



PANHANDLE GREAT 25 NURSES

AWARDS BANQUET
AND CELEBRATION

October 12, 2017



2017 PLANNING COMMITTEE

Marietta Branson, DHSc, MSN, RNC

Belinda Gibson, BSN, RN, MAM

Sharla Valdez, BSN, RN

Ruth Whitehead, MSN, RN

Carolyn Witherspoon, BSN, RN

Louise Osteen, MSN, RN

Kara Gaut, MSN, RN

Elizabeth Matos, PhD, RN, CNE

Candice Smith, CCRN, MSN

Angie Ross, MSN, RN

Stephanie Loya, CHES

Celia Tijernia, BA

Laura Reyher, MSN, RN

Patty Mathies, RNC

W E L C O M E

Tonight, we continue a tradition started in 2016 where nursing organizations across the Texas Panhandle have come together to celebrate the Panhandle Great 25 Nurses! With the support and work of many individuals and businesses, we are able to make tonight's celebration a continued reality. We have applauded the work, caring, and compassion of nurses across the Texas Panhandle and celebrated our successes through the years. You have nominated the best of the best, and tonight we are recognizing not only 25 great individuals, but also the Art and Science of Nursing as a profession. It is our mission to recognize Registered Nurses for their caring, compassionate service in the Texas Panhandle. All profits from donations and sponsorships is used to provide scholarships for RN students in our local nursing programs.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for celebrating with us tonight. And thank you for supporting the Panhandle Great 25 Nurses!

Valerie Kiper, DNP, MSN, RN, NEA-BC
Co-Chair-Panhandle Great 25 Nurses

Richard Pullen, EdD, MSN, RN, CMSRN,
Co-Chair-Panhandle Great 25 Nurses

OUR MISSION

To recognize Registered Nurses for their caring, compassionate service in the Texas Panhandle.

AGENDA

Thursday, October 12, 2017
Grand Ballroom, Civic Center, Amarillo, TX

5 – 6 p.m.

Networking Reception and Cash Bar

6 p.m.

Dinner

Invocation by Ruth Whitehead, TNA, District 2

6:30 p.m.

Welcome

Dr. Richard Pullen & Dr. Valerie Kiper, Co-Chairs,
Panhandle Great 25 Nurses

Special Address

Dr. Jeff Watson, President, TNA

6:40 – 7:30 p.m.

Presentation of the 2nd Annual Panhandle Great 25 Nurses Awards

Ali Allison, Mistress of Ceremonies

Recognition of Scholarship Recipients

Sharla Valdez, Chair of Great 25 Scholarship Committee

Texas Nurses Association Hall of Fame

Ruth Whitehead, TNA District 2

Special Recognition

Dr. Valerie Kiper, Co-Chair, Panhandle Great 25 Nurses

7:30 p.m.

Keynote Speaker

Kat Simmons – Humorist

8 p.m.

Closing Remarks

Dr. Richard Pullen and Dr. Valerie Kiper



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\$1000 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS:

Daniel Rackley (Pre-Licensure) | Amanda Hokanson (RN to BSN)

