

# UNIVERSITY OF PIKEVILLE

Kentucky College of Optometry  
Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine

## *Class of 2026 Commencement*

Saturday, May 2, 2026

# Order of Ceremony

Prelude.....	Phillip Westgate, DMA, <i>pianist</i> <i>Professor of Music</i>
* Academic Processional .....	Mark Saucedo-Izbrand, <i>piper</i> <i>Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine, Class of 2027</i>
* Presentation of Colors .....	Pikeville Police Department Honor Guard
Welcome .....	Burton J. Webb, Ph.D. <i>President, University of Pikeville</i>
Invocation.....	Carleigh R. Deitsch <i>Kentucky College of Optometry, Class of 2026</i>
Introductions.....	Lori Werth, Ph.D. <i>Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer, University of Pikeville</i>
Remarks and Information.....	President Webb
Introduction of the Deans .....	Dr. Werth
Dean's Remarks	
Renee Reeder, O.D., FAAO, FBCLA, FSLs, FIACLE, FNAP, DiplAAO <i>Dean, Kentucky College of Optometry</i> <i>Professor of Optometry</i>	Joe E. Kingery, D.O., MBA, FACOFP, FAAFP <i>Dean, Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine</i> <i>Professor, Department of Family Medicine</i>
Introduction of Commencement Speaker.....	President Webb
Commencement Address.....	Robert Layman, O.D. <i>Owner, Pinnacle Eye Group and Great Lakes Vision Care</i>
Certification of Degree Candidates .....	President Webb and Dr. Werth

Presentation of Degree Candidates

Donald J. Egan, O.D., FAAO, FNAP  
*Associate Dean for Academic Affairs*  
*Professor of Optometry, KYCO*

Malgorzata Simm, Ph.D., M.Sc.  
*Associate Dean of Biomedical Sciences*  
*Professor of Microbiology & Immunology, KYCOM*

Hooding

Cliff Caudill, O.D., FAAO, FNAP  
*Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, KYCO*  
*Associate Professor of Optometry*

Damian Cole, D.O.  
*Assistant Professor of Osteopathic*  
*Principles and Practices, KYCOM*

Jesson Martin, Ph.D.  
*Assistant Dean of Curriculum and Assessment, KYCO*  
*Professor of Optometry*

Maleshea Hopkins, D.O.  
*Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs, KYCOM*  
*Associate Professor of Family Medicine*

Administration of Oaths

Howell Findley, O.D.  
*President, Kentucky Optometric Association*

Laura E. Griffin, D.O., FAAO  
*Associate Dean for OPP Integration*  
*Professor and Chair, Department of OPP*

Presentation of Classes..... Dr. Reeder and Dr. Kingery

“My Old Kentucky Home” ..... Zoe Howard  
*Class of 2026, University of Pikeville*  
Dr. Westgate, *pianist*

Benediction ..... Alex Charles Graham, D.O.  
*Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine, Class of 2026*

\* Stage Party Recessional ..... Mark Saucedo-Izbrand, *piper*

*Thank you to KYCOM Sigma Sigma Phi members and KYCO Student Government Association  
for their assistance with today's ceremony.*

## *Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree Recipient*

*Robert Layman, O.D.*

Robert Layman, O.D., is a graduate of the Ohio State University College of Optometry.

Layman was elected to the American Optometric Association Board of Trustees in 2013 and elected president in 2021. With more than 35 years of continuous volunteer service, he has served as chair of numerous American Optometric Association (AOA) committees and task forces. Following his term as AOA President, he now serves as the chairman of the AOA Center for Independent Practice.

In 2014, Layman was named one of Ohio State Optometry's 100 Notable Alumni as part of the college's Centennial Celebration. He is the recipient of the 2006 American Optometric Association "Optometrist of the Year Award." The Ohio Optometric Association honored him with its Outstanding Senior Student Award in 1982, its Young Optometrist of the Year Award in 1987, and its Optometrist of the Year Award in 2005. He also received the TLC Dennis Kennedy, O.D. Excellence in Eye Care Award for 2005 and 2006.

Layman is an owner of Pinnacle Eye Group in Lambertville, Mich., and Great Lakes Vision Care in Monroe, Michigan. He is passionate about optometry volunteerism and mentoring young people who are developing an interest in optometry.



*Kentucky College  
of Optometry*

CLASS OF 2026

## *Optometric Oath*

With full deliberation I freely and solemnly pledge that:

I AFFIRM that the health of my patient will be my first consideration.

I WILL practice the art and science of optometry faithfully and conscientiously, and to the fullest scope of my competence.

I WILL uphold and honorably promote by example and action the highest standards, ethics and ideals of my chosen profession and the honor of the degree, Doctor of Optometry, which has been granted me.

I WILL provide professional care for those who seek my services, with concern, with compassion and with due regard for their human rights and dignity.

I WILL place the treatment of those who seek my care above personal gain and strive to see that none shall lack for proper care.

I WILL hold as privileged and inviolable all information entrusted to me in confidence by my patients.

I WILL advise my patients fully and honestly of all which may serve to restore, maintain or enhance their vision and general health.

