

Nurse of the Day: Lessons Learned
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You have that one friend, the one who gets you into things? That would be Mindy. You have that other friend, the one who wants to write an article about it? That would be Jennifer. We all need friends like this!

So, we trekked to the capital for Nurse of the Day. A minor adventure ensued, one that opened our eyes and taught us to *always* wear comfortable shoes.

Pro Tip #1: Know Before You Go. *Register through the ONA website, read all the info, choose your day, plan your stay.*

Plan for a good night's rest and a short, low stress drive in the morning to ensure pictures with legislators will be free of dark circles under the eyes. One thing we did not know is that legislators are at the capital all day Tuesdays and Wednesdays and ½ days Mondays & Thursdays. The Thursday before Spring Break was probably not the best time to be underfoot.

Pro Tip #2: Know Your Audience. *Find out who your legislators are.*

Do you know your senator and representatives? Even after checking the Oklahoma Legislature web site, one of us (we're not telling who) had the wrong name. There's nothing like making a good first impression! Unsurprisingly, the staff nurse was an excellent resource. After an introduction on the floor of the House and Senate, we met our legislators, had photo ops, and received certificates suitable for framing. A definite spirit of friendly competition exists between the House and Senate: the House's certificate is larger; however, the Senate provides better snacks. So, depending on your priorities...

Pro Tip #3: Know the Issues. *Watch your email for Legislative Alerts from ONA and find something you are passionate about to discuss with your legislator.*

While we reviewed the emailed Legislative Alerts from ONA, but failed to check the legislative calendar, so we were not knowledgeable about the bills discussed that day. This trip was a toe-in-the-water experience; we probably looked like a couple of wide-eyed kids (“Everyone is so dressed up!” “Look at those heels, must be uncomfortable!”). Next time, we will know the issues and speak with our legislators about them. Our representatives want to hear from us—we need to be sure we have something to say.

Pro Tip #4: Know You’re a Pro. *Dress appropriately and use your best manners. Remember, you are guest in the Legislature and represent the profession.*

Nurse of the Day is a wonderful opportunity to share educated and substantiated viewpoints in a professional manner. We were sure to smile and speak politely to our legislators, even when they held viewpoints vastly different from our own. When you go, remember: you are representing all of us, so we are counting on you to make a good impression. No pressure!

After locating the awesome Nurse of the Day parking space we realized we should have worn lab coats. Now, surely this information was provided to us, but in our excitement to witness the democratic process first-hand, we just overlooked it. So, now YOU know. Wear a white lab coat. And you don’t want those fancy dressed legislators to make you look bad, so dress well. You know what they say? When in Rome...

After your life-changing experience at the Capital, be sure to send a thank you note to your representatives. One of us may or may not have done this (again, no names!). However, learn from our mistakes! We are better together.

Pro Tip #5: Know your Self (Care). *Take time to have some fun and always wear comfortable shoes!*

When you choose fancy shoes to match your professional attire, make sure they are comfortable! You will be walking, so remember Maslow and care for your physiological foundation. Take some pictures—the capital building has beautiful marble, impressive art, and stunning architecture (even when under construction). Pick up a new purse at the gift shop. Go to Mutt’s Hot Dogs for lunch--it is excellent, if not healthy!

Pro Tip #6: Know how to try something new. *Just go! If we can do it, so can you!*

You Have Questions?	We Have Answers!
Where do I start?	http://www.oklahomanurses.org/Main-Menu-Category/Events/Nurse-of-the-Day Everything you need to know
Who are my legislators, anyway?	http://www.oklegislature.gov/FindMyLegislature.aspx Scroll down, our US congresspersons are listed first
Where could I stay the night?	Colcord Hotel, Aloft, Sheraton, Hampton Inn, & Ramada are all near downtown
What do I talk to them about?	Watch for emails from ONA (Legislative Alerts), check the calendars for the State House and Senate at http://www.oklegislature.gov/index.aspx , contact our lobbyist, Vicki White-Rankin.