



NEWS FROM ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY

8401 South Chambers Road

Parker, Colorado 80134

Office: 720-875-2853

Fax: 720-875-2897

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rocky Vista University Partners with Special Olympics Colorado and the Denver Osteopathic Foundation to Provide Sports Physicals for Athletes

[April 9, 2019 – Parker, CO] Rocky Vista University (RVU) students and faculty members provided free sports physicals for Special Olympics Colorado (SOCO) athletes on Saturday, March 30th. The event was made possible through a partnership between RVU, SOCO's Healthy Athletes® program, and the Denver Osteopathic Foundation's (DOF) Sports Physicals program.

According to SOCO, an average athlete with intellectual disabilities (ID) visits fifty different physicians until he or she can find a provider able to meet their needs. As such, the first goal of the event was to increase access to quality healthcare for the athletes, and to do so in a fun and comfortable environment. By participating in the partnership between SOCO and DOF's programs, RVU's students and faculty members also received free training on the specific care needs of individuals with ID, further increasing their knowledge of and compassion for these patients.

"We are grateful for the effort the Denver Osteopathic Foundation put into a student event with Special Olympics Colorado," said Jill Pitcher, DO, Associate Professor of Family Medicine. "This often requires not just good sports exam skills, but some understanding of the special circumstances these athletes have in their life and how it impacts their participation in sports. Paired first-year and second-year students performed exams on 12 athletes, and they all really enjoyed the interaction and experience they had."

The combined resources from SOCO's Healthy Athletes® program, DOF's Sports Physicals program, and RVU students and faculty members' expertise led to a fun event that greatly benefitted the athletes and their families. By receiving free sports physicals at RVU, athletes were cleared to participate in sports activities and competitions that are incredible rewarding for them, their families, and their community. In addition, the event raised awareness of the healthcare needs of individuals with ID and the importance of ongoing education and training for healthcare professionals and medical students.

"The athletes and their families were a joy to work with and provided a valuable experience for RVU students to perform their physicals under the supervision of a physician," said Emma Vaudreuil, OMS II. "The athletes came to us with unique medical needs and they helped teach medical students how to be flexible and perform a comprehensive exam. Events like these also

allow us to make connections with the community and share what it means to be an osteopathic physician,” said Gage Williamson, OMS II.

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About Rocky Vista University (RVU)

RVU is a health-sciences university based in Parker, Colorado and Ivins, Utah. RVU was founded in 2006 and opened its doors in August of 2008, enrolling students in its four-year program of study leading to the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degree in the University’s College of Osteopathic Medicine (RVUCOM). The Ivins Campus matriculated its first class in 2017. RVU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a commission of the North Central Association. RVUCOM is accredited by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA). RVU has also added a Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences (MSBS) degree program and a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) to its Colorado location. Rocky Vista University provides quality healthcare education while inspiring students to serve with compassion, integrity and excellence. For more information, visit www.rvu.edu.

About Special Olympics Colorado (SOCO)

The mission of Special Olympics Colorado is to provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendships with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community. Through the **Healthy Athletes® program**, Special Olympics Colorado athletes receive free screenings in a fun, welcoming environment that removes the anxiety and fear individuals with ID often experience when faced with a visit to the doctor or dentist. Our mission is to improve each athlete’s health and fitness, leading to enhanced sports experience and improved well-being. For more information, visit www.specialolympicsco.org.

About Denver Osteopathic Foundation (DOF)

The Denver Osteopathic Foundation is a non-profit organization (501)(c)(3) made up of osteopathic physicians and others interested in advancing medicine and promoting health. Foundation contributors share a common objective – to create futures in osteopathic medicine by raising and administering funds for osteopathic medical education scholarships and by representing the osteopathic profession through charitable work in the community. Contributors commit financially to the Foundation’s programs, which in turn, help osteopathic physicians give their patients the best care possible. Through contributions, donations and grant funding, the Denver Osteopathic Foundation conducts a variety of elementary school age education programs designed to promote health and prevent injury. For more information, visit www.dofound.org.