Commencement
2022
Introduction

The Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and students of Des Moines University are pleased to celebrate with you this one hundred and twenty-second Commencement Ceremony. Our academic traditions date back to our founding in 1898 and to the awarding of degrees to the first class of eight in 1899. Throughout this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Class of 2022 demonstrated great resilience, tenacity and a deep commitment to pursuing careers of service. Des Moines University is incredibly proud of you. Amid the challenges we always will face, our world needs the highly competent, compassionate health professionals our graduates represent.

Continuing the tradition that began in 1899, the College of Osteopathic Medicine will award the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree. The College also will award the Master of Science in Anatomy and the Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences.

The College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery, which was inaugurated in 1981, will award the Doctor of Podiatric Medicine (D.P.M.) degree.

The College of Health Sciences, also inaugurated in 1981, will award degrees to graduates in four programs – Master of Public Health, Master of Health Care Administration, Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies and Doctor of Physical Therapy.

As we honor our graduates, Des Moines University recognizes that the support provided by families, friends and loved ones contributed immensely to their success. Please share our great pride in your graduate.

To members of the Class of 2022, Des Moines University extends its congratulations for your significant accomplishments and also our sincere best wishes that you will always enjoy the rewards that come to those who serve others. Go forward and do great things!
One-hundred and Twenty-Second Annual Commencement Ceremony

10:00 a.m., Friday, May 27, 2022

Presiding Official
Angela L. Walker Franklin, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Processional

Announcement of Purpose
James A. Grekin, D.O., MACOI
Class of 1962, College of Osteopathic Medicine
Grand Marshal; Emeritus Trustee, DMU Board of Trustees

Welcome
President Franklin

National Anthem
Rachel Woo
Class of 2022, College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery

Greetings
David Kapaska, D.O., M.B.A.
Class of 1986, College of Osteopathic Medicine
Chairman, DMU Board of Trustees
Introduction of Commencement Speaker

President Franklin

Commencement Address

Richard Pitts, D.O., Ph.D.
Class of 1973, College of Osteopathic Medicine
Chief Medical Officer, CalOptima

Presentation of the Classes

College of Health Sciences
Wallace Boeve, Ed.D., PA-C, Dean

College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery
Kevin Smith, D.P.M., Ph.D., FACFAS, Dean

College of Osteopathic Medicine
Steven J. Halm, D.O., FAAP, FACP, Dean

Conferring of Degrees

President Franklin

Presentation of the Graduates and Hooding of the Doctoral Candidates

College of Health Sciences
Master of Health Care Administration
Master of Public Health
Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

Physician Assistant Oath
Administered by Holland Taylor, MSPA, PA-C
Chair/Director, Physician Assistant Program

Doctor of Physical Therapy

Physical Therapy Oath
Administered by Traci Bush, D.P.T., OTR/L, D.H.S.
Chair/Director, Physical Therapy Program
College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery

Doctor of Podiatric Medicine

Podiatric Oath
Administered by Sean Grambart, D.P.M., FACFAS
Assistant Dean, College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery

College of Osteopathic Medicine

Master of Science in Anatomy
Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine

Osteopathic Oath
Administered by Steven J. Halm, D.O., FAAP, FACP
Dean, College of Osteopathic Medicine

Congratulations and Welcome
Jami S. Haberl, M.P.H.’03, M.H.A.’03
Des Moines University Alumni Association President

Charge to the Graduates
President Franklin

Official Closing
James A. Grekin, D.O., MACOI

Recessional
Officers of the Academic Procession

GRAND MARSHAL
James A. Grekin, D.O.’62, MACOI

James A. Grekin, D.O.’62, MACOI, served as president of his class at the College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery (COMS), now DMU, and was the 1962 Graduate with Distinction. He went on to serve his medical alma mater as chair, member and now an emeritus trustee of the DMU Board of Trustees, which he joined in 1983. An ardent DMU advocate, he was a key leader in the fundraising effort to move the institution from downtown Des Moines to its current Grand Avenue campus.

In 2010, Dr. Grekin chaired the search committee that selected Angela Walker Franklin, Ph.D., as the University’s 15th and current president.

A retired internist in the Detroit area, Dr. Grekin was a founding physician of Bi-County Community Hospital in Warren, MI, which was established to educate osteopathic students, interns and residents. He retired in 1997. Active in osteopathic associations and related practice affiliates at the national, state and local levels, he is a life member of the American Osteopathic Association and the Michigan Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons. Named an honorary Fellow and then Master Fellow of the American College of Osteopathic Internists, Dr. Grekin was selected as the 2013 DMU College of Osteopathic Medicine Alumnus of the Year.