I WILL strive continuously to broaden my knowledge and skills so that my patients may benefit from all new and efficacious means to enhance the care of human vision.

I WILL share information cordially and unselfishly with my fellow optometrists and other professionals for the benefit of patients and the advancement of human knowledge and welfare.

I WILL do my utmost to serve my community, my country and humankind as a citizen as well as an optometrist.

I HEREBY commit myself to be steadfast in the performance of this my solemn oath and obligation.

# 2026 Candidates for the Degree

## DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY

Joseph Elom Allotey  
*Elk Grove, California*

Henry Isaac Anderson  
*Green Bay, Wisconsin*

\* Zachary Michael Austin  
*Saint Petersburg, Pennsylvania*

Joel Yaw Baidoo  
*Arlington, Texas*

Lauren Emily Bailey  
*Concord, North Carolina*

Melissa Dawn Bartley  
*Jenkins, Kentucky*

Bryan Keith Beals  
*Owensboro, Kentucky*

Kacey Danielle Boatright  
*Coweta, Oklahoma*  
*Hooded by Ronald Clifton Boatright,*  
*O.D.*

Nicholas Keith Brashear  
*Pikeville, Kentucky*

Jacob Robert Brown  
*Jamestown, New York*

Fate Lyn Brunswick  
*Dublin, Ohio*

Hannah Lyn Budde  
*Buffalo, Minnesota*  
*Hooded by P. Steven Anderson, O.D.*

Danielle Jordan Burnosky  
*Pataskala, Ohio*

Shawn Robert Busche  
*Fairmont, Minnesota*

Connor Mason Chandler  
*Donalsonville, Georgia*

Deanna Nicole Dale  
*Grundy, Virginia*

\* Carleigh R. Deitsch  
*St. Henry, Ohio*

Jonathan David Droke  
*Kingsport, Tennessee*

Caleb Wayne Gross  
*Somerset, Kentucky*

Robert James Heavner  
*Knoxville, Maryland*

Alyssa McKenzie Holland  
*Hazard, Kentucky*

Amber Jordan Jackson  
*Clayton, North Carolina*

Jaret Austin James  
*Forest Hills, Kentucky*

Hailey Renee Jenkins  
*High Springs, Florida*

Colleen Louise Johnston  
*Chesterton, Indiana*

Bruin Thomas Jones  
*London, Kentucky*

Taylor Jade Keathley  
*Jenkins, Kentucky*

Kanika Khanna  
*Dix Hills, New York*

Dawson Adrian King  
*Wyandotte, Michigan*

# 2026 Candidates for the Degree

## DOCTOR OF OPTOMETRY

James Alexander LeMarr  
*Rose Hill, Virginia*

Devyn Hallie Nathan Mandala  
*Murphy, Texas*

Alyssa Mari-Anna Mastriano  
*Palm City, Florida*  
*Hooded by Tatiana Sophia Mastriano,*  
*O.D.*

Madison Taylor McBride  
*Cullman, Alabama*

Matthew Ream McCall  
*Crockett, Texas*  
*Hooded by Anne Carol Ream, O.D. and*  
*John Artie McCall, O.D.*

Jacob Edward McCarter  
*Knoxville, Tennessee*

Gabriel Alexander McCuiston  
*Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee*

William Henry McElroy  
*Tifton, Georgia*  
*Hooded by Ted Ashley McElroy, O.D.*

\* Norman Marcus Molina  
*San Diego, California*  
*Hooded by Karen Molina, O.D., FAAO*

James Tybirius Morrison  
*Johnson City, Tennessee*

Diana Thanh Nguyen  
*Edmond, Oklahoma*

Carolyn Ann Ogle  
*Pearisburg, Virginia*

Julia Renee Otman  
*Linden, Michigan*

Wesley Grant Qualls  
*Harrodsburg, Kentucky*

\* Bryan Ramirez  
*Apple Valley, California*

Lauren Jene Richey  
*Anadarko, Oklahoma*

\* Anna Elizabeth Rowe  
*Irvine, Kentucky*

\* Haleigh Morgan Shelton  
*Volant, Pennsylvania*

\* Kevin Michael Smith  
*Penn Yan, New York*

Patrick Benjamin Stone  
*Waynesville, Ohio*

Mitchel Ross Taylor  
*Laramie, Wyoming*

\* Austin Dewayne Orion Thomas  
*Milton, Florida*

\* Amra Turkes  
*Hartford, Wisconsin*

Savannah Leigh Upshaw  
*Mansfield, Georgia*

\* Joshua Charles Weller  
*Atwater, Illinois*

Kenaniah Alan Williamson  
*New Castle, Indiana*

# 2026 Kentucky College of Optometry Awards

## DEAN'S AWARD

**Haleigh Morgan Shelton**

*Presented to a graduating student who has shown outstanding leadership while maintaining high academic standards.*

## PRESIDENT'S AWARD

**Fate Lyn Brunswick**

*Presented to the Class of 2026 Valedictorian.*

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES' AWARD

**Amra Turkes**

*Presented to a graduating senior who earned the highest score on Part One of the National Boards.*

