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CAREER LADDER

Cynthia Gamache

- Title:** Administrative director of nursing services.
- Organization:** St. Joseph Medical Center, 1000 Carondelet Drive; (816) 942-4400.
- Education:** Gamache has a bachelor's degree from the University of Connecticut and a master's degree from MidAmerica Nazarene University.
- Focus:** Gamache's duties include overseeing inpatient units, perioperative services, the float pool, the admissions unit and house supervisors. She's busy talking with physicians, staff and patients' families to learn where the hospital could improve to enhance patient care and ensure a good work environment. The job allows Gamache to broaden her scope while focusing on providing innovative leadership for nursing as well as the organization overall.
- Thoughts:** "I get to help other people be successful, to realize their own dreams, reach their potential. It is something inherent in nursing when you care for patients, but the neat thing is to be able to do that as a nursing leader for the people you lead.

"Nurses are the front line providers. They bring a wealth of knowledge, talent, skill and expertise. We want to retain top talent and need to create an environment that allows them to use their gifts and keep them satisfied."

Greg Garcia

- Title:** Academic dean.
- Organization:** Grantham University, 7200 N.W. 86th St.; (800) 955-2527.
- Details:** Garcia moved to Kansas City to join Grantham University last September. As academic dean, he works with the provost and vice president of academics.

"As you can imagine, although we are an online school, it has been a challenging experience to be working with an institution that was practically physically destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and yet has pretty much succeeded in maintaining continuity in service to our students," Garcia said.

- Focus:** Garcia was recently elected board secretary of the Council of College and Military Educators, the professional association for the agencies of the U.S. Department of Defense that manage its Voluntary Education Program as well as the civilian colleges and universities that offer degree-granting higher education programs to members of the armed forces.

•**Thoughts:** “I especially enjoy working in continuing higher education and with those who are in the armed forces, as they truly are special folks. They work very hard in very demanding jobs and circumstances, and they are highly dedicated students.”

Brick Owens

•**Title:** Principal.

•**Organization:** Nearing Staats Prelogar & Jones AIA Chartered, 3515 W. 75th St., Prairie Village; (913) 831-1415.

•**Education:** Owens has a bachelor’s degree from Kansas State University.

•**Focus:** Owens brings a passion for landscape architecture and 30 years of working in the field to his new position, where he will develop and expand a design studio to include additional landscape architects. He also has extensive experience in land planning and community and regional planning.

•**Background:** Owens worked for eight years at HNTB. Before that, he was at Ochsner Hare & Hare for 14 years.

•**Details:** While architects see their drawings become tangible once the builders start work, landscape architects must wait about five years for their creation to become established. Owens works to find the right plants for the right spots and then anticipates what it will look like in a few years.

•**Thoughts:** “The most successful landscapes are ones that draw your attention and move you from the interior to the exterior, either emotionally or physically. I do a lot more than landscaping. I design places where people work, live and play. That complete environment is a passion of mine.”

| Margaret Schmitz Rizzo, special to *The Star* | Toni Cardarella, special to *the Star* | Margaret Schmitz Rizzo, special to *The Star*

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