MACE BEARER
Julie Meachen, Ph.D.

PLATFORM PARTY MARSHAL
Melinda Miller, M.Ed.

FACULTY MARSHAL
Rachel Reimer, Ph.D.

STUDENT MARSHALS
Maria Barnes, Ph.D.
Matthew Henry, Ph.D.
Muhammad Spocter, Ph.D.
Catherine Stevermer, M.P.T., GCS, Ph.D., D.P.T.

READERS
Jennifer Beaty, M.D., FACS, FASCRS
John Bennett, D.P.M., FACFAS
Craig Canby, Ph.D.
Rachel Reimer, Ph.D.
David Roberts, MSPAS, PA-C
Julie Ronnebaum, M.P.T., GCS, D.P.T., Ph.D.

FACULTY HOODERS
Michelle Brown, MSPT, D.P.T., CCVT
Sarah Clayton, Ph.D.
Ashley Dikis, D.P.M., FACFAS, DABPM
Sean Grambart, D.P.M., FACFAS
Steven Harder, D.O., FAAFP
Noreen O’Shea, D.O., FAAFP
Tracy Porter, D.P.T., Ed.D.
Wayne Wilson, Ph.D.
College of Health Sciences
CLASS OF 2022

Master of Health Care Administration

Robert William Berger  Casey Hiroaki Mann
Lucas A. Blumenschein † Katherine Claire Matteson
Cody Dean Campbell  Danielle McCoy
Meylyn C. Chery  Emra Mustedanagic
Tasha D. Collett  Blake D. Nettleton
Olivia Colombo † Morgan Lorraine Olson
Ryan Joseph Danielson  Nicholas A Pomernackas
Merima Dizdarevic  Morgan Lynn Prescott ★
Madalyn A. Dosch  Abby L Raus
Erin Nicole Dankert Eggum † Raquel Relph
Jake Dylan Etherton  Betsy Jo Robertson
Samantha Lee Faulkner  Daniel Grant Roemerman
Shantell Marie Fulford  Kennedy Ann Voss
Alexis James Garcia  Emily Wilcockson
Abigail Hage  Michayla Dawn Williams
Joshua Allen Hawley  Taylor E. Wycoff
Katie Lamoreux

† Graduate With Distinction
❖ Also receiving Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Degree
★ Also receiving Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree
College of Health Sciences

Class of 2022

Master of Public Health

Benjamin Ahlrichs
Hanna Barrett
Jennifer Bender
Lukas Brenden
Emily Corr
Catherine A. Dysert
Yaye Ngane Gueye
Quinn I. Hennessy-Snow
Brittany Lee Jones
Courtney Lynn Krall

Katherine Louise Maggi
Vinelys Divina Mendez
Selai Rahimi
Michael Gamboa Rivera
Angela M Russo Caceres
Blake T. Savage
Nichole Blair Shumway
Brian Vanderheyden†
Benjamin Williamson

† Graduate With Distinction
College of Health Sciences
CLASS OF 2022

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

Zoe Amanda Au  Katherine Ann Lottermoser
Miranda Ayers-Burkgren  Carlye Morgan Marshall
Adela Bajric  Victoria Meier
Shelby Kyan Bearheels  Claire Moore
Rachel Blagg  Jacob Nagel
Lauren E. Bobst  Shayna K Piersma
Morgan Shelby Bohn  Patrick Reed
Troy M. Bunch  Madison Macie Reynolds
Kylie L Bundt  Lorraine C Roge-Jones
Abigail Caracci †  Nicole Ruhland
India Chapman  Zaynab Said
Josh Davis  Emily Ann Schmid
Tyler De Young  Rachel Schmieding
Emily M. Delzer  Taylor Lee Scott
Morgan Lee Fraise  Kassidy Arin Smith
Rebecca Goertzen  Madeleine Ann Stenzel
Paige Gorst  Madison Stonewall
Zachary Michael Haynes  Lauren Nicole Swan
Brian Michael Jasper  Louie Chelle B. Villamor
Jordan David Johnson  Emily Deanne von Wald
Rebecca Mary Kennedy  Hailey Marie Wilcox
Sarah Alena Kennedy  Audra Lynn Wilson
Abigail J. Lange  Kellie Marie Wong

† Graduate With Distinction
Physician Assistant Oath

I pledge to perform the following duties with honesty and dedication:

I will hold as my primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare and dignity of all human beings.

I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence and justice.

I will recognize and promote the value of diversity.

I will treat equally all persons who seek my care.

I will hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.

I will assess my personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve my medical practice.

I will actively seek to expand my knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.

I will work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.

I will use my knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.

I will respect my professional relationship with the physician.

I will share and expand knowledge within the profession.

