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Oklahoma's Nursing Times

FRANCIS TUTTLE
A STEP AHEAD



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STEPPING STONES

Francis Tuttle is a step ahead

By James Coburn, staff writer

The Francis Tuttle Technology Center Danforth Campus in Edmond is a learning center for high school students interested in becoming a certified nurse aide or an advanced unlicensed assistant.

“We prepare them for that next step in life,” said Lauren VanOsdol, RN and pre-nursing instructor.

VanOsdol is one of two health career instructors at the Danforth campus. She works closely with instructor Nicole Meek, RN.

Meek has been a registered nurse since 2009 since earning her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at Northwestern State University, located in Alva.

She worked at INTEGRIS Health Southwest Medical Center in Oklahoma City and INTEGRIS Health Edmond Hospital before becoming a nursing instructor at Francis Tuttle.

Meek is passionate about helping others climb the career ladder to achieve the success they want in life.

“We get to help students find that this is a good fit for them. Before they go to college — before they spend that money — they get to decide if this is something I really want to do,” Meek said. “Once they find something in our program whether it’s clinical, career research or maybe shadowing, they really find a passion in the area they abide with.”

Meek admires their fresh approach in making a difference in life. She said there are times when nurses experience burnout.

“So, their fresh perspective keeps me less burned out. I get to see them have success and really find their place,” Meek continued. “That helps me every year refresh and reset, and get a new group that really wants to be a part of it.”

Being science certified, she teaches first-year students’ anatomy and physiology. This allows students to earn a science credit at their high school. She prepares second year students to become licensed assistants, which is a step between a CNA and an LPN. Their skills include inserting catheters, drawing blood, sterile dressing change, and tube feedings.

Former students will often come back to share that Francis Tuttle prepared them for nursing school. They were a step ahead in beginning their skills lab.

VanOsdol is in her fifth year of teaching. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at Oklahoma Baptist University in 2004.

She began her career on the med-surg floor at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center. VanOsdol later was a labor and delivery nurse at Mercy Hospital in Oklahoma City. And she helped open Mercy Edmond I-35 in 2015. She became the second nursing instructor at Francis Tuttle Danforth Campus in 2022. The campus opened in 2021. She found the staff to be very supportive of each other.

“The main goal here in all of the academies and career-tech programs is getting these kids ready for life. We all have that common goal,” VanOsdol said. “You’ll see a lot of collaboration on this campus.”

They spend a day teaching cosmetology students CPR, first aid, signs of a stroke, and what to do if a client has a seizure. She teaches automotive students basic body mechanics while her students learn to change a flat tire and basic car maintenance in the event, they have an automotive breakdown on the way to nursing school.



From left, Lauren VanOsdol and Nicole Meek, both registered nurses, are a motivating force as pre-nursing instructors at Francis Tuttle Technology Center Danforth, located in Edmond.

“There is a lot of creativity and design innovation on this campus,” VanOsdol said.

The instructors also facilitate a College and Career Readiness course for students to visit nursing schools. They experience a simulation lab. Students recently went to a college and career fair where they met with Mercy Health and the Bethany Children’s Center.

“They actually see what jobs are out there,” VanOsdol said. “And they have to look up how much it costs to go to a college of their choice.”

VanOsdol and Meek are always in contact with local colleges. The program works with an advisory committee representing Oklahoma Christian University, Oklahoma State University, and the University of Central Oklahoma.

“We get feedback from them about what we can do here to prepare students for your program,” VanOsdol said.

Helping to navigate young students to move forward in their career is incredible, she added.

“My first group of students are now seniors in nursing school. I get to communicate with them. They are like, ‘Hey, I just did this test. You all taught me, and I had a lot easier time than other people did. I was more comfortable with clinicals because I did it with you,’” she said.

Students invite Meek and VanOsdol to their graduation ceremonies.

“I hope that we help the nursing shortage, so they don’t go out and say, ‘I hate this.’ They know all the options they can move to if they don’t like that particular area they are in,” VanOsdol explained. “And they also go in knowing this is going to be hard. It’s not a surprise to them.”

Investment Reaches $1 Million

Presbyterian Health Foundation investment in Oklahoma Children's OU Health Behavioral Health Center reaches $1 million. Additional $500,000 grant supports expanded pediatric care ahead of December opening and encourages community giving

Presbyterian Health Foundation has awarded an additional $500,000 Mission Impact grant to the Oklahoma Children's OU Health Behavioral Health Center, bringing its total investment in the project to $1 million.

The center is scheduled to open in December 2026, expanding access to specialized behavioral healthcare for children across Oklahoma.

Approved by the foundation's board in September, the grant builds on its initial $500,000 gift in 2023. The additional investment will help narrow the remaining fundraising gap, and the foundation is encouraging others to support the campaign.

The six-story, 172,775-square-foot center will be Oklahoma's first comprehensive pediatric behavioral health facility integrated with a children's hospital. It will add 72 inpatient beds for short-term stabilization and longer-term treatment, with space in every patient room for a parent to stay with their child.

"Children and families across Oklahoma need greater access to specialized behavioral healthcare," said Jonathan W. Curtright, MBA, MHA, president and CEO of OU Health, the University of Oklahoma's academic health system. "Presbyterian Health Foundation's continued investment is helping us meet that need and demonstrates the difference philanthropic partners can make in the care available to Oklahoma children."

The foundation views its role as part of a larger community commitment.

"We wanted to build on our earlier investment to help bring this important campaign closer to completion," said Rick McCune, president of Presbyterian Health Foundation. "Children's behavioral health is a shared responsibility, and this center represents an opportunity to strengthen care for families throughout Oklahoma. We hope our commitment encourages others to join us in supporting its future."

