahoma, CJ Barnhill, manager of nursing services for the emergency department at Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City, and his team helped organize and throw birthday parties for kids experiencing homelessness.

"We see a lot of people with housing insecurity come in through the emergency department, so my team and I are passionate about helping this population," said Barnhill. "When someone is experiencing homelessness, often the last thing on their mind is celebrating their birthday. There's something fulfilling about getting to make this day special again, and it's great that Mercy has a program that empowers co-workers to get involved."

One nursing team in Northwest Arkansas recently spent several of their VTO hours volunteering at Cobblestone Farms, a local nonprofit with a goal to alleviate hunger through sustainable farming. The Mercy volunteers spent several hours cleaning out greenhouses to prepare them for next season's planting and assisting with other tasks.

Katelyn Beckmann, manager of nursing services for the cardiac unit at Mercy Hospital Northwest Arkansas, helped plan and participate in the service project.

"We try to plan a team-building experience every few months, and we love using VTO as a way to get together and do something different than our typical work," said Beckmann. "For this project specifically, our team really wanted to get outside in the beautiful weather and do



Mercy OKC co-workers help Cardinal Community House resident get outfitted with new coat donated by Mercy co-workers.



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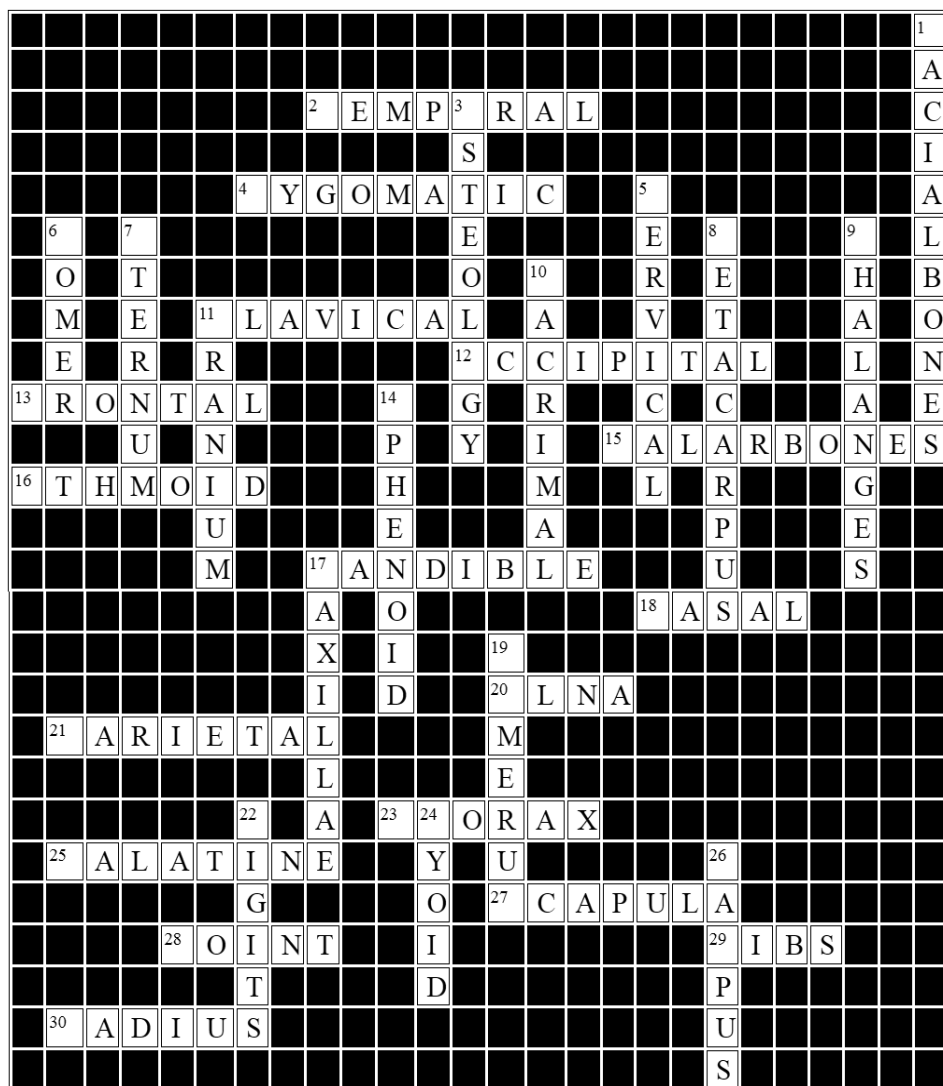
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INTEGRIS Health Caregiver Celebrates Major Progress in Caring for Cystic Fibrosis Patients

Ruth Crawford is the director of nursing over Women's and Children's Services at **INTEGRIS Health**. She has been with the organization for 27 years, starting as a bedside nurse in the pediatric unit at **INTEGRIS Health Baptist Medical Center**.

"When I first started here, I didn't know anything about cystic fibrosis," Crawford admits. "But I had to learn quickly, as we routinely had a large population of young patients who seemed to be in and out of the hospital frequently because of the disease."

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a disease that causes thick, sticky mucus to build up in the lungs, digestive tract and other areas of the body. It is a life-threatening disorder that impacts children and young adults.

