Oklahoma Nursing

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UNEGR

Esther L., RN RN Staff

RN

RECRUITER SHOWCASE

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OUR AD ON PAGE

E

Ether Lara-Wedman, RN Radiology Department at INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute

story and photo by James Coburn, Staff Writer

Esther Lara-Wedman's experiences with cancer patients tells her that living a long life is a gift.

"I will say that cancer patients are probably the nicest people that I've ever worked with," said Wedman, a registered nurse at INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute, located in northwest Oklahoma City.

Her 17-year nursing career has taught her that everyone has problems. But when she sees people her age or younger living with cancer, who are parents like her — Wedman thinks her own problems are not a big deal.

"You see your patients and get to know them. You see when they're doing really well and then you see them when they're not doing well," Wedman said.

She studies patients' charts

to see their medical history to see what was happening as their symptoms began. It helps her to know them in a better way without being intrusive.

"There's some that I feel closer to, that I talk to a lot. And it's just really hard to see them later and their prognosis is not great. Or they're getting worse, and they're scared," Wedman said.

But she also knows that cancer is definitely not a death sentence. Many people recover and there is hope. She said it's great to be able to help patients understand their journey. Sometimes she sees patients after a five-year absence of their disease process.

"I worked with a gal who had cancer as a child. And now she is married and has two kids," Wedman continued.

She grew up thinking about ways to help people and animals

feel better. Her father was only 55 when he passed away of congestive heart failure in 1996. And Wedman's momentum grew to become a nurse. Today, Wedman said she is humbled to serve the radiology department at INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute.

A nurse for 17 years, Wedman rose quickly to a registered nurse when graduating from nursing school at OSU/OKC. During her early thirties, Wedman was hired by INTEGRIS Health Baptist Medical Center where she worked for four years in the pre- and post-liver transplant unit. She continued her career for seven more years assisting Dr. Clinton Wallis, a gastroenterologist at Digestive Disease Specialists Inc.

She incorporates all her skills as a radiology nurse at INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute. Wedman provides patients information regarding EGD's, colonoscopies, colon polyps, Barrett's esophagus, and other GI issues. She will celebrate her seventh year at the institute in March.

All patients from the Nazih Zuhdi Liver Transplant program at INTEGRIS Baptist receive MRI scanning at the INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute.

"Many are pending a liver transplant. It's so rewarding to see them come in for a check-up scan after receiving their 'new' liver. The body is an amazing thing," Wedman said.

Wedman has always preferred being busy on her feet. She takes patients to be scanned and go over their schedules for the day. Wedman assists with ports, IV's, labs, and EKGs. She provides allergic reaction intervention, checks vitals, and gives medication directed by a radiologist, documents, and keeps her area clean and stocked.

"If any patient is having an issue, whether it be a seizure, oxygen levels, fainting, etcetera, I come running," she said.

Wedman shares her institutional knowledge by answering questions from patients living with cancer, or even curious about ulcerative colitis and other gastrointestinal diseases. And she's able to learn new things

See LARA-WEDMAN Page 3

INTERACTIVE AD - CLICK BELOW TO APPLY

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Oklahoma City UNIVERSITY College of Health Professions

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Esther Lara-Wedman, a registered nurse at INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute values life. She devotes her time helping patients living with cancer.

LARA-WEDMAN Continued from Page 2

about imaging.

Continuing education is a proven resource for nurses when learning about the most up to date technology and advancements in cancer care.

"I just like to learn," she said. Wedman isn't shy about asking questions to staff members in other areas of the radiology department. She learns a lot by being observant.

For a nurse who likes being busy on her toes at work, Wedman remains active at home with her two boys, ages 8 and 10. She takes them to practice and play soccer and basketball. And their pet dog keeps them active outdoors, too.

"I am a single mom. I share

our kids with my ex-spouse. When I don't have them, I usually take our dog for an hour-long walk. We walk around the neighborhood for an hour," she said. "I used to run a lot and need to get back into that. When I have my boys it's always, go, go, go. There's always something. I love what I do."