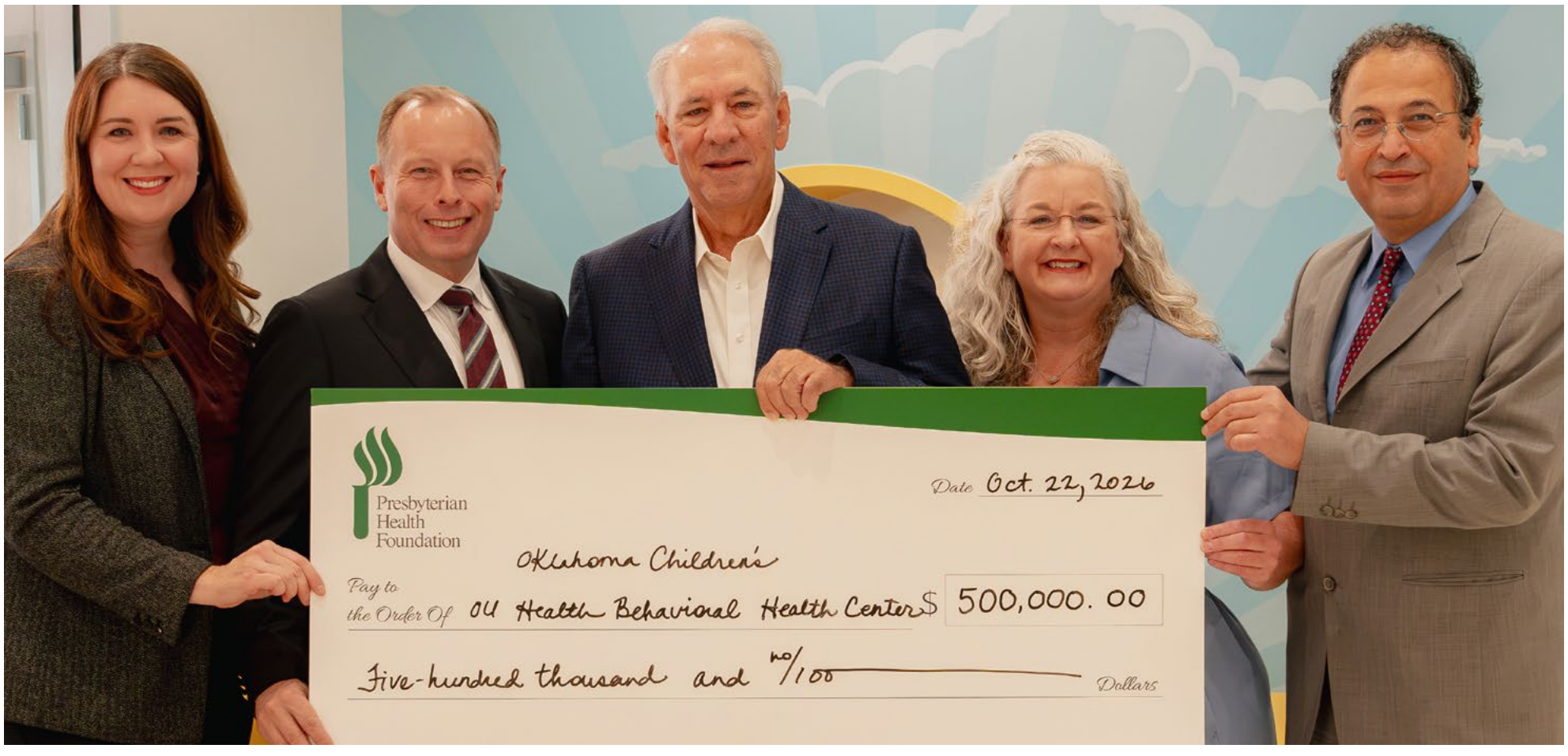
Services will include intensive outpatient and partial hospitalization programs, offering treatment options for children who need more support than routine outpatient appointments provide. A specialized neurodevelopmental unit, recreation and outdoor spaces, and family resources will support care tailored to children's needs.

"For a child with complex medical and behavioral health needs, access to integrated specialty care is essential," said Rasim Somer Diler, MD, MBA, DFAACAP, clinical service chief of psychiatry and behavioral health at OU Health and chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Oklahoma College of Medicine. "This state-of-the-art center will bring that care together in an environment designed for children, with families involved throughout treatment. Presbyterian Health Foundation is helping make that care available to more Oklahoma families."

In recognition of its contributions, the center's main lobby waiting area will bear Presbyterian Health Foundation's name.

Development of the center has been supported by the Oklahoma Legislature, University Hospitals Authority and Trust, and philanthropic partners. The campaign continues to accept donations to help fund programs, family resources and expanded pediatric behavioral health services across the state.

To learn more about the Oklahoma Children's OU Health Behavioral Health Center or to make a donation, visit **Giving.OUHealth.com/BHC**



Giving Hope Through the Gift of Life

By Vicki Jenkins, staff wrier

Shellie Gibson finds purpose in helping families through organ donation.

For families facing the unimaginable loss of a loved one, compassion and understanding can make an extraordinary difference. Shellie Gibson, RN, In-House Coordinator for LifeShare Network at OU Health Children's Hospital, has dedicated her nursing career to helping families navigate some of life's most difficult moments while offering hope through organ, eye and tissue donation. "I am passionate about giving others a second chance at life through organ and eye donation," Shellie said.

Originally from Alamogordo, New Mexico, Shellie never imagined her career would lead her into nursing. As a child, she thought she would follow in her mother's footsteps and become an accountant. "I always thought I was going to do some type of accounting or bookkeeping," she recalled. However, once she entered college, those plans quickly changed.

Shellie moved to Oklahoma to attend Phillips University in Enid, where she earned a degree in fine arts. She later received her bachelor's degree in nursing from Oklahoma City University and her master's degree in nursing from Maryville University in St. Louis, Missouri.

With 20 years of nursing experience, Shellie has spent 12 years working for LifeShare. She first joined the organization in 2009 as an organ recovery coordinator, a position requiring extensive training and responsibility. "When I started, we pretty much did everything," she explained. Her responsibilities included receiving referrals, speaking with families, obtaining authorization for donation, managing potential donors, assisting with organ recovery procedures and traveling for organ procurement.

Today, LifeShare has expanded considerably, employing more than 200 people, including clinical professionals, hospital representatives and administrative personnel.

As an In-House Coordinator, Shellie works directly at OU Health Children's Hospital, serving as a liaison between the hospital and LifeShare. Her responsibilities include facilitating organ donation, educating healthcare professionals and maintaining communication with physicians, nurses and families. "My position provides me an opportunity to build meaningful relationships with healthcare professionals," she said. "There is a lot of communication, networking and collaboration."