**WTAMU ALUMNI ON THEIR SELECTION
AS "PANHANDLE GREAT 25 NURSES"**

Louise Anderson – Amarillo VA

Belinda Gibson – BSA

Jesus (Chuey) Hernandez - BSA

Mary Holcomb – BSA

Kristina Hudson – BSA

Jana Kidd – Amarillo VA

Marilyn May – Amarillo VA

Melissa Miller – Amarillo VA

Lisa Miller – Amarillo VA

Jennifer Moore – NWTHS

Farley Naples – NWTHS

Becky O'Neal – NWTHS

Candace Smith – Hereford Regional Medical Center

Leanna Tijerina – Amarillo VA

Lisa Touma – BSA

Michelle Wells – NWTHS

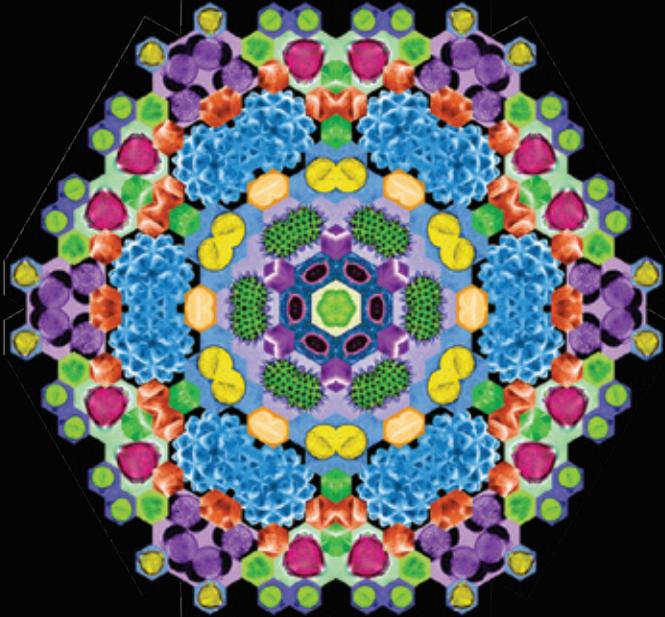
David Williams – BSA



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~Melinda Birtciel,
Nurse at Northwest

Panhandle Great 25 Nurse Honorees

We are proud to honor and recognize such great nurses for their contribution to the community, their patients, and for making Northwest a great place to work!

*Northwest is honored to celebrate and support
The Panhandle Great 25 Nurses.*

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NURSE

CAROLYN
WITHERSPOON



CAROLYN WITHERSPOON, BSN, RN

Upon graduating from West Texas State University with a Bachelor of Science Nursing degree in 1977, Carolyn Witherspoon began her nursing career in the rural community of Dimmitt, Texas. She held positions as a staff nurse, nursing supervisor and nursing director until 1998 in the rural settings. Her areas of nursing practice have been in women and children's health. As Mrs. Witherspoon puts it though, "I have a passion for rural communities and a strong will to improve health care for residents of the Texas Panhandle."

In March of 1998, she began employment with the Coalition of Health Services as Quality Assurance Director. In November of 2000, she was appointed as the Executive Director following 6 months as Interim and continues in that role today. The Coalition of Health Services, Inc. is a 501c3 not for profit organized in 1996. The Board consists of CEO's or their designees representing two tertiary for profit hospitals in Amarillo and 12 rural hospitals in the Texas Panhandle. The purpose of the Coalition is to enhance rural health through coordinated and collaborative efforts of the member rural health care facilities, their partners and to support ongoing rural health initiatives in individual communities. These entities serve over 450,000 people living over a sparsely populated 26,000 square miles. The Coalition contracts with Texas Department of State Health Services and the Texas Department of Health and Human Resources to administer funds to providers in 33 counties of Health Service Region 1.

Under Mrs. Witherspoon's leadership, the Coalition over the years has been involved with a plethora of grant funded projects to meet the health care needs of the Panhandle. (As a matter of fact, the list of grant funded projects is too numerous to list!) The Coalition partners with other community based organizations to provide information and education throughout the Panhandle region for a variety of health related services. Most recently, private grant funding and local foundations have contributed financial support to the development of Gateway to Health Careers. This is a collaborative project between AACAL, TTUHSC SimCentral, the Coalition and the Texas Panhandle Coalition for Nursing to promote health career training in rural high schools.

In 2013, the prestigious Outstanding Network Leader of the Year from the National Cooperative of Health Networks (NCHN) was awarded to Mrs. Witherspoon. NCHN is a membership organization comprised of health network leaders from throughout the nation of which, she serves as President.

Mrs. Witherspoon is an active participant on a number of local, regional and national advisory boards including Amarillo College School of Nursing, West Texas A&M University, Panhandle Behavioral Health Alliance, just to name a few. Her name is known well at the offices of state legislators, local elected officials, county judges, school superintendents, administrators, etc.

Kudos to Mrs. Witherspoon for a lifetime of championing nursing and impacting the wellbeing of the Texas Panhandle.

PANHANDLE GREAT 25 NURSES

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G25



Imagene Bradford

RN

I never would have dreamed of such a thing! I sure never considered it and don't know that I'm deserving of it.



Jesus Hernandez

RN

It's an honor and a privilege to be recognized for the hard work and dedication I've devoted to patient care. Receiving this award is encouraging and motivates me to continue to work hard.



Robert Brown

ADN, RN

This recognition is very important to me, because I was chosen by my nursing peers. To be recognized by so many esteemed nurses is a highlight in my career. I am ecstatic that I was chosen, however, my nursing duties have called me away from this prestigious event. I thank you all very much for this honor tonight.



Teresa Herrera

RN, BSN, MSN

I am honored and humbled for being recognized for such a prestigious award. Nursing is a profession that encourages human kindness, caring and compassion. The word "great" is to be shared with those I work with every day. This award confirms my commitment to making a difference.