Everything about INTEGRIS Health Cancer Institute was designed to benefit the patient. The modern campus offers a 200,000-square-foot facility that includes radiation oncology, imaging, infusion therapy, a wellness center, Jim Thorpe Outpatient Rehabilitation, a meditation garden and a medical office building.

To become part of the INTEGRIS Health team visit https://integrisok.com/careers

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- RN Med-Surg Bariatric Program FT Days
- RN Pain/GI FT and PRN

North Campus:

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De La Pena Providing Mobile Healthcare to Patients in Need

Right: Kara De La Pena is owner of NP 2 Go, located at 800 W 18th St Ste 140 in Edmond, a mobile urgent care practice for homebound patients, on-the-go parents and families with scheduling available online, by text or phone.

Story Van Mitchell, Staff Writer

Kara De La Pena said with more people getting deliveries at home, it only made sense that healthcare delivery should be a part of that.

The result was the creation in 2019 of NP 2 Go, located at 800 W 18th St Ste 140 in Edmond, a mobile urgent care practice for homebound patients, on-the-go parents and families with scheduling available online, by text or phone. An advanced practice registered nurse delivers convenient, urgent care to a patient's home

"We're getting so many things delivered nowadays. We've got Amazon, you've got your groceries, dry cleaning delivered, everything's being delivered, so then it just made sense that the next thing, in healthcare, would be that, it would be being delivered to your house," De La Pena, APRN-CNP, said. "I think when I first started, I was really scared about what people might think of this crazy idea. We're going to go back and do house calls. I know it's silly, but it might work."

De La Pena provides in-home urgent care visits, migraine treatment, weight loss consults, IV vitamins/hydration.

"I think one thing that makes us stand out is that, one thing that we really pride ourselves on is our customer service," she said. "When I started out my company, we worked with being able to text message every patient, check on them the day after they had their appointment. So that has kind of stayed along with us, and we still create an open line of communications with patients through text messaging. Our nurses are really good at building rapport with the patient from the moment that you call us or text us, to the nurse practitioner doing the virtual visit before the nurse arrive. We just really care about our patients."

De La Pena was born and raised in Enid. She earned her associate's degree in nursing from Oklahoma City Community College in 2012, and her bachelors of science in nursing from Northwestern Oklahoma State University in 2014.

In 2019, she earned a master's degree in nursing while graduating as a family nurse practitioner from Maryville University in St. Louis. The school, founded 150 years ago, provides a technology-driven, mentor-inspired education.

NP2GO MOBILE NURSES

care, nurse tech, CNA, LPN, RN, and now APRN-CNP status.

"My mom is the hardest working person I've ever known, and I think just always seeing her work hard, and she also got her RN degree. I remember, I was 13 years old when she graduated," she said. "She's been a nurse for over 30 years, but she's very hardworking. That's all I've ever known, that's all I've seen, and that's the only way I know how to act, is just hardworking, get up every single day and give it your all."

Nurse practitioners in Oklahoma need only a supervising physician to oversee their prescriptive authority.

De La Pena and her supervising physician have agreed on specific medication protocols for her outpatient emphasis at NP 2 Go. They went over her business plan extensively before she started her private business ventures.

De La Pena believes that patients deserve to have transparent billing and to know the costs of services before booking their appointments. NP 2 Go works with local companies to provide the most cost-effective labs, medications, or radiology. She says this provides a thorough solution to the patient's needs.

> "We are private pay, but you will never get stuck with a bill that you weren't anticipating," she said.

> De La Pena has lived in Edmond for more than 11 years, marrying Jason in June of 2014. They now have three daughters. The family attends Victory Church in Warr Acres and enjoys boating at Lake Arcadia often.

De La Pena said NP 2 Go is a family-friendly environment.

"I think that the most important thing, to any of us, is our family," See MOBILE Page 5

Along the way she has been a certified nurse's aide and licensed practical nurse before becoming a registered nurse.

She says her mother prompted much of this by being a mentor and role model.

Her mother, Karla Brock, an RN since 1991, has worked at St. Mary's Hospital in Enid for over 28 years.