LifeShare serves hospitals throughout Oklahoma, coordinating the donation process when patients meet appropriate medical criteria. Depending on the circumstances, organ donation may follow a determination of brain death or occur after circulatory death.

Shellie explained that donation requires careful coordination, including medical testing, evaluating potential recipients and preparing for recovery procedures. The process may take approximately 36 to 72 hours, depending on the circumstances.

Although the medical responsibilities are extensive, Shellie believes the emotional support offered to families is equally important.

"You have a huge opportunity to connect with patients' families and advocate for their needs," she said. "You provide compassionate, empathetic support during some of the most difficult times of their lives."

She understands that families are often overwhelmed by unexpected tragedy. Her goal is to provide guidance while



Shellie Gibson, in-house coordinator at OU Children's Hospital, brings compassion, dedication and nursing experience to her role, helping make a difference in the lives of patients and families.

respecting their emotions and honoring their loved one's wishes. "We try to provide something good that can come out of the tragedy," she explained.

When asked about the most challenging aspect of her profession, Shellie answered thoughtfully. "The hardest part is actually sitting with someone in their grief," she said.

Every family responds differently to loss. Some express overwhelming sadness, while others experience anger, confusion or disbelief. Shellie recognizes that each reaction requires patience, understanding and compassion. "Everyone grieves differently," she said. "Many of our donor families have experienced some type of tragic event. It is a huge shock because they weren't expecting to lose their loved one."

Shellie considers empathy one of her greatest personal strengths. "I think my greatest strength is empathy and a genuine desire to help others," she said. "I want to provide support and guidance to families throughout the donation process."

She also emphasizes the importance of education, teamwork and effective communication. Her own professional journey has been encouraged by friends who inspired her to continue learning and expanding her knowledge.

Outside the hospital, Shellie enjoys gardening, planting flowers, swimming and spending time outdoors. Her artistic background continues to influence her interest in decorating and interior design.

She especially enjoys relaxing at home with her two pugs, Beau and Frank, whom she affectionately considers her children.

Although her work can be emotionally demanding, Shellie remains committed to making a meaningful difference.

For Shellie, nursing is more than a profession. It is an opportunity to offer comfort during heartbreak, honor the wishes of donors and help provide the precious gift of life."Sometimes we can help families find something meaningful through an incredibly difficult experience," she said.



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Touching Lives Through Compassion

By Vicki Jenkins, staff writer

Kate, a dedicated nurse at Saint Ann's Skilled Nursing and Therapy in Oklahoma City, has been a nurse for 14 years and has worked at Saint Ann's for two and a half years. Her career began in a skilled nursing facility, but the foundation for her calling was laid much earlier.

Growing up, Kate considered several professions. She thought about becoming a social worker, a teacher or a nurse. Although the careers were different, they had one important thing in common. "I wanted to be able to help people," she said.

A deeply personal experience eventually helped point her toward health care. Kate was a teenager when her father became seriously ill and spent his final two weeks in the hospital. During that time, one nurse made a lasting impression by caring not only for her father's medical needs, but also for the emotional needs of the entire family—offering guidance, answering questions and helping them understand what was happening. "She not only took care of him, but she took care of us," Kate recalled.

It was the kind of night a teenager never forgets. Kate Camp stood beside her father's hospital bed during his final two weeks of life, watching machines hum and nurses move quietly through the room. Most of the care was clinical and routine, but one nurse stood out for the way she cared for both patient and family, pausing to listen and acknowledge their presence during a painful time. "She not only took care of him, but she took care of us," Kate recalled.

That experience stayed with her long after she left the hospital. It reshaped how she understood care itself, as presence, compassion and connection in the middle of heartbreak. "I don't necessarily need to impact lives," Kate said. "I want to touch lives."

That nurse's compassion showed Kate that nursing could extend far beyond medications, treatments and routine bedside care. "She's the reason I got into medical care," Kate said.

Another experience reinforced her decision, but in a very different way. Kate worked as a certified nursing assistant for about six months. During that time, she encountered a nurse who believed some aspects of patient care were beneath her because of her title. Kate never forgot that attitude. "Between the two of them, the good and the bad, that's why I became a nurse," she said.

Those contrasting examples helped shape the kind of nurse Kate wanted to become, one who never loses sight of the person behind the medical needs.

Before nursing, Kate had already experienced a life of service and change. The daughter of an Air Force family, she moved frequently while growing up. She later served eight years in the U.S. Navy. Her duty stations included San Diego and Italy, and her final assignment brought her to Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma.

Eventually, Oklahoma became home. Kate returned to the state 13 years ago to be near family and later pursued her nursing education at Vernon College in Vernon, Texas.

Today, her work at Saint Ann's gives her the opportunity to form meaningful relationships with the residents she serves. Kate is the charge nurse on two halls, caring for residents whose needs can vary greatly from day to day.

For Kate, the work becomes especially meaningful when a resident is nearing the end of life. One of the rooms in her area is designed to provide additional privacy and space, allowing family members to remain close during those final days.

Kate recognizes the privilege and responsibility that comes with caring for someone at that stage of life. She may be one of the last nurses to care for the resident, but she is also caring for the people gathered around the bedside.

That perspective echoes the lesson she learned as a teenager watching a compassionate nurse care for her own family.



Kate Camp, LPN, brings compassion, dignity and a caring heart to residents at Saint Ann's Skilled Nursing and Therapy.

Fourteen years into her nursing career, Kate understands that families may not remember every detail of a loved one's care, but they often remember how a nurse made them feel. A reassuring word, an answered question or a small act of kindness can remain long after a nursing facility stay has ended. For Kate, those moments are not extras. They are part of nursing.

Her career has taken her from military service to nursing and from Texas to Oklahoma, but the purpose behind her work has remained remarkably simple: help people, care for them with dignity and be present when they need someone most.

Caring is rooted in experiences from her own life and carried into every room she enters. Kate does not measure nursing by recognition or by whether she makes a grand impact. She measures it in relationships, compassion and the opportunity to make a difficult day a little easier. She simply wants to touch lives.

NURSE TALK

Saint Ann's Skilled Nursing and Therapy

What is your special talent?



"I like teamwork and set my goals high."

Mahmud Musa, LPN



"My special talent is caring for people."

Vivian Njoku, RN



"My special talent is playing the piano and baking."