These duties are pledged with sincerity and upon my honor.
College of Health Sciences
Class of 2022

Doctor of Physical Therapy

Dani Anderson        Jennifer Lockhart
Michelle Atchison    Shawn Marion
Grace Austin         Anthony McBroom
Kallie Ann Baughman  Maria McDonough
Kylie Jo Behrens     Morgan Jonette Mills
Riley Berg           Elise Olsen
Lance Briard         Abigail Catherine Panek
Jamie L Busch        Madison Parks
Cole Daniel Crawford Joshua Peters
Mitchell Daly        Morgan Lynn Prescott
Allyson Davidson     Nathaniel S. Rosfjord
Spencer Derifield    Kristina Irene Salazar
Alyssa Lynne Dittmer Justus Keith Sherman
Austin Ellis         Hannah Shield
Madison Farren       Kyle Sickles
Dustin Michael Farris Mason Speer
Zach Hillman         Sean Studer
Kyra Alyssa Hoffman  Summer Rose Thibodeau
Danae LeAnn Holtman  Troy Tigges
Alex Hutchinson       Rebekah Trost
Taylor Austin Illg    Travis Tupper
Alyssa Lynn James    Kielyn Ryan Tutton
Marcus Paul Johnson   L Faith Vandehaar
Zachery Juaire       Mo Vongsa
Laura Sue Judd       Jackson Yoder
Brandon Robert Krogman

† Graduate With Distinction
♦ Also receiving Master of Health Care Administration Degree
The Physical Therapy Oath

As I practice the art of physical therapy, I will respect the rights and dignity of all individuals and will provide compassionate care.

I will place the welfare of my patients and clients above my own self-interest.

I will exercise sound judgment and comply with laws and regulations that govern physical therapy and protect the public from unethical, incompetent, and illegal acts.

I will maintain professional competence and promote high standards for physical therapy practice, education, and research.

I will address the health needs of society and strive to effect changes that benefit patients, clients, and the community.

Thus with this pledge, I freely accept the responsibilities that accompany the practice of physical therapy.
College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery

Class of 2022

Doctor of Podiatric Medicine

Amar Alkhafaji
LeAnn Elizabeth Alland
Danika Anderson
Drew Anderson
Emory Barnes
Mitchell Booth
Andrew Brown
Alexa Taylor Bykowski †
Ruben Joseph De La Cruz
Viet Dieu
Rafi Mohammed Fasihuddin
Andrew Ferguson
Taylor Mae Fillar
Taylor Fullmer
Lauren Giddens
Tobee Paige Gunter
Taylor Hale
Michaela K Heys
Nathaniel Holte
Chase Horrocks
John W. Jaeger
Sara Jane Judickas
Megan Kingston Bartos
Pavlo Kolyesnykov
Mary K Lanoue
Curtis Marker
Stephen Meyer
Devin Munk
Danielle Nack
Tiffany Phuong Ngo
Devon J Niewohner
Matthew William Novak
Sara Palmer
Connor Bird Reed
Kalli Ann Rush
Kathryn Leigh Schmidt
McKayla Rae Seymour
Shaan Singh
Anthony Smaldino
A.J. Solomon
Jasmine Juan Strozier
Joshua D. Treimer
Katelyn Marie Ugo
Lei Vilar
Sydney Warrick
Thane Wedum
Isaac Wilmot
Rachel Anne Woo

† Graduate With Distinction
The Podiatric Oath

Upon my honor, I declare that I will accept the moral and the legal responsibilities which become mine as a member of the podiatric medical profession.

Those talents with which I may have been endowed will be devoted to aid those who may choose to entrust themselves to my judgment and care.

I will abstain from all intentional harm and wrongdoing to my fellow citizens, especially from abusing the soul or the body of those who entrust themselves to my professional care.

In all good faith, I will support my profession and do what I may to advance its best interests, even at the sacrifice of my personal advantages.

In serving my patients, I will administer to their needs in a professional manner to the best of my ability.

In all instances, I will do that which will reflect credit and honor on this my chosen profession.
College of Osteopathic Medicine
CLASS OF 2022

Master of Science in Anatomy

Tessneem Abdallah  Seth M. Light
Naeema Abdulrazak  Rebecca Manzo
Becca Amick †  Molly O’Brien
Megan Mae Beveridge  Elizabeth Orr
Matthew Brooke  SaCora Ann Osbon
William Bui Tran  Nicholas K Pashina
Malia Faith Griffin  Hannah Elise Reussner
Tyler M. Johnson †  Andrea Kay Stone
LeAndre D. Kennedy  Abbie Voas

Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Aleyna Follett  Matthew Francis Kvech
Jeffery Foltz  Victoria Mathis
Mercedes Foster †  Patrick T. Walsh †
Adam Garman

† Graduate With Distinction
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine

Stephanie Bruno
Davis Chambers
Dylan Chad Chandiram
Henry K Chang
Wyatt Chicoine
Ankit Chopra
Cory Allen Christensen
Cera E Cissna
Alexander Collins
Olivia Colombo
Alexis B. Cross
Molly S. Cunard
Fred Paul Davis IV
Sanam Desai
Sharyn Doden
Troy Dolmetsch
Danielle Dowell
John Dube
Taylor Duff
Ryan Patrik Edens
Lauren Edmond
Erin Nicole Dankert Eggum
Megan Mae Ellis
Erik Engelsjørd
Collin Thomas Erickson
Kalyn Noelle Erickson
Megan Euerle
Konner Feldhus
Bryce J. Fiebiger
Shannon Finner  Lakshmi Karuparthy
Kaitlyn Finneran ▼  Devesh Kaushik
Kristine Marie Fischer  Jayson Kemble
Michael Foster  Catherine Anne Khasho
Jaron Ken Fowers  Harrison T. Khong
Amy Fulcher  Melanie Jung Mee Kim
Teresa Fuller  Yechan (YC) Kim
Calvin Fung  Caleb Kimm
Charles Gaccione  Bethany King
Jacob Garner  William Emmett Kivlin
Nate Garner  Christian Lynn Kladstrup
Tyler Gloe  Richard Kline
Daffney Tan Gomendoza  Derek Koon
Brady Goodwin  Abigail Koski
Michael C. Graves  Miranda Kramer
Jagmeet Grewal  Christian Krauthammer
Matthew Gunter  Hanna Lo Williams Larson
Sabhya Gupta  Ivan Lazar
Steven B Halvorson  Phillip J. Leff
Nicholas Hanson  Yaru Li
Dallin Harper  Brian Nathan Lifschutz
Marissa Haubrich  James Guanming Lo
Mark James Hedinger  Taylor Lee Lonjin
Joseph Hegedus  Erica Jasmann Loon
Zoe Marie Heis  Kirby Lundy
Alyssa M. Hernandez  Peter Ma
Augustin Douglas Hernandez  Matthew Joseph Mahoney
Emily Nicole Hernandez  Nisha Mandla
Madison Hesse  Pauldeep Singh Mann
Elizabeth Marie Hohl  Alyssa Manteufel
Nadia Homedi  Katherine A Marciniec
Suna Alev Horie  Macie Markello
Cody Hughes  Robert Marker
Caden Hullin  Savannah Mayer
Nicholas Huth  Charles A. Mayeux
Sara Lien Huynh ▼  Pooja Mayur
Mateen Jalili  Lauren C. McCormick
Austin B. James  Tyler McGinnis
Sefi Ahmed Jawadi  Kyle Meek
Alexander Johnson  David Merkley
Teju Kapa  Anna Lindsay Mesec
Ayeir D. Karnwie-Tuah ▼  Isaac Metzler
Jason Leibrandt Moore McKenna Kathryn Sexton
Alyssia Morley Ethan Seymour
Faris Najdawi Rida A. Shaikh
Jacob McLean Nelson Prateek Sharma
Dakota Nerland Pranita Shenoy
Alexander Nguyen Sivapraekh Sivaji
Andrew Nguyen Noah Skantz
Jonathan Nilles Cameron Slife
Eric M. Nordhus Luke Joseph Smith
Brittany O’Brien Kristina J Sousou
Lukas Ohnemus Watchapol Sowapark
Tanner Olinger Victoria Sheree St Martin
Jared Olson Zachary Stanek
Brenna Ori Sydney N Stanley
Morgan Ostrander Adam Streicher
Millie Pal Daniel Stroud
Christopher Parrill Hoang-Anh Tang
Renuka Patel Ruffin Tchakounte
Vitaliy Perepelitsa Trevor John Tersigni
Grethel Perez Tobey Thomas
Morgan Elizabeth Perrett Matt Todd *
Matthew Petersen Quentin Tompkins
Eliza Rochford Plummer Andrew Troxell
Richard Powell Manoja Uppugunduri
Tanner Scott Pulsipher Matthew Vaughn
Nezia Rahman Hannah Rose Vickland
Spencer Randazzo Michael Volk
Rebecca Rae Rasmussen John Wagoner
Zeyad Jandali Rifai Victoria Elizabeth Whitcomb
Naveen K. Rihal Brian Thomas Whitley
Kathryn Ritter Bailey Laurel Widstrom
Sean Rogers Emily A. Willmann
Andrew Root Lea Witzel
Sidniann Marie Rummans Erin Woeste
Tyler Alexander Rutherford Molly Wootten
Kierstyn Sandwell Betsy Wright
Jacqueline Sandwidi Howard T Yu
Hayley Amber Schuchard Daniel Zaiss
Derek Schumacher Stephanie M. Zobel