De La Pena has a combined 15 years of experience helping patients throughout her years of basic patient "She's been a nurse for over 30 years, but she's very hardworking. That's all I've ever known, that's all I've seen, and that's the only way I know how to act, is just hardworking, get up every single day and give it your all." Kara De La Pena, owner of NP 2 Go

MOBILE **Continued from Page 4**

she said. "Our employees are hardworking, but we are able to balance family-work life with our employees."

De La Pena said she is proud to be a female business owner, as well as mentor to future generations of female leaders.

"I would say that I feel very confident in our place, in our community and the community that we get to serve," she said. "And, the coolest thing that has come out of this, is being able to be a female CEO and actually think about all the patriarchal things I've been taught before, now, as far as running a company. I can run my company how I want, and it doesn't have to be on anybody else's terms. I see it (NP 2 Go) just growing and hopefully inspiring other young or other females to, especially young girls, to believe in themselves that they have the power to have an idea, go through with that idea and be successful at what they do."

For more information about NP 2 Go call (405) 696-7003 or visit https:/ /thenp2go.com.

OC Nursing Adjuncts Named Among 2023 Great 100 Nurses of Oklahoma

Based on their concern for humanity, dedication to the nursing profession and their mentoring of others, Michele Bradshaw and April Shearing, two of OC's nursing adjuncts, were named among the 2023 Great 100 Nurses of Oklahoma during an annual celebration Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Several nominations for this prestigious honor are submitted each year; but, only 100 nurses are selected by their peers to be recognized for their innovativeness, character and dedication to the art of professional and compassionate nursing. Commended by the Great 100 Nurses Foundation for their commitment to excellence within the nursing profession, Bradshaw and Shearing work full-time while still managing to teach in OC's work-based nursing program.

The Great 100 Nurses Foundation, established in Louisiana 37 years



Michele Bradshaw, Nursing Adjunct from the College of Outreach and Innovation, received her recognition.

celebrated thousands of Registered Nurses in Louisiana, North Carolina, Texas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma.

ago, has since recognized and Nomination for this prestigious award of distinction "is a great honor in the life of a Nurse.'

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Oklahoma's Nursing Times

What is your source of getting local, state and world news?



SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital-Midwest

"Usually online or on TV

because it is the most

convenient."

Holly Jones, RN

"My mom. I'm terrible about getting the news so my mom always tells me what's going on."





Chelsea Edwards, LPN



Cecilia Hill, RN

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Health Care Training is a Core Area of Francis Tuttle

Among the most highly regarded career training programs at Francis Tuttle Technology Center are those in the health sciences. From programs for adults looking for a new career to those designed to prepare high school students to earn a living while exploring other health career options, many are available to help people considering pursuing a career in the helping professions of health care. Francis Tuttle has experienced faculty who have worked extensively in the industry, with state-of-the-art equipment used in health and medical facilities throughout the metro area and around the country and a dedicated focus to help fill a looming skills gap. Below is a brief description of each of Francis

Tuttle's program offerings.

The **Pre-Nursing** program for adult and high school students is an exciting opportunity to explore a healthcare pathway and see what careers are available with additional training. Students gain knowledge about the broad spectrum of health professions. Students can obtain certification as a Nurse Aide (CNA) and an Advanced Unlicensed Assistant (AUA) through the program.

The unique **Respiratory Care** program for adult students works cooperatively with Oklahoma City Community College. Upon completion, students receive a Certificate of Completion from Francis Tuttle and an Associate of Applied Science degree from OCCC. Students are trained to



assist with treating individuals with pulmonary and cardiac disorders and obtain eligibility to take the national examinations to earn a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential and apply for an Oklahoma Respiratory Care Practitioners License.

The **Practical Nursing (LPN)** program prepares adult students to provide quality health care in various settings. Three enrollment options are available to best-fit student needs: full-time, blended online, and the 1+1 program. Upon completion, students can take the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) to become a **Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)**.

Each program offers the potential for a high-paying career, and Francis Tuttle is dedicated to serving the growing demand for a highly qualified workforce in the healthcare industry. If you're interested or know someone looking to expand their horizons through the expanding medical care field, check out these and other programs at:

https://www.francistuttle.edu/ and get started on your future today!