Faith Gillispie, LPN/ wound care

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SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital Named a Best Regional Hospital by U.S. News

Hospital recognized in nine clinical areas

SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital has been named among U.S. News & World Report's 2026-2027 Best Hospitals edition as Best Regional Hospital in Oklahoma City and second Best Regional Hospital in the state of Oklahoma. This is the highest distinction a hospital can earn as part of U.S. News' Best Hospitals Best Hospital Rankings.

Additionally, SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital was named a Best Regional Hospital for Community Access and earned a "High Performing" designation in the types of care evaluated by U.S. News in nine adult procedures and conditions. These included: heart attack; heart failure; heart arrhythmia; stroke; diabetes; spinal fusion surgery; hip replacement surgery; knee replacement surgery; and leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma. Fewer than half of the thousands of hospitals evaluated earned this designation. The publication reported that 89% of patients at SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital are willing to recommend this hospital to others.

"Being recognized as a Best Regional Hospital in Oklahoma City gives patients added confidence when choosing care for themselves and their families," said Rajesh Kumar, MD, chief of staff for SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital. "The distinction reflects the clinical excellence, expertise, and dedication of our teams and reinforces our commitment to delivering high-quality, evidence-based care across a broad range of specialties and services. We are proud of our physicians, nurses, and care teams whose dedication to patient-centered care makes this recognition possible."

U.S. News evaluated nearly 4,500 hospitals across 14 adult specialties and 23 procedures and conditions; less than half earned recognition in any of those 37 areas of care. To determine the Best Hospitals, U.S. News analyzed each hospital's performance based on objective measures such as risk-adjusted mortality rates, preventable complications and patient experience. The Best Hospitals Specialty rankings methodology and Procedures & Conditions ratings methodology measure patient outcomes using data from over 800 million records of patient care.

"Receiving this prestigious recognition from U.S. News & World Report is both an honor and a reflection of the extraordinary work happening across SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital every day," said Stacy Coleman, president of SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital. "Our caregivers are united by a shared commitment to serving others with compassion, excellence and dignity. We are grateful to our patients and communities for the confidence they place in us, and we remain dedicated to advancing our Mission of providing exceptional health care and revealing God's healing presence through every patient encounter."

"When patients face a major surgery or a chronic medical condition, having access to clear, quality data is vital," said U.S. News' Managing Editor and Chief of Health Analysis Ben Harder. "A High Performing rating means that SSM Health St. Anthony Hospital outperformed a national threshold, giving families a reliable starting point as they consult with their doctors to choose the best place for care."

To find an SSM Health St. Anthony hospital, emergency department or clinical location near you, go to **ssmhealth.com/locations**.



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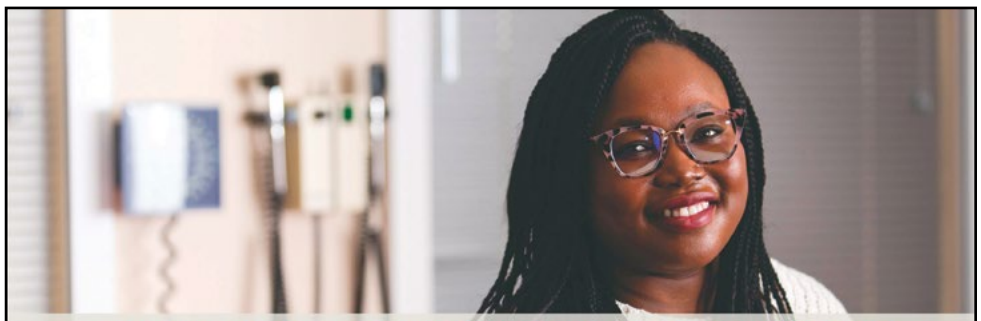
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Answers on page 15



Receives grant to study origins of infertility, congenital disorders



An Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist has received a two-year grant to explore one of biology's oldest mysteries: how chromosomes find the correct partner before an egg or sperm cell is formed.

With a $470,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health, OMRF's Roberto Pezza, Ph.D., will build on a new method he developed a way to observe chromosomes moving inside living cells in real time.

For more than a century, researchers have pieced together snapshots to understand this critical process. Pezza's new imaging process allows scientists to watch the entire process unfold as it happens.

Every person inherits one copy of each chromosome from their mother and one from their father. Before eggs and sperm are created, these matching chromosomes must recognize one another and join together before separating correctly. If that process goes wrong, it can lead to miscarriages or genetic conditions such as Down syndrome.

Using his new imaging system, Pezza's lab discovered a previously unknown way that chromosomes locate and join one another in male reproductive cells. The scientific journal Nature Communications recently published this discovery.

With the new grant, Pezza will now investigate the same process in female reproductive cells.

"Understanding exactly how healthy eggs and sperm are formed may help us develop better ways to predict or perhaps even prevent pregnancy loss," Pezza said.

An estimated 20% of all pregnancies end in miscarriage, with most occurring during the first trimester. Ther risk for miscarriage and having a baby born with Down syndrome or other congenital disorders increases with the age of the mother.

"With more people choosing to have children later in life, understanding the fundamental biology behind chromosome behavior is more important than ever," Pezza said.

Pezza's grant, No. R21HD118636-01A1, was awarded by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development, part of the NIH. His lab's recent discovery was supported by grant No. R01HD110990 from the same NIH institute and also by funding from the Presbyterian Health Foundation.

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Ovaries remain active after menopause, OMRF scientist says

For decades, women's health experts have operated under the assumption that ovaries become dormant after menopause. But recent studies suggest that's simply not true, an Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist says.

"Ovaries remain biologically active once their reproductive job is finished," said Michael Stout, Ph.D., whose lab studies female reproductive aging. "They may continue to affect a woman's health for the rest of her life."

Stout and a longtime collaborator, Francesca Duncan, Ph.D., made their case in an article published this month in the prestigious journal Science. The article stemmed from a workshop held by the National Institute on Aging.

"The postmenopausal ovary has been referred to as a wrinkled and shriveled husk," said Duncan, a professor at Northwestern University's medical school. "Women commonly spend a third of their lives after menopause, and it is becoming increasingly clear that the ovary does not become defunct. We need more research, and we must change the

(con't. page 13

language surrounding this organ to match modern scientific discoveries."