Belinda Gibson

RN, BSN, MAM

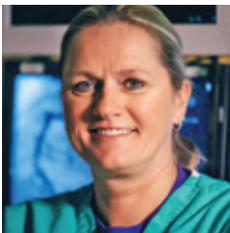
The heart, strength, compassion and core of health care is nursing and the Texas Panhandle is blessed with hundreds of talented and dedicated nurses who provide that care without ceasing. It is an honor to be recognized as one of the 25 great nurses in the Texas Panhandle in 2017.



Brent Hickmott

RN

I am honored and humbled to be included with this group of nurses. I am also very thankful for all of the teachers, leaders, and mentors I have learned from over the years. Generosity is the key to any success.



Michele Gorday

RN

God put great parents and great leaders in my life, and he gave me wisdom to listen and learn from them. This is an opportunity to thank all of those that have influenced me, and my parents for being the first to believe in me. I am grateful for this recognition.



Mary Holcomb

RN, MSN, CNS, CPAN

This honor gives credit to the professional nursing I offer to patients due to my: Army Nurse Corps Service, Masters Nursing Degree, Clinical Nurse Specialty, and Certified Post Anesthesia Nurse Credentials. A testament to the nursing skills and duties I provide with compassion and dignity to all in my care.



Kylie Griffitt

ADN, RN

I am honored and humbled to be recognized for simply doing what I love. Receiving this award confirms that I'm pursuing God's plan for my life. I am blessed to work with excellent nurses and leadership. I strive to make a positive impact on others and to be recognized for it is truly rewarding. Thank you!



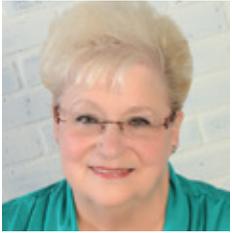
Kristina Hudson

RN, BSN

My fellow nurses and I help our Pediatric warriors and their families fight their battles as a team. The fact that one of these nurses I so very much look up to saw me with this honor makes my heart full and me without words to do it justice.

PANHANDLE GREAT 25 NURSES

G25



Jana Kidd

RN, MSN, FNP

The recognition means many things to me, as I am recognized by my peers as a role model, and leader in the nursing profession. I am honored to be identified as having made a significant contribution especially in the realm of service to our community and compassionate caregiver.



Marilyn May

RN, BSN

This recognition is such an honor for me. It confirms my desire to continue being an advocate for others. I want to do my part in preserving the legacy of such a fulfilling profession. Thank you to those who have influenced my career and positively impacted my life



Lisa Miller

RN, BSN

I am humbled to receive this recognition knowing the vast amount of talent, knowledge and dedication I've seen amongst the nurses in the Texas Panhandle. I am blessed to be a nurse and even more blessed to have learned from and worked with the best of the best in this region.



Melissa Miller

RN, MSN

I am so honored to have been nominated and selected as one of the 25 Panhandle Great Nurses. We have so many great nurse's here in the Texas Panhandle it would be hard to choose just 25. It is a privilege to be able to stand here with these other Great Nurses who have been selected.



Jennifer Moore

RN, BSN, CCRN

When I started my journey in nursing, I never dreamt that my life's work would be recognized. I am humbled that my dedication to my patients, co-workers, and community is being recognized. Knowing past recipients of this recognition only makes it that much more honorable; they are outstanding nurses.



Farley Naples

RN, BSN, CPN, ACM

Nursing is known as a noble and trustworthy profession in a dynamic healthcare setting. As a nurse, the respect of my peers is important to me. My grandmother was a nurse and it is validation to her as a role model.



Becky O'Neal

BSN, RN, CA-CP SANE, SANE A, SANE P

I am humbled and deeply honored to receive this award. In reality I could not do what I do without the support of my husband Ryan and my children Ansley, Addy and Brody! They are the wind beneath my wings!! I pray they all know how much they mean to me and that all their sacrifices to support me in this job have never gone unnoticed.



Louise Osteen

BSN, MSN, RN

It is a tremendous honor to be recognized by fellow nurses that so freely give of themselves. This recognition is a challenge to me in the final years of my career to dedicate myself to assuring a strong and healthy nursing community in my facility to support those that will come after me.



Crystal Ramos

RN

It's an honor to be recognized by fellow nurses. There aren't many people whose lives haven't been touched in some form or fashion by the care a nurse provides.

I am proud to be a part of a profession with such knowledge, respect, and dedication. I am proud to call myself a NURSE!