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OU Health is a leading destination for new nurses because they recognize the strength of our programs, the level of challenges they will face and the collaborative and supportive environment we provide. Our goal is to get you started right through our Nurse Residency Program, then offer limitless opportunities to change and grow over the course of your nursing career.

OU Health Nurse Residency Program

OU Health's Nurse Residency Program provides new graduate nurses with resources and experiences that will serve as a strong foundation for a successful nursing career. With guidance from a preceptor and an Residency Coordinator, Nurse Residents are given the support necessary to successfully bridge the transition from student to practicing nurse.

The 12-month program includes:

- Experience in our unique Collaborative Care Models
- Social networking and support
- Ongoing continuing educational opportunities
- Certification review programs
- Involvement in interdisciplinary and collaborative programs
- Research and evidence-based practice opportunities
- Monthly nurse residency seminars
- Mentor relationships to support professional development
- Evidence-based projects, with time allotted within the seminars to gather project information
- Opportunities to provide and evaluate care, incorporating evidence-based practice, research and quality data



Scan the QR code to learn more about OU Health's nurse residency program



INTEGRIS Health Woodward Hospital Celebrates New Ownership with Ribbon Cutting and Luncheon

On Thursday, Nov. 2, INTEGRIS Health held a welcome celebration at its new hospital in Woodward.

In August, INTEGRIS Health announced it would be acquiring AllianceHealth Ponca City and the operational assets of AllianceHealth Woodward.

Even though the announcement came months ago, the transaction was not official until Nov. 1.

To celebrate, the newly renamed INTEGRIS Health Woodward Hospital hosted a ribbon cutting and lunch for its caregivers and community guests. Click here to watch a video of the festivities.

"We are so excited to further our reach into the western part of the state,"

proclaims Timothy Pehrson, the president and chief executive officer of INTEGRIS Health. "We are committed to improving health outcomes for all Oklahomans and are thrilled to partner with Woodward to ensure their citizens live longer healthier lives."

John Brown, the interim chief hospital executive of INTEGRIS Health Woodward Hospital, welcomes the many additional resources made available through the INTEGRIS Health system. "Our Woodward team looks forward to continuing to provide quality health care to our community and the northwest Oklahoma region, under INTEGRIS Health leadership."





Over 200 people attended a welcome celebration including Woodward Mayor Tom Fisher and City Manager Shawn Barnett.

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OKNT JOB FEATURE - Nursing Education Consultant

Oklahoma Board of Nursing Looking for Nursing Education Consultant

The Oklahoma Board of Nursing is looking to hire a Nursing Education Consultant.

"This is not a new position. It's one we've had for a long time, and the person that is currently in the position is retiring" said Michael Starchman, RN, CPA, and Deputy Executive Director for the Oklahoma Board of Nursing.

Starchman said the Nursing Education Consultant is primarily a telecommute position, but with required attendance at OBN meetings and other agency functions. "The position covers the whole state," he said.

Starchman said the Nursing Education Consultant is in direct alignment with their mission of public protection through nursing regulation.

"This person is the agency representative interfacing with the nursing education programs in the Career Techs, colleges, and universities across the state," he said. "This person provides guidance to the programs on the Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act and Rules to assist them in graduating competent nurses." Part of the role is to visit the programs and conduct surveys. For example, if a new program is being started, there are requirements that the school must meet to be in compliance with the statutes. The nursing education consultant would provide guidance with that process. This role also requires involvement in different committees and consortiums relating to nursing education in Oklahoma."

Starchman said the ideal candidate will hold a master's degree in nursing, preferably nursing education, and need to have at least four years of experience in an administrative role in a nursing education program.

Starchman said the Nursing Education Consultant position offers a

great work-life balance.

"Being a telecommute position broadens the aspects of our applicant pool" he said. "It doesn't have to be somebody that lives in the metro area, as long as they're able to travel to Oklahoma City. We have other positions within our agency that are telecommuting positions and the employees live outside of the OKC metro; it works well."

Starchman said the Oklahoma Board of Nursing is a great organization to work for.