Today, postmenopausal years comprise more of most women's lives than ever before. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American women who reached menopause in 1925 could expect to live another 20-25 years. Over the past century, science and improved health care have added a decade to that expected lifespan.

The implications of recent ovarian research aren't clear, but Stout said discoveries increasingly link postmenopausal ovaries to inflammation, even in the absence of infection.

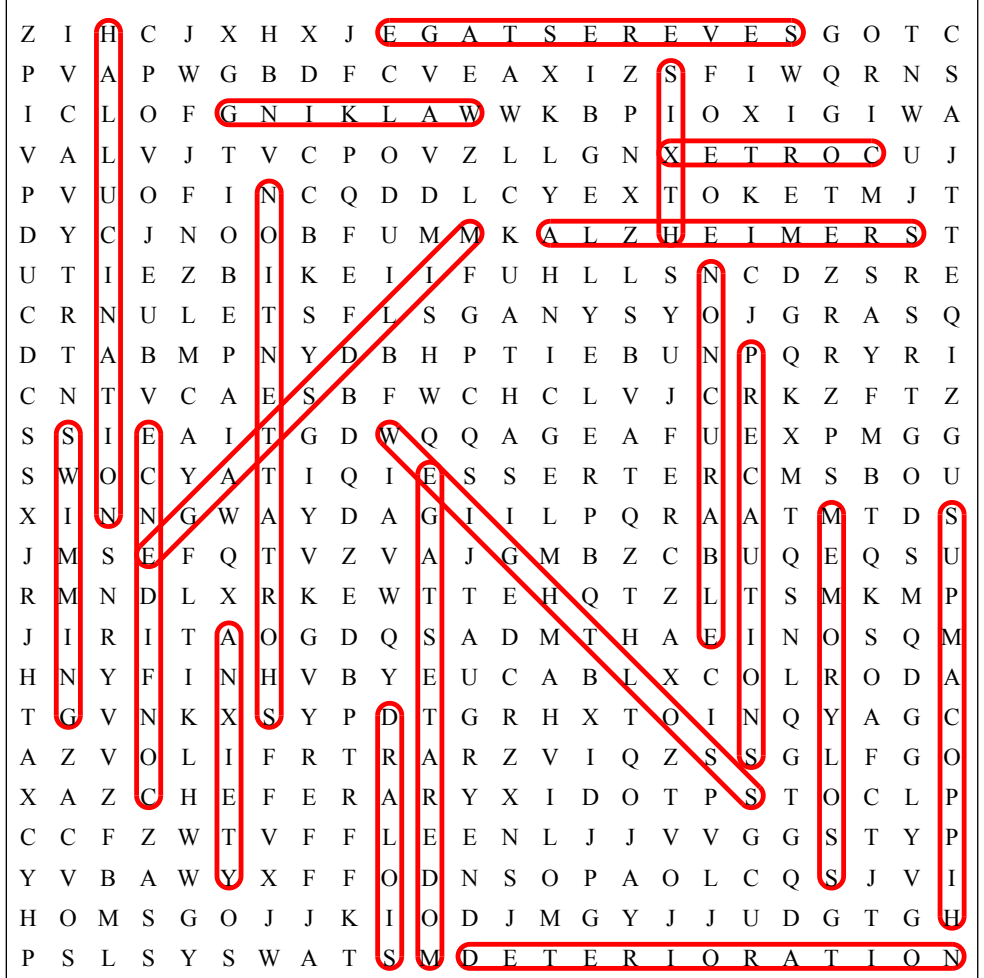
Therefore, he said, aging ovaries might become vehicles for inflammation to form and then travel to other parts of the body. This type of chronic, low-level inflammation has been linked to conditions including cardiovascular disease, neurodegeneration, muscle loss and metabolic disorders.

Stout has played a key role in developing scientists' understanding of ovarian aging, helping to identify specific types of immune cells that change as ovaries age.

Recent studies have led some scientists to ask whether women should remove their ovaries after menopause to improve overall health. "We know that removing ovaries before menopause increases the risk of chronic disease," Stout said, "but removing them after menopause has remained largely untested."

So, that question – like many others in the field – remains an open one, Stout said. "There 's so much more to learn about the postmenopausal ovary."

OKNT Puzzle Answers: Alzheimers Word Seach



OMRF to hold estate planning seminars in OKC, Tulsa

The Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation will host estate planning seminars this fall for attorneys, CPAs, certified financial planners and trust officers.

The half-day seminars are anticipated to provide four hours of continuing legal education through the Oklahoma Bar Association and four hours of continuing education through the American Banking Association and the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards. CPAs will self-report attendance.