† Graduate With Distinction
♦ Also receiving Master of Health Care Administration Degree
▼ Fellow in Osteopathic Manual Medicine
THE OSTEOPATHIC OATH

I do hereby affirm my loyalty to the profession I am about to enter. I will be mindful always of my great responsibility to preserve the health and the life of my patients, to retain their respect both as a physician and a friend, who will guard their secrets with scrupulous honor and fidelity, to perform faithfully my professional duties, to employ only those recognized methods of treatment consistent with good judgment and with my skill and ability, keeping in mind always nature's laws and the body's inherent capacity for recovery.

I will be ever vigilant in aiding in the general welfare of the community, sustaining its laws and institutions, not engaging in those practices which will in any way bring shame or discredit upon myself or my profession. I will give no drugs for deadly purposes to any person, though it may be asked of me.

I will endeavor to work in accord with my colleagues in a spirit of progressive cooperation, and never by word or act cast imputation upon them or their rightful practices.

I will look with respect and esteem upon all those who have taught me my art. To my college, I will be loyal and strive always for its best interests and for the interests of the students who will come after me. I will be ever alert to further the application of basic biologic truths to the healing arts and to develop the principles of osteopathy which were first enunciated by Andrew Taylor Still.
George Clavenna, D.O., M.P.H., FAOCOOHNS, joined Des Moines University in 1986 as assistant professor of surgery and ophthalmology in the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM). He was promoted to associate professor in 1990 and professor in 1995. He served as interim discipline head of surgery in 1991 and chaired the ophthalmology department from 1996 to 2018, when he retired from the University. He also practiced in the University’s ophthalmology clinic until it closed that year. He continues to treat patients at Wolfe Eye Clinic in West Des Moines and to teach students as a guest lecturer.

Dr. Clavenna served on numerous COM and University committees and was president of the COM faculty for six terms and the clinical faculty organization three terms. A Fellow of the American Osteopathic Colleges of Ophthalmology, Otolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery, he has been active in his profession on local and national levels. He served as chair of ophthalmology at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines from 1998 to 2019 and as a member of its medical executive committee from 1999 to 2019.

A past member of the Prevent Blindness Iowa Board of Directors, he has volunteered for various causes, including 10 years with Vision Haiti. His many honors include recognition as the Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association 2009 Physician of the Year, the COM Faculty Service Award and several distinguished teaching awards.
Dr. Kathy Mercuris became an instructor of physical therapy in 1988, the year the University of Osteopathic Medicine and Health Sciences, now DMU, enrolled the first class in its new master’s-level physical therapy program. Between then and her retirement in 2020, she taught every student in the program.

Dr. Mercuris was promoted to assistant professor of physical therapy in 1991 and associate professor in 1997. She took on additional roles as needed by the program, the College of Health Sciences and the University, serving as acting director and then associate director of the physical therapy division from 2002 to 2005. She also twice served as associate dean of the College of Health Sciences in the years from 2002 to 2006. Past president of the DMU Faculty Organization, Dr. Mercuris was a member of University committees on topics including facilities, intellectual property and rank, promotion and tenure.

Dr. Mercuris was among those who shaped DMU’s physical therapy program as it transitioned from a master’s level degree to a three-year doctoral program. Throughout, she created and led opportunities for students such as global service trips, fitness screenings and balance assessments for community members and other educational/volunteer efforts. She advanced her own skills as well, earning certifications in tai chi for arthritis, fall prevention, rehabilitation and diabetes. She founded at DMU an annual week-long “camp” for individuals who experienced stroke, during which DMU students and physical therapists lead participants in intense therapy sessions to enhance gait, balance and strength.

Active in the American Physical Therapy Association, Dr. Mercuris has published and presented numerous articles, posters and event presentations on physical therapy topics.
Dr. Robert Tim Yoho joined DMU’s College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery (CPMS) in 1993, the year the college moved from 2150 Grand Avenue to the University’s main campus at its current location. The college’s success from that year onward largely paralleled his career through his retirement in 2021.

Dr. Yoho became associate dean of clinical affairs in CPMS in 1995, interim dean in 1997 and permanent dean in early 1998. He built on his lifelong career of advocating for the podiatric medical profession by joining and eventually chairing the Council of Podiatric Medicine; accepting an appointment by then-Iowa Governor Thomas Vilsack to the Iowa Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners; and later becoming chair of the board of directors of the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine. At DMU, Dr. Yoho worked to enhance curricula across academic programs by serving in 2002 as interim vice president of academic administration under former President Richard Ryan, D.Sc.

