Parker Hall: The School of Nursing’s New Home

In 2011 the SWOSU School of Nursing relocated to its new home on the first floor of Parker Hall. The School of Nursing was previously housed in the basement of Stewart Hall.

Two state of the art classrooms, two clinical lab areas, a computer lab, and a student lounge area make a great environment for students to learn.

This new touchscreen display showcases alumni classes in a slideshow presentation.
This display case features artifacts from nursing history. Winona Madison, RN, long-time program supporter, donated the items. Included in her donation was an original letter written by Florence Nightingale.

Reyna Mingura, a School of Nursing student, practices on a human model in one of the two clinical labs. Many of you may recognize Dr. Lu Reichmann as the lab instructor.

The student lounge contains two sitting areas where students can do homework and relax between classes.
While Michelle Evans was crowned Mrs. America on August 9, 2014, her ties to Oklahoma began long before that day. Michelle was born and raised in Oklahoma, and came to Southwestern Oklahoma State University to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a minor in Marketing. Evans was a member of the women’s soccer team at SWOSU and graduated from the School of Nursing with honors. After graduating from SWOSU, Evans moved to New York and married her now husband Dr. Heath Evans, an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon. They both attended junior high school at Union City but didn’t start dating until they became reacquainted in college. During the couple’s four years in New York, Michelle worked as a Neonatal Intensive Care/Mother-baby Registered Nurse and Dr. Evans completed his residency. The couple also welcomed their baby girl, Camden Faith Evans, into the world.

The young family recently relocated back to Oklahoma where Michelle is working as a neonatal intensive care nurse in Tulsa. Evans was also recently accepted into the Stony Brook University Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Masters program. She is, however, delaying her involvement in the program while she holds her title.

Michelle won the title of Mrs. Oklahoma in March of this year. She went on to compete for the title of Mrs. America in Tucson, Arizona in August. The Mrs. America competition includes interview, swimsuit, evening gown, and state costume portions. Evans won the costume contest and continued to the top six, where the judges determine the final three contestants based on each individual’s answer to a single question. The final three are then called back to answer one last question before the winner is crowned. Evans took home the title of Mrs. America and is competing in Mrs. World November 11-19 in Solomons Island, Maryland.

Congratulations Michelle! The SWOSU School of Nursing is so proud to call you one of its alumni!
Meet our Faculty

Mary Carrell, MS, RN

Where are you from?

I was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and have subsequently lived in Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. I’ve also lived in several countries, including Costa Rica, Mexico, Colombia, South America, Israel, and Gaza. In August, I moved to Weatherford from Indiana.

Where did you graduate and what are your credentials?

I graduated from Northeast Louisiana University (now University of Louisiana – Monroe) with a BS in Nursing & achieved a RN license in Louisiana. I earned a MS in Nursing (Clinical Nurse Specialist Option) from Pennsylvania State University.

What brought you to Southwestern Oklahoma State University?

My husband accepted a job in Clinton.

How long have you been involved in the nursing program at Southwestern?

I started working in September.

What are a few of your hobbies outside of teaching?

I enjoy listening to music, reading murder/mystery books, traveling and visiting new places.

What are your hopes for the future of this program?

My hopes are that we continue to graduate nurses who are ready to fulfill healthcare needs of Oklahomans, that we continue to stay in tune with healthcare changes and prepare nurses for those changes, that nursing graduates will be both technologically proficient and caring.

What do you feel like you bring to the program?

My experience of working in 6 states and living in several countries and cultures. Our society is multicultural. I am a bilingual speaker with a dual major in Spanish as well as nursing.
Meet our Faculty

Kathy Wolff, PhD, APRN, CNS

Where are you from?
I grew up in Ashland, WI, a town of 10,000 located on Lake Superior. It is 70-miles west of Duluth-Superior. The country side is beautiful up there but it is far too cold for me for most of the year!

Where did you graduate and what are your credentials?
I graduated as an Associate Degree Nurse from Fox Valley Technical Institute in Appleton, WI in 1978. I completed a BSN from SWOSU in 1993, an MS in Nursing from University of Oklahoma Health Science Center in 1996 as a Clinical Nurse Specialist, and a PhD in Nursing from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2011.


What brought you to Southwestern Oklahoma State University?
We actually took the scenic route, and eventually, ended up in Weatherford. We lived in Fresno, CA from 1981-1984 while my husband, Dr. Michael Wolff, completed a Master’s degree in Psychology, then moved to Tallahassee, FL while he worked on a PhD in Clinical Psychology at FSU. We moved to the St. Petersburg area in 1988 where he completed an internship. He applied for positions in various parts of the country and accepted the offer from SWOSU. The town seemed very quaint and friendly. It also seemed like a nice place to raise a family (no drive-bys), so we packed up and moved here in August of 1990.

How long have you been involved in the nursing program at Southwestern?
I have been teaching in the School of Nursing since August, 1996-18 years.

What are a few of your hobbies outside of teaching?
I love to go to auctions! One never really knows what one needs until you go to an auction!

Although my leisure time is limited, I spend a great deal of that time restoring very old houses filled with character in OKC.