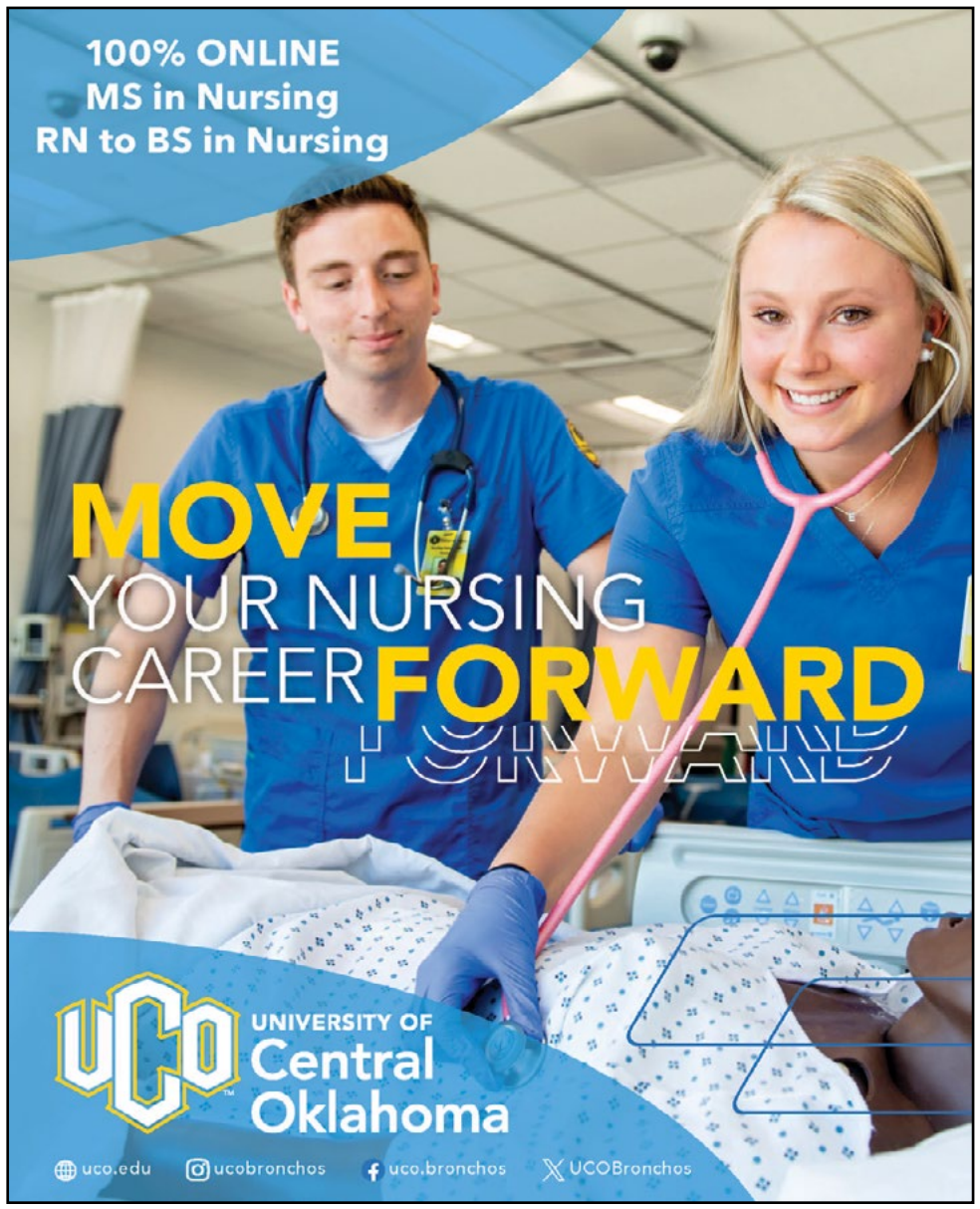
Seminar dates and locations are:

Oklahoma City – 1-5 p.m. Nov. 12, Oklahoma City Golf & Country Club, 7000 NW Grand Blvd.
Tulsa – 8 a.m. to noon Nov. 13, The Summit Club, 15 W 6th St.
This year's speaker is Christopher Hoyt, a law professor at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. Hoyt teaches courses in federal income taxation, charitable organizations and retirement plans.

Hoyt's OMRF seminars will include these topics:

"Inherited IRA Rules Made Simple"
"Solving Trust Issues: Inherited IRAs Payable to Trusts"
"Getting Hitched Without the Hitches: Estate Planning for Retirement Assets in first and second Marriages"
"Giving Gets a Twist: Changed Tax Incentives for Charitable Gifts in 2026"
Argent Trust Oklahoma is the presenting sponsor for this event. Other sponsors are HoganTaylor, Bank of Oklahoma Private Wealth, BancFirst, MidFirst Private Wealth, Rogers & Bell, Busey Bank, Hartzog Conger Cason, and Trust Company Oklahoma.

Registration is $125. For more information or to register, visit omrf.org/seminar or call 405-271-7400.



OKWU Announces 2027 Symposium

Focused on Transforming Healthcare Through Nursing Excellence.

The Oklahoma Wesleyan University (OKWU) Department of Nursing is pleased to announce its second annual Implementation Science Symposium, to be held on January 8, 2027, on the OKWU campus in Bartlesville.

Hosted in partnership with Hillcrest South, an ANCC-accredited provider, the symposium will bring together nurses, healthcare leaders, educators, and professionals from across the region for a day of learning, collaboration, and professional development providing. Attendees will earn six Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) hours.

This year's theme "Transforming Healthcare Through Nursing Excellence" highlights the far-reaching impact of nurses from the bedside to the boardroom. The symposium aims to strengthen the connection between research and practice while empowering nurses to lead meaningful change as clinicians, educators, advocates, researchers, policymakers, and executive leaders.

"At OKWU, we recognize the vital role nurses play across every level of healthcare" said Dr. Rosa Ketchum, Associate Dean of Nursing, "The Implementation Science Symposium was a way to give back to those who give so much to others."

The symposium will feature keynote speaker, Dr. Timothy L. Hudson, PhD, RN, FACHE, a nationally recognized nurse leader, healthcare executive, educator, author, and retired U.S. Army Colonel. Currently serving as Regional Vice President of Operations for Palmetto Infusions, Dr. Hudson distinguished career spans more than three decades in military medicine, federal healthcare, executive leadership, and higher education. He is also the author of Lead Like It Ends: Because It Will, a leadership book inspired by experiences gained throughout his career, including service on the White House Medical Unit during the events of September 11, 2001. Dr. Hudson's career journey began as bedside nurse and evolved into positions of significant organizational leadership, exemplifying the diverse opportunities and influences of the nursing profession. In addition to the keynote presentation, attendees will have the opportunity to participate in breakout sessions covering a variety of topics, including:

- Missing Signs, Missed Opportunities: Domestic Violence in Primary Care
- The Connection Between Employee Experience and Patient Outcomes
- Thinking Outside the Classroom: Expanding Nursing Pathways and Supporting Student Success
- Good Grief! Navigating Loss in the Caring Professions
- Practice Before Crisis: Transforming Workplace Violence Education Through Simulation
- Beyond the Bedside: Transforming Nursing Practice Through Virtual Care and AI-Assisted Patient Safety

Registration is now open. Early registration is encouraged.





Network with presenters during breakout and poster sessions

Individuals who register by December 1, 2026, will receive a symposium swag bag and lunch. Additional event information, registration details, and schedule can be found at **https://www.okwu.edu/nursing-symposium**

Invest in your professional growth while gaining insights from nationally recognized leaders and innovative colleagues. Whether you are a clinician, educator, administrator, or researcher, the 2027 Implementation Science Symposium offers tools and perspectives that can be immediately applied to practice. Join us on January 8 as we learn, collaborate, and advance the future of nursing together. Contact: For inquiries or additional information, please contact OKWU Department of Nursing, 918-335-6856, **schoolofnursing@okwu.edu**

OKWU is a Christ-centered institution located in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, dedicated to academic excellence and spiritual formation. With a commitment to developing servant leaders through a biblical worldview, OKWU offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate programs across disciplines including nursing,



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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2026 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

OSU Nursing Program Grads Addressing Health Care Shortages



Medical facilities throughout Oklahoma are getting a much-needed shot in the arm.