Crawford says because these patients were hospitalized many times a year, some for long durations, she and the other caregivers became very close with many of the CF families. She says it would break her heart when she would have to discuss end-of-life decisions when the disease

progressed.

Just three decades ago, the average person with cystic fibrosis would live only to the age of 30, but now 50 years is typical and some patients with CF live into their 80s.

Thankfully because of medical breakthroughs and new medications, Crawford is happy to announce that INTEGRIS Health has not had a CF patient admitted to the hospital in over four years!

"That is amazing, if not miraculous," she exclaims. "Now, I'm not saying the disease has gone away and I certainly don't mean to minimize or downplay the hard work families are still doing at home to keep their children out of the hospital, but because of medications like Trikafta, CF kids are living longer and enjoying a better quality of life."

Crawford recently received the 2023 Breath of Life Award from the Central/Western Oklahoma chapter of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. The honor is presented to individuals whose contributions breathe vitality and resilience into the lives of those affected by cystic



fibrosis.

She encourages everyone to consider donating to the cause. "This is only the beginning. There are so many exciting things coming down the pike. Therapies and medications, like nothing we've ever seen before. We are so

very close to finding a cure for this awful disease. Join me in continuing the fight, so that all CF kids can live to see more tomorrows."

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more or to donate to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

VOLUNTEER

Continued from Page 10

something meaningful. Farming is so different from nursing, and it was great to bond as a group over new and interesting work."

Eight hours are granted to co-workers at the start of each calendar year. The hours can be spent consecutively or in separate volunteer activities preapproved by a co-worker's leader.

"This specific project felt like a cycle that keeps giving to everyone involved," Beckmann said. "We helped clean up the greenhouses, and in return, our service will allow the farm to continue serving those who are most at need in our community. Ultimately, it makes Northwest Arkansas a better place for all of us."

Co-workers can provide a wide range of meaningful service

through the VTO program. Other opportunities include serving meals at a homeless shelter, cleaning up a section of a road or highway, walking dogs at a local animal shelter and more.

The VTO program allows co-workers to continue the spirit of giving demonstrated by Mercy's Foundress Catherine McAuley, who established the Sisters of Mercy in 1831 in Dublin, Ireland. Her framework for charitable work guides Mercy's mission and values today. With this program, co-workers can go into their community to help others and follow in Catherine's footsteps.

"The communities where we work and live support us in our mission to provide compassionate care to all who come through our doors," said Pierce. "We are so grateful to give back by encouraging our co-workers to serve together through volunteer work."



Mercy OKC co-workers host Warmth for Winter drive for unhoused residents at Cardinal Community House

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HSC College of Nursing leadership team member receives Dallas College Distinguished Alumni Award

Fort Worth, Texas – The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth is thrilled to announce that Tonychris Nnaka, PhD, MPH, RN, CPH, associate dean for research in the HSC College of Nursing, was named one of the recipients of the Dallas College 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award.

Nnaka is an experienced nurse leader and health disparities researcher with expertise in cardiovascular disease management and digital therapeutics. He gained his research training at The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing under the National Institute of Nursing Research T-32 Precision Health Training in Self-Management of Multiple Chronic Conditions and at the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College under the National Institute on Drug Abuse T-32 Science of Co-Occurring Disorders.

He graduated from Dallas College with an Associate Degree in Science and served as the president and vice president of the college's Student Government Association.

His professional journey is marked by a transition from serving as a frontline nurse to health care policy and academic leadership. He previously served as a policy advisor to Dallas Mayor Eric Johnson on data-driven health decision-making, health disparities and COVID-19 responses.

"Tonychris Nnaka is the perfect winner of the Dallas College Distinguished Alumni Award," said Cindy Weston, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, CHSE, FAANP, dean of the HSC College of Nursing. "His contributions and achievements in nursing reflect the values of what our profession stands for. We are proud to have Dr. Nnaka on our College of Nursing leadership team, where he will set an example of servant leadership to the newest generation of health care professionals."

The Dallas College 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award honors outstanding alumni who exemplify Dallas College's tradition of excellence through service and accomplishments. Nnaka was formally recognized Thursday during the Dallas College 2023 Distinguished Alumni Awards Event, where he was celebrated by his peers, faculty and the larger Dallas College community.

The UNT System Board of Regents approved the creation of the HSC College of Nursing in February to help address the shortage of nurses in Texas. In August, it approved the college's first two degree offerings: a Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) and



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Cindy Weston, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, CHSE, FAANP, dean of the HSC College of Nursing.

a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) in Nursing Practice Innovation, pending approval by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The college's first students are expected to start classes in fall 2024.

For more information about HSC's new College of Nursing, visit <https://www.unthsc.edu/college-of-nursing/>.

The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth is located in the heart of the Fort Worth Cultural District. HSC trains the health care providers, public health workforce and scientists of the future in an interprofessional ecosystem. In HSC's six schools, students learn to work in teams and to develop an innovative mindset that prepares them for a rapidly changing health landscape. HSC Health, the clinical enterprise of the Health Science Center, provides patient-centered care to people across Tarrant County. HSC's research enterprise provides a foundation to expand the frontiers of scientific discovery to improve health and well-being.

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