As CPMS dean, Dr. Yoho drove strategic quality improvement on an ongoing basis to ensure its rigorous curriculum prepares the nation’s top podiatric medical providers. CPMS students earn board scores and achieve first-time board exam pass rates that exceed those of their peers at other podiatric medical schools. This spring, members of the CPMS Class of 2022 continued the college’s 20-plus years of its graduates achieving a 100 percent residency placement rate.

Throughout his tenure at DMU, Dr. Yoho was a mentor to hundreds of CPMS students and graduates. He was part of a collaborative effort to create a podiatric residency at UnityPoint Health - Des Moines, and he worked to bring about a major gift from Bako Diagnostics that established the Bako Classroom and Clinical Skills Lab on campus. He also led efforts to establish a memorial scholarship in honor of his late administrative assistant, Becky Stills, that has supported numerous CPMS students in their goal of becoming exceptional podiatric physicians.
Dr. Richard T. Pitts is a 1973 graduate of the College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery, now DMU, and a physician and health care executive. His distinguished career spans clinical practice in emergency medicine, preventive medicine and occupational health as well as leadership in government, academic and nonprofit medical centers. He has extensive experience in facilitating change management, improving patient safety and clinical outcomes, building relationships at all levels of an organization, and managing financial resources.

Dr. Pitts is the chief medical officer for CalOptima, Orange County’s largest health insurer that works to provide 850,000 Californians with access to high-quality, compassionate health care services. He oversees CalOptima’s health care delivery system for patients, 9,400 contracted physicians and 41 hospitals and rehab centers.

Previously, Dr. Pitts was outpatient medical director for Prospect Medical Systems and vice president for clinically integrated networks and senior medical director for St. Joseph Heritage Healthcare. As interim hospital director (CEO) and medical director at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center in Colton, CA, he managed the executive team and coordinated delivery of medical services for its 450-bed teaching hospital. He also spent 17 years at Kaiser Permanente Orange County in positions including staff physician and assistant area medical director.

Dr. Pitts’ 21 years as an associate clinical professor and part-time attending physician at the University of California-Irvine Medical Center reflect his interest in training the next generation of physicians. His professional leadership positions include president of the California State Licensing Board and managing co-chair of the California Industrial Medical Council.

In addition to his DMU degree, Dr. Pitts holds a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Chapman University, a Ph.D. in management and decision sciences from Walden University and several certificates in entrepreneurship, management, finance and other areas.
Honors and Awards

Des Moines University is pleased to recognize graduates who have distinguished themselves during the course of their academic studies.

College of Health Sciences

MASTER OF HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

Graduate with Distinction ............... Erin Nicole Dankert Eggum
Dean’s Leadership Award ............... Nicholas A Pomernackas
Faculty Special Recognition Award ... Shantell Marie Fulford
Pamela A. Duffy Award ................. Raquel Relph
Scholarship Award ...................... Katherine Claire Matteson
Alpha Eta Honor Society ............. Cody Dean Campbell
                                Ryan Joseph Danielson
                                Erin Nicole Dankert Eggum
                                Nicholas A Pomernackas
                                Betsy Jo Robertson
                                Emily Wilcockson

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

Graduate with Distinction ............ Brian Vanderheyden
Dean’s Leadership Award ............. Jennifer Bender
Distinguished Achievement Award .... Courtney Lynn Krall
Faculty Special Recognition Award ... Benjamin Ahlrichs
Pamela A. Duffy Award ............... Brian Vanderheyden
Scholarship Award .................... Benjamin Williamson
Alpha Eta Honor Society ............ Courtney Lynn Krall
                                Brian Vanderheyden
                                Benjamin Williamson

Alpha Eta is the national scholastic honor society for the allied health professions. Its purpose is to promote and recognize scholarship, leadership, and contributions to the allied health professions. The members of Alpha Eta are wearing ceremonial green honor cords.
College of Health Sciences

Physician Assistant Program

Graduate with Distinction ............... Abigail Caracci

Dean’s Leadership Award ................. Carlye Morgan Marshall

Pi Alpha Honor Society ..................... Lauren E. Bobst
                                        Kylie L. Bundt
                                        Abigail Caracci
                                        Rebecca Mary Kennedy
                                        Paige Gorst
                                        Carlye Morgan Marshall
                                        Louie Chelle B. Villamor

Pi Alpha is the national physician assistant honor society organized for the promotion and recognition of significant academic achievement, leadership, research, community/professional service, and related activities. The society also encourages a high standard of character and conduct among both physician assistant students and graduates. The members of Pi Alpha are wearing ceremonial blue and green honor cords.