"We like to pride ourselves in public service. The agency's mission is to protect the public through nursing regulation," he said. "We're proud of our involvement on a national level with nursing regulation. Several of our staff are involved in national



committees such as the NCSBN and the NLC. We're very involved in that, and so that gives us a seat at the table nationally, but also helps to make sure that Oklahoma is aligned with national standards and national trends. I think it's a progressive place to work, very professional, but we're a good group of people, just good people to work with."

For more information or to apply for the position **CLICK HERE**

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Oklahoma Baptist University's Dual-Credit and Dual-Enrollment Programs Empower High School Students for Success

Oklahoma Baptist University's dual-credit and dual-enrollment programs offer high school students unique opportunities to earn college credits while still in high school.

OBU has partnered with faith-aligned institutions, Christian Heritage Academy in Del City and Oklahoma Bible Academy in Enid, to bring college-level courses to high school campuses. These partnerships allow students to earn both high school and college credits concurrently. Since the launch of this program in Fall 2023, 108 students have participated, representing a total of 139 enrollments in courses.

"Our dual-credit program is about more than affordability; it's about integrating faith and academics, preparing students not only for their careers but for a lifelong mission," Dr. Micah Meek, OBU's associate dean for online, nontraditional and graduate education said.

With tuition as low as \$65 per credit, these courses offer an affordable pathway to higher education. OBU welcomes new partnerships with high schools interested in helping their students excel academically.

"OBU's commitment to Christian education at all levels is exemplary," Dr. Susan DeMoss, Associate Headmaster for Christian Heritage Academy, said. "Their investment in CHA goes beyond dual-credit opportunities for students at a greater reduced rate than what we had. It extends to the investment in teachers through training and continuing education opportunities. The OBU faculty has made the dual-credit process more simplified and streamlined. Having two children of my own attend CHA and OBU, I know firsthand the likeminded mission and commitment to distinctly biblical education. I also have been blessed by the genuine care and concern of the OBU faculty for students."

OBU's dual-enrollment program offers high school students the chance to take college courses taught by OBU faculty, either on the Shawnee campus or online.



The OBU School of Nursing has been preparing highly-qualified nurses for careers since 1952. And today nurses are needed more than ever as the demand for quality healthcare continues to escalate. We are dedicated to equipping you with the finest nursing skills that will prepare you to enter your nursing career, whether you are seeking an undergraduate degree to become a registered nurse or you already have a bachelor's degree in another field and would like to become a registered nurse or you are an LPN who wants to advance your education and expand your career options. You will experience a high-quality curriculum that is contemporary, relevant and meets the ever-changing needs of the health-care industry.

The online component, introduced this fall, has already attracted 48 students with 56 course enrollments. Seven students are currently participating in in-person classes in Shawnee.

Kalyn Fullbright, director of admissions, emphasized, "Our program provides a personal transformation wrapped inside a rigorous education. It's about finding your purpose while pursuing academic excellence."

Tuition for dual-enrollment courses is \$100 per credit, ensuring quality education that prepares students for their future.

For dual-credit inquiries, please contact Dr. Meek at micah.meek@okbu.edu. For information about dual-enrollment, please contact Fullbright at kalyn.fullbright@okbu.edu.

About OBU: With its campus located in Shawnee, OBU offers nine bachelor's degrees with more than 80 fields of study and four master's degree programs. OBU has been rated as one of the top regional colleges and universities in the West by U.S. News and World Report for 32 consecutive years and as Oklahoma's highest rated regional college or university in the U.S. News rankings for 30 years. Forbes.com consistently ranks OBU as a top university in Oklahoma and the Princeton Review has named OBU, of the southwestern region, one of the

best colleges and universities in its region of the United States for 19 consecutive years.

For more information about the Oklahoma Baptist University Nursing progrom CLICK HERE.





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BBB

OMRF 241 events raise \$830,000 for medical research



Betty Jane Cawley and Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation Board Member Mike Cawley served as sponsorship chairs for OMRF's 241 fundraiser on Oct. 22, 2023.

Oklahoma The Research Foundation raised a record \$830,000 from a pair of events held Sunday and Monday in Oklahoma City. Proceeds will support medical research at the nonprofit.