What are your hopes for the future of this program?
I would continue to recruit high quality candidates to our traditional program to provide nursing services to the people of Oklahoma. I would also love to offer a Master’s program in Nursing at SWOSU as there is a number of nursing faculty currently working on their doctorates.

What do you feel like you bring to the program?
I believe my most valuable contribution to the nursing program is my passion for psychiatric-mental health nursing. Although students rarely pursue this specialty upon graduation, every nurse is a psychiatric nurse. All patients have psychosocial needs, so if I can teach the students the appropriate knowledge and skills, I am confident they will compassionately meet their patients’ psychosocial needs as they assist them through the most difficult times.
**Where are you from?**

I'm from Woodward. I have lived there, basically, my whole life.

**What are a few of your hobbies when you aren't focused on being the best possible student?**

Between school and working, I don’t really have much free time. When I do, I like to go to the wellness center and lift weights and hang out with my wife.

**When do you plan on graduating from SWOSU?**

I will graduate May of 2015.

**What are your plans after graduation?**

I plan on moving to the city and getting a job in an ICU. After working there for 2-3 years, I would like to further my education and get my Master’s either in nurse practitioner or nurse anesthetist.

**Are you currently working in the healthcare field and where?**

I have been a phlebotomist at the Weatherford Regional Hospital for the past 5 years.

**Describe some of the things you needed to make it into nursing school.**

Good study habits are a must. The nursing program has a strict policy, if your test grades or clinical paperwork aren’t at a 75% average at the end of the semester, you must retake that semester the next year. Also, a good GPA helps. Not everyone who applies will get a spot, so it’s very competitive.
Where are you from?

Oklahoma City, OK

What are a few of your hobbies when you aren’t focused on being the best possible student?

I enjoy spending time with my family, watching movies with friends and trying new places/things to eat!

When do you plan on graduating from SWOSU?

I will graduate May, 2015.

What are your plans after graduation?

I hope to work as a nurse in a Labor & Delivery unit somewhere! Not exactly sure where yet.

Are you currently working in the healthcare field and where?

Yes. I work at Mercy Hospital in OKC as an Advanced Nurse Technician

Describe some of the things you needed to make it into nursing school.

I had a great support system encouraging me throughout the process and keeping me focused. I believe my GPA and my TEAS test scores played the biggest role in being accepted in to the SWOSU School of Nursing. Before I started nursing school I was an Orientation Leader at SWOSU, which provided me with the opportunity to meet and get to know many of the faculty at the SON. This helped me during my application process significantly because there were several people I knew I could go to with questions and felt comfortable doing so.
Where are you from?
Cordell, Oklahoma

What are a few of your hobbies when you aren't focused on being the best possible student?
I enjoy running, visiting my family, and going to concerts with my friends.

When do you plan on graduating from SWOSU?
I plan to graduate in May of 2015.

What are your plans after graduation?
After graduation, I am hoping to find a job in the Oklahoma City area. I would like to find a nursing program with a long residency so that I can specialize and really know the field in which I am working, to be the best possible nurse.

Are you currently working in the healthcare field and where?
I am currently employed at Great Plains Regional in Elk City, OK. I work as a Monitor Tech.

Describe some of the things you needed to make it into nursing school.
To get into nursing school you really need to focus on your main courses such as Anatomy and Human Physiology. You also need to maintain a competitive GPA as they only accept 60 students and that is one of the things they look at. It will greatly benefit you to have a strong support system to keep you on track and help you to remember why you want to be a nurse and that it will all be worth it. Discipline and family support are two of the main things you will need during nursing school as well because it is very time consuming and can be emotionally draining. This would be very hard to get through without people helping to push you.
School of Nursing Challenges

Southwestern Oklahoma State University School of Nursing is presented with challenges regarding different areas such as: obtaining qualified applicants, maintaining adequate faculty members, recruiting new clinical sites, competing with BSN programs, and offering further education after BSN program completion.

- **OBTAINING QUALIFIED APPLICANTS**
  Students need to have a heart and desire for nursing as well as focus and determination to keep up with the rapid pace once accepted into the BSN program.

- **MAINTAINING ADEQUATE FACULTY MEMBERS**
  Weatherford’s rural location creates challenges to finding faculty members willing to relocate or commute to a smaller community and can create a lack of applicants.

- **RECRUITING NEW CLINICAL SITES**
  With increasing nursing school enrollments and decreasing in-patient census, clinical site placements are highly competitive with other programs. It can be a challenge to find adequate high quality clinical sites.

- **COMPETING WITH ONLINE BSN PROGRAMS**
  Our online RN to BSN program currently has approximately 400 students. We compete with other online programs for students. However, SWOSU School of Nursing has a great reputation in the state and beyond with satisfied program graduates marketing to friends and co-workers.

- **FURTHER EDUCATION AFTER BSN PROGRAM COMPLETION**
  Nursing students inquire about a masters’ program for nursing education, nursing informatics, and nursing administration which are all unavailable at SWOSU.

Would you like to Donate to the SWOSU School of Nursing?
Visit the link below to make your donation today!

alumni.swosu.edu/donations