Oklahoma State University's four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing program is making great strides toward closing the gap in the state and national shortage of nursing professionals, producing a new generation of highly qualified nurses equipped to lead with confidence.

Housed within the College of Education and Human Sciences, the BSN program is the culmination of years of dedication and collaboration. From its early planning stages to celebrating the first graduating class, this initiative continues to grow with purpose and momentum.

Now in its third year, the program welcomed over 165 aspiring nurses to the Stillwater campus for 2025-26. Since its inception in the fall of 2023, the program has accepted over 300 students.

Director of nursing Dr. Alana Cluck says it has been incredibly rewarding to lead and witness the transformation of a vision into a thriving reality.

"I am immensely proud that the BSN program at OSU is built on a strong foundation of academic excellence, a supportive and compassionate learning environment, and a commitment to high expectations," Cluck said.

"We strive to empower our students with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to thrive in today's health care landscape. Our nursing faculty represents a cohesive, highly experienced, compassionate and exceptionally knowledgeable team of nurse educators whose collective expertise and dedication to student succes set them apart."

Substantial growth has been found in enrollment capacity, faculty size and facilities.

Eight new faculty members have joined the team for the 2025-26 academic year.

Backed by rigorous courses, hands-on clinicals and statewide support, program graduates are ready to make an impact from day one.

OSU BSN students have the unique experience of being embedde in campus life, like any other student.

Dr. Diane Cannon, assistant professor of nursing, believes this illustrates the well-rounded nature of the program.

"Yes, they're training to become highly competent, compassionate nurses in an intensive academic program. But they're also getting the full OSU experience - something many nursing students in other programs simply don't have," Cannon said.

"Our students are part of a vibrant, traditional college campus. The cheer on the Cowboys at Boone Pickens Stadium, join Greek life, attend concerts and cultural events, and make lifelong friendships in student organizations. They study hard but feel connected to a larger community that celebrates who they are and who they're becoming."

Just as important, they're surrounded by top-tier campus resources - from the LASSO Center and the Reboot Center, to mental health support, tutoring, academic coaching and career services. These wraparound supports ensure they don't just survive nursing school, they thrive.

"It's not just about becoming a nurse," Cannon said. "It's about growing into a well-rounded, resilient and connected leader. That's the Cowboy way - and it's a difference you can feel." For more information, visit www.go.okstate.edu or scan the QR CODE.

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(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2026 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

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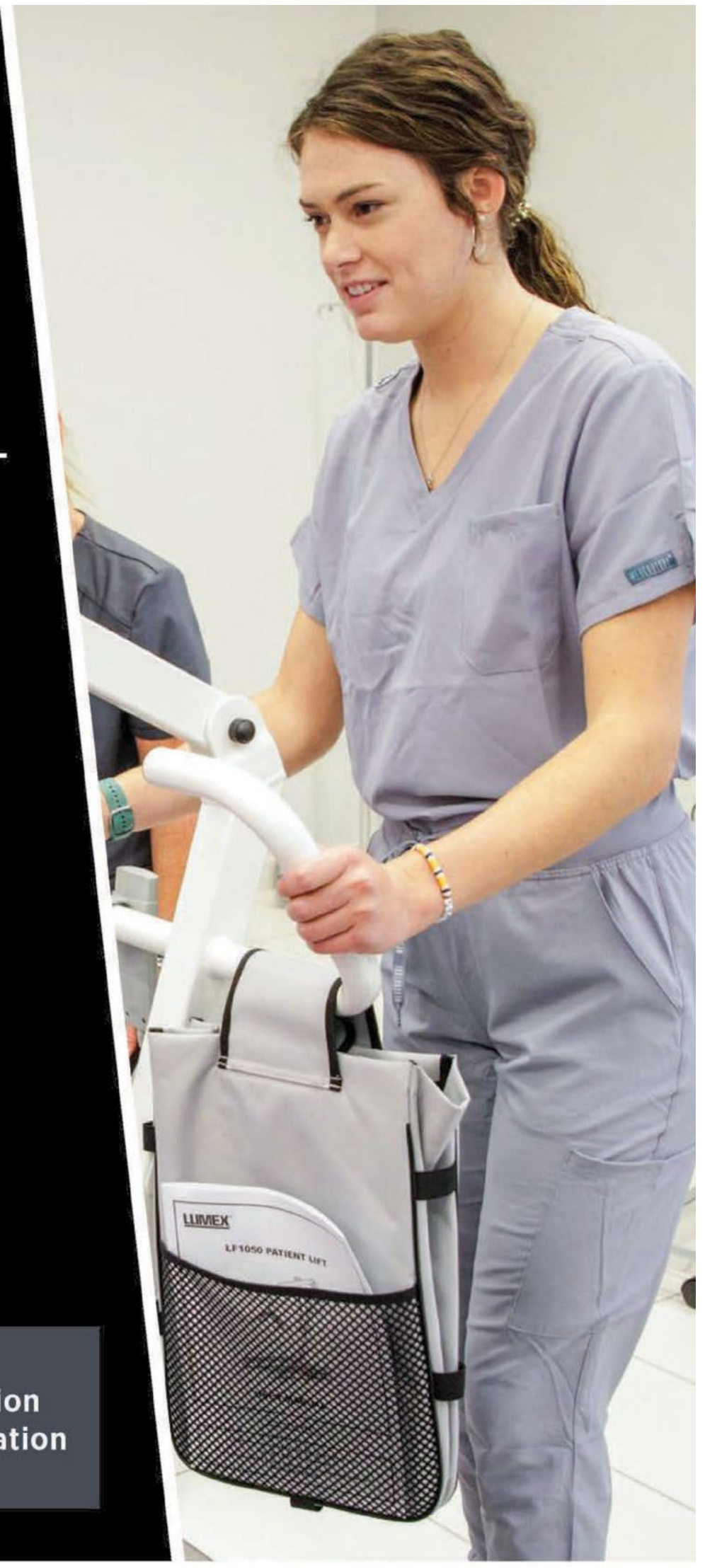
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INTEGRIS HEALTH Becomes Part of Risant Health

Transformative vision to improve health outcomes by expanding access to value-based care in Oklahoma

INTEGRIS Health and Risant Health have signed a definitive agreement for INTEGRIS Health to become part of Risant Health, pending regulatory approvals. Risant Health is a nonprofit, charitable organization created to bring together like-minded organizations, increase more affordable access to value-based care, and raise the bar for approaches that bring the best health outcomes.

