

Children's Hospital Foundation

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NEWS RELEASE

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PREPPING A NEW GENERATION OF MEDICAL MIRACLE MAKERS *Medical Professionals Inspire High School Leaders to Pursue Medical Careers*

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA. (January 18, 2012) – In her 10 years as an Assistant Professor in Pediatric Hematology and Oncology at The Children's Hospital at OU Medical Center, Dr. Rene McNall-Knapp has witnessed an infinite amount of children bounce back from life-threatening illnesses. That's one reason why she jumped at the opportunity to inspire the Youth Leadership Exchange to pursue similar careers in healthcare. On January 17, Children's Hospital Foundation organized a health care career exploration event for these high school leaders to learn about the many professions involved in caring for Oklahoma's children.

The Youth Leadership Exchange is the high school-age programming arm of Leadership Oklahoma City, Inc. which includes students representing more than 20 high schools. On January 17, this group ranging from sophomores to seniors learned about the responsibilities of various health care professionals such as Dr. Terrence Stull, CHF Scientific Director and CMRI Patricia Price Browne Distinguished Chair; Dr. Mark Fergeson, CMRI Harris D. Riley Jr. Chair in Pediatric Education; Dr. David Fields, Diabetes and Endocrinology; Dr. Casey Hester, CMRI/PHF Endowed Chair in Pediatric Education; and Dr. Rene McNall-Knapp, Pediatric Hematology and Oncology.

"Pediatrics is the most rewarding and inspiring profession," said Dr. Hester. "In no other field can you so profoundly influence the mental, physical and social well-being of a child."

Some students left the experience with more knowledge of a desired medical profession while others identified a passion for a different health care field. It is the hope of Children's Hospital Foundation that this up-close perspective provided students with an understanding of how it takes a team of the most exceptional medical specialists to provide quality care for future generations in Oklahoma.

"You never know if this tour maybe planted a seed that will impact a youth today who will inspire the new discoveries of tomorrow," said Dr. Fields. "Because knowledge is power, understanding the different careers paths empowers kids. It's not just nurses and doctors, but researchers and advocates as well."

Children's Hospital Foundation helps to fund pediatric research, education and clinical care, ultimately supporting The Children's Hospital in serving every county in Oklahoma with more than 134,000 annual patient visits. All funds raised through Children's Hospital Foundation stay in Oklahoma so children will have access to exceptional pediatric specialists without having to leave the state. Despite dedicated and steady progress, there are still obstacles in the quest to combat pediatric illness and disability.

To donate to Children's Hospital Foundation, go to www.okchf.org or call 405.271.6050.

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ABOUT US: Children's Hospital Foundation, proud affiliate of Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, is a nonprofit 501c (3) organization in Oklahoma striving to improve the health of children. Since its inception in 1983, Children's Hospital Foundation, through its volunteer board and vast community support, has funded pediatric research and education programs including collaborative projects with the OU Department of Pediatrics, The Children's Hospital at OU Medical Center, OU Children's Physicians and

the University Hospitals Authority and Trust. For more information, contact Executive Director, Kathy McCracken at 405.650.1718 or visit our website: www.okchf.org.