Physical Therapy Program

Graduate with Distinction .................. Nathaniel S. Rosfjord

Dean’s Leadership Award ................... Joshua Peters

Special Recognition Award .................. Abigail Catherine Panek

Research Awards ............................ Madison Farren
                                        Anthony McBroom

Service Awards .............................. Grace Austin
                                        L Faith Vandehaar

Clinical Education Award ................... Sean Studer

Sandra Teague Memorial Scholarship .......... Allyson Davidson

Alpha Eta Honor Society .................... Michelle Atchison
                                        Joshua Peters
                                        Nathaniel S. Rosfjord

Alpha Eta is the national scholastic honor society for the allied health professions. Its purpose is to promote and recognize scholarship, leadership, and contributions to the allied health professions. The members of Alpha Eta are wearing ceremonial green honor cords.
Graduate with Distinction ......................... Alexa Taylor Bykowski
Leadership Award ........................................ Devon J Niewohner
Dwayne S. Rivard, D.P.M., Surgery Award .... Alexa Taylor Bykowski
ABPM Graduate Merit Award .................. McKayla Rae Seymour
Basic Science Award ................................. Joshua D. Treimer
Timothy Holbrook Award for Excellence
in Clinical Performance ......................... Michaela K Heys
Service Award ........................................... Megan Kingston Bartos
Research Award ........................................... Taylor Hale
Pi Delta Members .......................... Alexa Taylor Bykowski
................................................ Rafi Mohammed Fasihuddin
................................................ Taylor Hale
................................................ Michaela K Heys
................................................ Nathaniel Holte
................................................ John W. Jaeger
................................................ Sara Jane Judickas
................................................ Mary K Lanoue
................................................ McKayla Rae Seymour
................................................ Joshua D. Treimer

Pi Delta is the national honor society for podiatric medicine, that was created
to recognize excellence in academics, service and research within the profession.
The members of Pi Delta are wearing ceremonial blue and silver honor cords.
Osteopathic Medicine Program

Graduate with Distinction .......................................................... Matt Todd

Academic Achievement Awards .............................................. Bryce J. Fiebiger
                           Nate Garner

AOF/AAOA Donna Jones Moritsugu
Memorial Award ................................................................. Caleb V. Stanley
                           spouse of Sydney N Stanley

Distinguished Educator Scholars ........................................... Stefanie Abbott
                                                              Collin Thomas Erickson

Excellence in Public Health Award ................................. John Dube

Garrett Reed Wheeler Award
in Pediatrics ........................................................................... Kalyn Noelle Erickson

Global Health Outreach Award ............................................ Alexis B. Cross

Howard A. Graney Award for Outstanding
Achievement in Surgery ....................................................... Matthew Petersen

Iowa Osteopathic Medical Association
Service/Achievement Award .................................................. Jacob McLean Nelson

Iowa Chapter of the American College of
Osteopathic Family Physicians Award .............................. Ankit Chopra

Joseph R. McNerney, D.O., Award for
Excellence in Internal Medicine ........................................... Rebecca Rae Rasmussen

Osteopathic Manual Medicine - Ram’s Head
Awards for the Fellowship Program ............................. Gabriel Berenbeim
                           Megan Mae Ellis
                           Kaitlyn Finneran
                           Isaac Metzler

Behavioral Medicine (Psychiatry)
Discipline Award ................................................................. Joseph Andrade

Family Medicine Discipline Award ................................. Jill Beach

Internal Medicine Discipline Award ................................. Adam Streicher
Obstetrics & Gynecology
Discipline Awards..............................................Shannon Finner
Alyssa M. Hernandez
Bailey Laurel Widstrom

Osteopathic Manual Medicine
Discipline Award ..............................................Spencer Randazzo

Pediatric Discipline Award .................................Tyler Alexander Rutherford

Surgery Discipline Award .................................Matt Todd

Gold honor cords signify graduates in the top ten percent of the class. Crimson and blue cords signify membership in Sigma Sigma Phi Honorary Service Fraternity. Gold Humanism Honor Society inductees are wearing a specially cast medallion.

Biomedical Sciences Program
Graduate with Distinction
(Primary Degree) ..............................................Mercedes Foster

Graduate with Distinction
(Dual Degree) ..............................................Patrick T. Walsh

Anatomy Program
Graduate with Distinction
(Primary Degree) ..............................................Tyler M. Johnson

Graduate with Distinction
(Dual Degree) ..............................................Becca Amick

Faculty Award
Clinical Adjunct Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching .................................Scott Anthony Mikesell, DO
History of the University

The history of Des Moines University reflects a continuing commitment to teach, to learn and to serve.

