



## NEWS FROM ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Rocky Vista University Celebrates Commencement Ceremony

[May 29, 2019 – Parker, CO] Rocky Vista University (RVU) celebrated the graduation of 151 medical students from the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) and that of 23 students from the Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences (MSBS) program at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House in Denver, Colorado. The ceremony began with the Posting of the Colors, and was followed by the National Anthem, performed by Garrett Smith, OMS II.

RVU President and CEO Clinton E. Adams, DO, FACHE, welcomed the audience and congratulated the graduates on the completion of their respective programs. “Each of you should enjoy the overwhelming sense of pride and accomplishment as you now look to the next chapter of your professional development – residency training. It is in this chapter that you will complete your formal education and begin the journey as a caring and compassionate life-long learner.” The keynote address was then delivered by Scott Ellner, DO, Group President for Physician Alignment at Centura Health. “Our healthcare system does have its flaws, and it does dramatically impact the physicians of today. The healthcare delivery model fundamentally has to change, and you are the physicians of the future who will change it. You have been trained to be innovative, and [at Rocky Vista University] you have been trained to think differently.”

Thomas N. Told, DO, FACOFP, dist., Dean and Chief Academic Officer of RVUCOM, offered the traditional Dean’s Charge: “As your Dean, I charge you to consecrate your life to the service of humanity, and to always make the health of your patients your first consideration. I charge you to honor your teachers with great respect and gratitude, and to strive to hold all your fellow physicians in high esteem.” The graduates were then “hooded” - a rite of passage carried out by a student’s loved one or mentor that marks the student’s designation as a holder of a doctorate degree. Graduates also recited the Osteopathic Oath, led by RVU Alumni Association President Christopher Mutter, DO’14, in which they reaffirmed their commitment to the duties of the osteopathic medical profession. The oath also offers a moment of assertion and reflection on the values that have guided and will continue to guide the Class of 2019 as they transition into their residencies.

RVU has continued its trend of having 100% of its medical students place into their chosen residency programs. Approximately 24% of the Class of 2019 will go on to practice Family Medicine, 15% will practice Internal Medicine, while the remainder will go into various specialties.

During the Commencement Ceremony, RVU conducted a commissioning of 19 graduates from the Military Medicine Track, one of RVU’s specialty programs. The commissioning ceremony, which recognizes the ranking of the officers, was conducted by Major General Ronald J. Place, MD, Acting Assistant Director of the Health Care Administration and Director of the National Capital Region Medical Directorate and Transitional Intermediate Management Organization within the Defense Health Agency.

As a Military Friendly® school, RVU has among the highest number of students attending on a military scholarship of all civilian medical schools in the nation. Earlier in the year, RVU was awarded the Military Friendly® Top Ten School Gold Award for its commitment to military students and military medical education.

Francina Towne, PhD, Director of the MSBS program, presented the MSBS students their degrees during the ceremony. She congratulated the graduates on their accomplishments and their commitment to becoming healthcare professionals. “[This class] is a force of nature...they have explored the science and asked probing questions that displayed such a depth of knowledge, a desire to learn, and an innate curiosity. They have built on the traditions of the classes before them, reinforced this program’s legacy with their excellence, and set a new bar of distinction for their successors.”

During the ceremony, Jill Pitcher, DO, FACOFP, and Robert J. Sokol, MD, were recognized for their dedication to graduate medical education and for embodying the University’s mission and core values. Dr. Pitcher, Associate Professor of Family Medicine, was presented the Presidential Award of Excellence for her dedication to teaching the next generation of osteopathic physicians. In her time at RVU, she has enhanced the rigorous curriculum by ensuring more student interactions with standardized patients and worked closely with the Global Medicine Track to train students to care for rural and underserved communities. Dr. Sokol, retiring Board of Trustees Member, was also recognized with the Presidential Award of Excellence for guiding the University through significant transitions and displaying exceptional leadership as a member of the Board of Trustees.

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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](http://www.rvu.edu).

#### **About Osteopathic Medicine**

Doctors of Osteopathic Medicine (DOs) are fully licensed physicians who practice in all areas of medicine and have the same rights and privileges of a MD. DOs emphasize a whole-person approach to treatment and are trained to listen and partner with their patients. In addition to a traditional medical school curriculum, DOs receive training in the musculoskeletal system. By combining this knowledge with the latest advances in medical technology, DOs offer their patients the most comprehensive care available in medicine. Osteopathic medicine is one of the fastest growing segments in health-care with one in every four medical students in the nation enrolled in a college of osteopathic medicine.