"We're excited to have INTEGRIS Health become part of Risant Health and join us in changing healthcare in this country," said Greg A. Adams, chair and chief executive officer for Kaiser Permanente. "Together, Risant Health and its organizations are moving healthcare from siloed, episodic care to a value-based care approach with an increased focus on evidence-based care that achieves healthier outcomes for more people. INTEGRIS Health's expertise in complex clinical services, combined with its experiences in value-based care, offers an opportunity to continue improving health and affordability for the people of Oklahoma."

Headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, INTEGRIS Health would become the third health system to become part of Risant Health, joining Geisinger and Cone Health.

INTEGRIS Health is Oklahoma's largest not-for-profit health system and a recognized leader in clinical excellence, known for its high-quality services continuum spanning from primary care to advanced specialties. It has the state's largest physician network, a statewide network of 10 acute and 10 specialty hospitals, physician clinics, and urgent care. As one of the state's largest private employers, its 13,000 employees are guided by a single mission: partnering with people to live healthier lives.

"Becoming part of Risant Health is about delivering on our mission — partnering with people to live healthier lives — but faster," said Timothy Pehrson, chief executive officer for INTEGRIS Health.

"This will be done by adding resources, proven value-based care capabilities and investments in our hospitals and clinics, in growth, in technology, and in the clinical enablers that will help our physicians and nurses serve our communities better. These are investments and capabilities we couldn't make or build on our own, not at this scale and not this fast."

INTEGRIS Health will maintain its medical staff, name and brand, and its leadership team will remain in place. Its mission will not change, and it will continue to work with other health plans, provider organizations, and independent physicians.

Risant Health's success in advancing value-based care will offer INTEGRIS Health patients access to more robust health management technology, tools, and programs, while INTEGRIS Health employed and network physicians will gain access to integrated, value-based care solutions through Risant Health's value-based platform.

Risant Health, alongside Geisinger and Cone Health, has made demonstrable progress in accelerating the transformation of healthcare delivery in America.

Improved wait times

At Geisinger Community Medical Center (GCMC), patients are receiving care in the emergency department approximately 60% faster on average than before Care Without Delay (CWD) was implemented, reducing wait times and improving access to timely treatment.*

Getting patients to the right care

Value-Based Care Guides give primary care providers evidence-based clinical guidance to help patients get the care they need earlier and in the most appropriate setting, while making approximately 490 more specialist appointments available each month for patients with more complex needs.**

More time focused on patients

Ambient Clinical Assistant reduces the documentation burden for Cone Health clinicians, who are spending almost 14% less time on clinical notes per patient encounter, allowing more time to focus on patient care.***

Through joining Risant Health, Geisinger has realized benefits translating to nearly 1% of operating margin improvement.

Together, INTEGRIS Health, Risant Health, and its organizations will continue this momentum, bringing better health outcomes to even more Americans.

*Percent reduction in admission process time at GCMC through May 31, 2026

**Estimated specialty visits avoided at Geisinger per month as of June 30, 2026

***Percent reduction of time spent in notes per clinical encounter for Cone Health Medical Group providers as of June 30, 2026

About INTEGRIS Health

INTEGRIS Health is Oklahoma's largest not-for-profit health system and is known for innovation and unparalleled quality, offering advanced treatment options and specialties found nowhere else in the region.

INTEGRIS Health has a statewide network of hospitals, physician clinics, urgent care, rehabilitation, mental health and addiction recovery, home health and hospice services. As one of the state's largest private employers, its 13,000 caregivers are guided by a single mission: partnering with people to live healthier lives.

About Risant Health

Raising the bar for delivering equitable, high-quality patient outcomes.

Risant Health is a nonprofit organization created to expand and accelerate the adoption of value-based care in America by partnering with leading community-based health systems.

Risant Health brings together Kaiser Permanente's expertise in value-based, integrated care with that of like-minded, high-performing, nonprofit, community-based health systems operating in diverse business models to accelerate their strategies to deliver superior health outcomes at a lower total cost of care.

By deploying proven capabilities, sharing best practices, and preserving the strengths of local health systems, Risant Health seeks to improve quality, affordability, and the patient experience for more communities across the country.

(AS PUBLISHED IN THE 2026 EDUCATION GUIDE TO NURSING)

Metro Tech Meeting Needs of Today's Medical Industry



Located in the heart of Oklahoma City, Metro Tech offers a variety of full-time, short-term, and online programs designed to prepare students for successful careers in healthcare. With options for high school students, adult learners, and working professionals, Metro Tech is committed to supporting Oklahoma's healthcare workforce through hands-on, high-quality career training that meets the needs of today's medical industry.

In-district high school juniors and seniors can get a head start in nursing through Metro Tech's full-time Nursing Services program. Students graduate with certifications in Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Advanced Unlicensed Assistant (AUA), and Phlebotomy, setting them up for success after high school. Many further their training through Metro Tech's Next Step Scholarship, which provides a seamless transition into the adult Practical Nursing program.

For adults ready to pursue a career as a Licensed Practical Nurse, Metro Tech offers a full-time program with both day and evening options. This program combines classroom instruction with hands-on clinical experiences to prepare students for real-world healthcare environments.

Metro Tech also provides short-term healthcare courses for those looking to enter or advance in the field in as little as 12 weeks. Offerings include CNA, Certified Medication Aide, Phlebotomy Technician, and Medication Administration Technician.

For current healthcare professionals, Metro Tech offers online continuing education courses, allowing nurses to meet licensure requirements or expand their knowledge on a flexible schedule.

No matter where you are in your healthcare journey, Metro Tech provides the training and support to help you succeed. To learn more about Metro Tech's healthcare education programs, visit www.metrotech.edu.

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