

CAREERTECH *Cares For Caregivers*

By Emily Kilian



New CareerTech teachers in high schools and technology centers across Oklahoma donated care package items to the 86th Combat Support Hospital nurses stationed in Baghdad. This community service project was initiated at the state's CareerTech New Teachers Academy.

Now, students are modeling their teachers' efforts through HOSA's Fall Leadership Conference service project. HOSA's Fall Leadership Conference was held on Oct. 14 at Clarion Meridian Convention Center in Oklahoma City. HOSA has more than 4,400 members in 100 chapters across the state.



HOSA is the CareerTech student organization affiliated with Health Careers Education. The project involves collecting items for healthcare providers in the armed forces who are stationed in Iraq. HOSA chapter officers who attend the conference will be asked to bring donations for troops from their local chapters. The chapter that brings the most items by weight will be awarded \$50 to their chapter treasury.

"Our project allows potential healthcare workers across Oklahoma to get involved and lend a hand in the industry now," said Debbie Shumaker, state HOSA adviser. "Their donations will make a big difference to the nurses in Baghdad."



"We proposed the community service project as part of leadership development in teaching standards," said Lara Skaggs, state program administrator for Health Careers Education at the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. "The response was outstanding. Most came back with big bags full of donations."

More than 25 teachers attended the conference, held July 22-23 in Stillwater. The teachers were given a list of items needed, and the group filled 10 boxes.

The idea for the project came from Skaggs' summer experience with an ROTC leadership training course for educators in Fort Knox, Ky.

"While I was at Fort Knox, we listened to a nurse briefing from the 86th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad," Skaggs said. "They are there on an 18-month deployment, while most people stay six months."

Skaggs and others wanted to help the nurses in Baghdad, so they asked Col. Susan Raymond, who is in charge of support at the hospital, if there was anything they needed.

"Col. Raymond told us anything would be greatly appreciated," Skaggs said. "They suggested we send things like magazines, gum and packets to flavor water."

Having new teachers across the state donate items was a perfect fit, according to Skaggs. She said the teachers quickly embraced the project, donating everything from cookies and crackers to ink pens and disposable cameras.

The state CareerTech agency is also collecting items to send to troops stationed overseas.

"We believe community service should become a lifelong habit," Skaggs said. "From students to new teachers to state staff, everyone wants to help support those serving our nation."

Letter from SUSAN M. RAYMOND
COLONEL, Army Nurse Corps
Chief Nurse, 86th CSH
TF Baghdad, Iraq

Your boxes and contributions are so appreciated, especially as the holidays are approaching. Although we will be leaving at the end of December, this will be our second Christmas away from our families. We are counting the days until we are home again.

I've attached a few photos of our nurses here. A photo of me in combat gear, nurses preparing for a mass casualty in the ER, and sharing your treats!

You can continue to send donations to myself or to "Chief Nurse, 86th Combat Support Hospital" - then I will ensure they are distributed to our nurses. If you choose to continue your donations, or if your packages arrive late after we are already gone, they will be received by the Chief Nurse of the new hospital - the 10th Combat Support Hospital. I will let the incoming Chief Nurse know about you and your group - I know her very well and she will also highly appreciate your gifts.

Once again - a BIG thank you from all the nurses at Ibn Sina Hospital in Baghdad, Iraq!

Susan Raymond