The foundation's annual "241" fundraiser - two events for one great cause – included a concert at OMRF from Grammy Awardwinning musician Lukas Nelson and his longtime band, POTR. A golf tournament on Monday at the Oklahoma City Golf & Country Club concluded 241.

This was OMRF's 10th year to hold the benefit, which has raised nearly \$6.7 million since its inception. The amount raised from this year's fundraiser exceeded the previous record by more than \$130,000.

Funds raised will go toward the recruitment and retention of scientists and research projects where the need is greatest, in areas including cancer, heart attack and stroke, multiple sclerosis and diseases of aging such as Alzheimer's.

"Events like 241 provide our Fund; OG&E; and SSM Health. scientists with the resources they need as they seek new treatments visit www.omrf.org/241.

Medical for a wide range of diseases," said OMRF President Andrew Weyrich, Ph.D. "We are extremely grateful to our supporters. Their gifts are making a difference that will benefit Oklahomans and people everywhere for generations."

> Honorary chairs for this year's 241 were former First Lady Kim Henry and former Gov. Brad Henry, and former First Lady Cathy Keating and former Gov. Frank Keating. Betty Jane and Mike Cawley served as sponsorship chairs.

> Lead event sponsors included the Chickasaw Nation; Tom and Judy Love Foundation; American Fidelity Foundation; Continental Resources; Virginia and John Groendyke; Presbyterian Health Foundation; Ronnie A. Rosenfeld; Glenna and Dick Tanenbaum; Tyler Media Group; Arvest; Best Companies; Lariat Creek, LLC; GJW & Associates; Mary K. Chapman Foundation; Clearwater Enterprises, LLC; Devon Energy Corp.; Danny Zelisko Presents; William D. Hawley, M.D.; Gay and Ed Kirby; Polly and Larry Nichols; Don and Linda Nickles Charitable

For more information about 241,



Grammy Award-winning musician Lukas Nelson performs at the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation's 241 fundraiser on Oct. 22, 2023.



Among those dancing during the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation's annual 241 fundraiser were OMRF President Andrew Weyrich, Ph.D., and his son, Sam.

UCO Among Top 100 on 'Best for Vets: Colleges' List

The University of Central Oklahoma ranks as a top 100 institution in the nation for providing services and support for veterans and military-connected students, for the eighth consecutive year, on the 2023 Military Times "Best for Vets: Colleges" list. Central moved up 74 spots from the prior year to claim No. 86 and is one of only four institutions in Oklahoma on the list.

Central focuses on providing services and support for veterans and military-connected students through the Veterans Higher Education Resource and Opportunity Center (VetHERO) and federally funded programs.

"This accomplishment is a testament to the University of Central Oklahoma's unwavering commitment to serving those who have served our country," said UCO President Todd G. Lamb.

"UCO is home to many militaryconnected students, faculty, staff and their families. We are proud

The University of Central to provide both the resources and lahoma ranks as a top 100 support that military and veteran titution in the nation for students need to succeed at the viding services and support for university and as they enter the erans and military-connected workforce."

> The Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) program serving pre-college veterans and the Serving America's Leaders Using Transformative Education (SALUTE) program serving Central's veterans who are first-generation college students, are federally funded via U.S. Department of Education grants. These resources aid militaryconnected students in their academic, financial, physical and social needs.

> The 2023 Military Times "Best for Vets: Colleges" list is the largest and most comprehensive ranking of the best schools for military service members and veterans. The ranking looks at services available to veterans and practical information that will help veterans make important decisions about their career planning and how to



(Veterans Day is November 11.)

use the education benefits they earned through military service.

Central also received national recognition earlier this year for its commitment to military-connected students. Central was named a goldlevel Military Friendly School in the category of public universities with more than 10,000 students by Viqtory Media's 2023-24 Military Friendly Schools list.

To view the complete 2022 Military Times "Best for Vets: Colleges" rankings, visit https://bestforvets.militarytimes.com/rankings/colleges/.

For more information about veteran support services at Central, visit https://www.uco.edu/student-resources/vss/.



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