Glenda Sappington

BS, RN, EMT-B, CEN, TCRN, CPEN

I am very humbled to be chosen for this award. It is an honor and the recognition is also to my wonderful husband and family who have supported me along my nursing path. This honor validates the many mentors who guided me along my career. Thank you to all!

PANHANDLE GREAT 25 NURSES



Candice Smith

MSN, RN, CCRN

I believe that I firmly belong in this great field of nursing. There is nothing more rewarding than knowing that I have made a difference in someone else's life and I am so honored to stand beside my brothers and sisters that serve others in this great profession.



Leanna Tijerina

RN, MSN/MHA

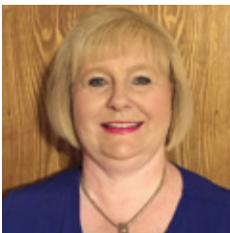
I am very honored and humbled to be nominated for the 25 Panhandle Great Nurses alongside many other great nurses. There are many great nurses named here tonight and I would not be where I am at today without great nursing educators and mentors that supported me throughout my career.



Lisa Touma

RN, MSN

I am truly honored and humbled to receive this award. Words can't even express what this means to me. I am truly blessed and thankful. This couldn't be possible without God, my family, and work colleagues. They have made me the nurse that I am today.



Michelle Wells

RNC

This recognition means the world to me. Receiving it reaffirms to me that I made the right career choice 31 years ago when I began the journey that brings me to where I am today. I am so blessed to receive an honor of this magnitude.



David Williams

RN, BSN

I am humbled and honored to receive this recognition. It is so nice to be rewarded for hard work and dedication. I wish my parents we still here to see this. Thank you.

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Candice Smith
CCRN, MSN, Chief Nursing Officer

for being named one of the
2017 Panhandle 25 Great Nurses.

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**Texas Panhandle
Coalition for Nursing**

TPCN is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit
coalition that was established in
2004. Its membership consists of
representatives from nursing academia
and area nursing employers. The
mission of the organization is to ensure
we have an adequate supply of nurses
to meet the demands of the Texas
Panhandle area.

If you are interested in becoming a
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and
**Panhandle Organization
of Nurse Executives**

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from tonight's event



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Texas Nurses Association District 2 in collaboration with
Panhandle Organization of Nurse Executives presents:



Kat Simmons

Comedienne/Keynote Speaker

Kat Simmons is a 27 year veteran of the international comedy club circuit. You may have seen her at The Improvs, Catch A Rising Star, the Comedy Channel, Fox's Comedy Tonight, or on Candid Camera. She has toured with The 3 Blonde Moms and won the eWomen Network's international talent contest in Dallas in 2009.

Kat has a unique talent for combining physical comedy with real life situations that everyone can relate to. She has been favorably compared to the masters of the craft, Lucille Ball, Carol Burnett and Red Skelton. She is one of a few physical comediennes working today. You may recognize yourself in some of her material as she honestly shares with the audience as though they were all long time friends. She delights in bringing to the stage the very things most people keep a secret. She speaks the truth, making it easier for the rest of us to be honest with ourselves.

"Comedy is not what I do, it's who I am."

Kat Simmons
775-721-8864
Author of *Kat's Daily Cups*
www.katsimmons.com
twitter.com/KatSimmonsComic

Music provided by Jennifer Akins, Pianist

Jennifer Akins has served as
Music Director and Rehearsal and Audition Pianist
for Amarillo Little Theatre for many years.

Jennifer is a graduate of WTAMU
with a degree in Music Education.

She also plays the piano at First Christian Church.

Having played the piano most of her life,
Jennifer enjoys playing all genres of music,
from Classical and jazz standards
to current pop and rock as well as musical theater.

Photos provided by Productions 918

To access photographs taken at the
Panhandle Great 25 Nurses Event,
please go to the gallery link:

<https://productions918.smugmug.com/Panhandle-Great-25-Nurses/>

The password for the gallery is: nurses2017

Once the photos are uploaded to the gallery, enter the link into your web browser and type the password to unlock the gallery. Photos can be downloaded via the "download all" button in the top right-hand corner of the screen or single photos can be downloaded by clicking each photo individually and selecting the download icon.

Prints can be easily ordered through the gallery by selecting individual photos and clicking the blue "BUY" button in the bottom right-hand corner. These photos will be professionally printed and shipped to the buyer's address within several days.

It will take 10 days from the day of the event to be uploaded to the gallery.