Founded in 1898 as the Dr. S. S. Still College of Osteopathy, the institution has several times undergone changes in name and location to accommodate expanding enrollment and programs of study.

Renamed Still College of Osteopathy in 1905, with a two-year program of instruction, the school continued to grow and prosper. During the 1940s the name was changed to Des Moines Still College of Osteopathy and Surgery, reflecting a broader curriculum of medical studies. During this period, the College Hospital and first clinic building were acquired. These facilities provided enhanced clinical training opportunities for students and additional health care settings through which to serve the community.

In 1958, the institution was renamed the College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery. The first satellite clinic was established in 1963. In 1971, the Dietz Diagnostic Center, a specialty clinic, began operation as a major outpatient facility.

In 1972, the College moved to its present 22-acre site on Grand Avenue. During the ensuing years, enrollment in the College more than doubled.

Recognizing the need for additional members on the health care team to complement physicians in the delivery of health care, the Board of Trustees in 1981 established the College of Podiatric Medicine and Surgery and the College of Health Sciences. These colleges, with the College of Osteopathic Medicine, form the medical and health sciences university.

In 1999, the University was renamed Des Moines University to reflect a strengthened commitment to the Des Moines community and the osteopathic philosophies upon which our traditions are built.

As part of its ongoing commitment to provide future health care professionals with the best education possible, in 2003 Des Moines University demolished the oldest buildings on campus to make way for the Student Education Center, which opened in 2005. The University has continued to enhance its technology and expand its research enterprise. In 2019, Des Moines University launched yet another bold initiative – to build the medical and health sciences university of the future on 88 acres in West Des Moines, Iowa. The move to the new site is anticipated to occur in 2023.
**REGALIA**

The academic attire worn at commencement and other ceremonial events is reminiscent of the distinctive dress associated with academic processions and convocations of the Middle Ages. Students in English and European universities wore woolen and fur garments to stay warm in unheated, drafty stone buildings. Most scholars of the time were clerics in holy orders, and wore cloaks with hoods to cover their tonsured heads. Today academic attire indicates by style and adornment the highest degree earned, the major field of study and the college or university attended by the wearer. Hence, graduates receiving doctoral degrees in medicine in today's ceremony wear a black robe with green chevrons and a green tassel. Similarly, the colors on the hood reflect the degree being conferred and the colors of the institution. Hoods for graduates in the osteopathic and podiatric colleges are green and have purple and white trim. Doctoral graduates in physical therapy wear hoods of teal velvet with purple and white trim. Graduates receiving the master of public health degree wear salmon-colored hoods, graduates receiving master of health care administration degree wear beige hoods, and graduates receiving the master of science degree in physician assistant studies wear green hoods. Graduates of our newest degree programs – master of science in anatomy and master of science in biomedical sciences – wear a hood of golden yellow. All are trimmed in the University’s colors of purple and white.

**MEDALLION**

The president’s medallion serves as a visible display of the authority vested in the office of the University president. As a complement to academic attire, the medallion is worn by the president at Commencement and at other official ceremonies of the University. The University’s medallion, designed in the year 2000 to celebrate the new millennium, was struck in pure silver and plated with 24-karat gold. The center features a two-dimensional seal bearing the lamp of learning, to signify education, and the caduceus, to signify medicine. A chain of office honors the University’s presidents, from its founder, S. S. Still, D.O., to its most recent president.

**MACE**

The presence of the mace is another symbol of a ceremonial event. As used in academic settings today, the mace is modeled after a medieval weapon carried by a bodyguard to protect a king or person of high status. Carried immediately in front of the president by a member of the faculty, the mace is symbolic of office and authority. As on the president’s medallion, the mace is adorned with the University seal.
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Charge to Graduates

I charge you to relentlessly pursue knowledge, seek wisdom, give service, and demand excellence throughout your lifetime.

I charge you to fulfill the promise of being health professionals committed first to service for our nation’s rural and underserved citizens, with a dedication to prevention, wellness, and the delivery of compassionate, patient-centered care.

I charge you to maintain respect for others and to cherish those who have been your greatest champions. Remember that professional integrity is essential to your success as a health care professional. So I charge you to also embrace the values of Honesty, Accountability, Collaboration, and Inclusiveness as the basic tenets of Integrity.

I charge you to be honorable and supportive alumni of Des Moines University. See this as an imperative to invest in the next generation of health care professionals.

I charge you to lead, to inspire, and to serve and be always assured of our enormous pride in you.

Congratulations, dream big and focus your knowledge, energy and passion on improving the quality of life for all people!

President Angela L. Walker Franklin, Ph.D.