



Our Blood Institute Appoints Dr. Jesse McCool as New Chief Operating Officer

Our Blood Institute, the primary provider for more than 5 million residents across Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas, has appointed Dr. Jesse McCool as COO.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, UNITED STATES, May 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Our Blood Institute, the nation's seventh-largest independent blood center and the primary provider for more than 5 million residents across Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas, has appointed Dr. Jesse McCool as its new Chief Operating Officer. McCool will succeed Kim van Antwerpen, who will retire in May after two decades with OBI, including the last five years as COO.

With a biopharmaceuticals development and manufacturing background spanning both private and public companies, from start-ups to international contract and development manufacturing organizations (CDMO), McCool brings nearly three decades of operations leadership experience in technical and C-suite roles. He co-founded antibody CDMO Wheeler Bio in 2020 and led the company from inception to the buildout and commissioning of a state-of-the-art GMP biomanufacturing facility. Throughout his career in pharma services at Lonza, Cytovance Biologics (CEO), Wheeler Bio (CEO) and Asahi Kasei, Dr. McCool has demonstrated a strong commitment to customers, employees and the community. He earned his Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of Massachusetts, received postdoctoral training at Dartmouth College and secured further specialist credentials from Technische Universiteit Delft in The Netherlands. He has been a fixture in the Oklahoma biotechnology sphere since he and his family moved to the Sooner State in 2013.

"I am honored to take the helm of the core operations at OBI and carry on the organization's longstanding promise to be the donor-to-patient lifeline in the communities we serve. I am excited to contribute to our continued success and to find ways to further drive our evolution to expand our services into the advanced cell therapy market," said McCool.

"I am excited to welcome Dr. McCool to our leadership team. His industry experience in operating and scaling manufacturing organizations will be very valuable as we address accelerating adaptation to respond to increasingly disrupted blood banking and transfusion services fields. In addition, with his biotech venture background, Jesse is ideally suited to support our goals of expanding internal R&D, developing advanced therapy solutions and connecting into the clinical research ecosystem," said Dr. John Armitage, Our Blood Institute president and CEO.

Kim van Antwerpen has been a cornerstone of OBI since joining as Vice President of Technical Operations in 2004. In 2019, she was appointed COO and has played a vital role in shaping the organization's culture of excellence, compliance and care. Her contributions include helping establish Testing Labs United, strengthening industry partnerships and guiding OBI through the unprecedented challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. As she steps into retirement, Kim leaves behind a remarkable legacy and a foundation of success and momentum that will carry OBI forward for years to come.

"Over the past two decades, I've had the privilege of watching Our Blood Institute evolve as the industry has changed, built on a foundation of integrity, innovation, and compassion. I'm incredibly proud of the teams we've built, the lives we've touched, and the resilience we've shown—especially through challenges like the pandemic. As I step into retirement, I do so with immense gratitude and full confidence in Jesse McCool's ability to carry forward our mission. His leadership will help ensure that OBI continues to evolve, lead, and serve with purpose for generations to come." said Kim van Antwerpen.

Anyone who is healthy and 16 years old* or older can give blood. Appointments to donate can be made online at obi.org or by calling 877-340-8777. Walk-ins are also welcome.

*16-year-olds must weigh at least 125 pounds and provide signed parental permission; 17-year-olds must weigh at least 125 pounds; 18+ year olds must weigh at least 110 pounds. Photo ID required.

Our Blood Institute is the seventh-largest independent blood center in the nation, with 17 donor centers in Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas. OBI is the nonprofit blood provider for patients at more than 272 hospitals, medical facilities and air ambulances across all three states.

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