

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Shelby Unruh  
Public Relations Coordinator  
(580) 242-2750, Ext. 226  
sunruh@autrytech.edu

## **Autry Graduate Named Therapist of the Quarter at OUMC Children's Hospital**

ENID, OKLA. — Autry Technology Center Respiratory Therapy graduate Kelsey Schoonmaker was recently named Therapist of the Quarter at OU Medical Center Children's Hospital.

Schoonmaker secured a position at OUMC Children's Hospital shortly before she completed the Respiratory Therapy program at Autry Technology Center in 2018. She chose the program because of the class size and affordability.

"I chose to enroll in Autry because of the close bond with the instructors and teachers," said Schoonmaker. "It is a smaller class size, so the instructors can provide a more one on one experience. And, of course, the price was a fraction of the cost of a university which was a huge selling point for me."

A career in respiratory care wasn't always the plan for Schoonmaker, but she is confident it was the right decision for her.

"This is a path I didn't plan to take, but I'm so glad that I did," said Schoonmaker. "I have a stable job and will always have job security. My whole class was able to get jobs lined up before we even graduated. If you are on the fence about what you want to do for a career, I suggest looking into respiratory care. Respiratory therapists are always needed in the hospital!"

Respiratory Care Program Director Dr. Deryl Guilliford knew Schoonmaker had a bright future in the industry during her time in the two-year program.

"Kelsey is a big success at Children's Hospital," said Dr. Gulliford. "Her Clinical Director Jim Grantz and I knew that she would be a success down there. She has a strong work ethic, excellent human skills, and a real passion for taking care of infants and kids. That combination has made her therapist of the quarter at Children's Hospital at the University of Oklahoma Medical Center. We are so proud of her!"

The Respiratory Care program opened in Enid in 2006 under the direction of Dr. Deryl Gulliford, RRT. Jim Grantz, BS, RRT, was soon added to the faculty as Director of Clinical Education. The program has just over 100 graduates to date, with a 96% pass rate on the board examinations conducted by the National Board for Respiratory Care. 94% of those graduates finding positions working in the field.

A unique partnership between Autry Technology Center and Northern Oklahoma College contributes to the program's success. Program Director Dr. Deryl Gulliford is employed by Northern Oklahoma College, the degree-granting partner in the program. Clinical Director Jim Grantz is employed by Autry Technology Center.

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The Respiratory Care program is 23 months in length and interested students can find an application online at [autrytech.edu](http://autrytech.edu) or contact Linda Belknap at 580-242-2750, Ext. 182.

Autry Technology Center has been a part of the Enid community since 1967 and is one of 29 CareerTech schools across Oklahoma. The center has more than 25 career programs and offers a wide variety of evening and weekend short-term courses and certifications for many diverse career fields. Autry serves nearly 16,000 individuals each year, including many area employees who receive training through the Business and Industry Services Department that works with over 500 local businesses each year.

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