## EARL T. REEDER MEMORIAL AWARD

**Julia Renee Otman**

*Presented to a graduating student who is pursuing a residency and has a desire to join academia.*

## DR. MICHAEL AND KELLY BACIGALUPI FAMILY AWARD FOR ADVANCED THERAPEUTICS

**Matthew McCall**

*Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated special interest and skill in the area of advanced therapeutics and laser treatment by optometrists.*

## IBIRONKE FAMILY LEGACY & LEADERSHIP AWARD

**Deanna Nicole Dale**

*Instituted in 2020 by Josephine Ibronke, O.D., MPH, in honor of her parents, children and siblings.  
Presented to a graduate who consistently exemplifies discipline, empathy, dedication and humility in service to all patients.*

## DR. PIERRETTE DAYHAW-BARKER AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN THE AREA OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

**Fate Lyn Brunswick**

*Awarded to the KYCO graduating student with the highest GPA in the areas of medical science: anatomy, physiology, pathology, biochemistry and microbiology.*

## DR. RONALD MCCOY COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

**Bryan Ramirez**

*Presented to a graduating student who exemplifies Dr. Ronald McCoy's commitment to community service.*

## DR. CAITLYNN ESTEVEZ AND ESTEVEZ FAMILY AWARD

**Jonathan David Droke**

*Presented to a graduating student from one of the 21 U.S. coalfield states who has maintained good academic standing and demonstrates a positive attitude, willingness to learn and strong clinical professionalism. This award honors students who reflect the hard work and resilience that define coalfield communities.*

**BETA SIGMA KAPPA HIGHEST GRADE POINT AVERAGE AWARD**

**Carliegh R. Deitsch**

*Presented to the graduating Beta Sigma Kappa member with the highest GPA.  
Beta Sigma Kappa members will also receive cords for commencement.*

**AEG VISIONARY OPTOMETRY STUDENT AWARD**

**Lauren Jene Richey**

*Presented to a graduating student who has a clear vision for their career and contributions to the profession.*

**COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRISTS IN VISION DEVELOPMENT  
AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**

**Deanna Nicole Dale**

*Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated strong interest  
and clinical skills in the area of vision therapy.*

**DEDICATION TO TRANSFORMING THE DELIVERY OF EYE CARE AWARD**

**Savannah Leigh Upshaw**

*Presented to a student who demonstrates leadership both personally among their peers and professionally  
within the optometry field to transform the delivery of eye care for years to come  
and lead this profession to even greater heights. Sponsored by EyeCare Partners.*

**ESCHENBACH LOW VISION STUDENT AWARD**

**Amra Turkes**

*Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical application,  
exceptional aptitude and interest in the field of low vision.*

**CONTACT LENS CLINIC EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**Joel Baidoo**

*Presented to a graduating student for outstanding enthusiasm and achievement with gas permeable contact  
lenses in the clinical environment. Sponsored by the Gas Permeable Lens Institute.*

**GOOD-LITE PEDIATRIC VISION CARE AWARD**

**Lauren Jene Richey**

*Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated a high passion  
and excellence in pediatrics and binocular vision.*

**AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN CONTACT LENS PATIENT CARE**

**Shawn Busche**

*Presented to a graduating student who has outstanding clinical patient care as demonstrated by the student's  
overall knowledge in the contact lens field, and skillful, considerate and professional care of their contact lens  
patients. Student must be a member of the AAO. Sponsored by Johnson & Johnson*

**KENTUCKY OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION ADVOCACY AWARD**

**Bruin Thomas Jones**

*The KOA Advocacy Award is presented to the graduating KYCO student who is a vocal advocate for  
organized optometry, seeks to advance and protect the profession and demonstrates outstanding dedication  
and contribution to the profession, the Kentucky Optometric Association and the legislative process.*

## **METRO OPTICS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN CONTACT LENS PATIENT CARE**

**Joshua Charles Weller**

*Presented to an outstanding clinician who has demonstrated excellence in contact lens patient care, including the student's overall knowledge in the contact lens field and skillful, considerate and professional care of their contact lens patients.*

## **METRO OPTICS EXCELLENCE IN CONTACT LENS SKILLS**

**Hannah Lyn Budde**

*Presented to a graduating student who has shown exceptional skills in the fitting of gas permeable and specialty contact lenses.*

## **MYEYEDR. SENIOR EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**James Alexander Lemarr**

*Presented to a graduating student who has exemplified excellence in patient care, showcases exceptional leadership, and a commitment to being a life-long learner with a special focus on corporate practice.*

## **NATIONAL VISION SENIOR AWARD**

**Lauren Emily Bailey**

*Presented to the graduating student who has a grade point average of at least 3.25 and demonstrated service throughout their schooling through outreach programs offered by the school or through other avenues.*

## **PIONEER INTERNATIONAL SENIOR LEADERSHIP AWARD**

**Haleigh Morgan Shelton**

*Presented to a graduating student who has helped pave the way for not only their classmates and schoolmates, but also incoming students.*

## **PIONEER INTERNATIONAL SENIOR EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**Austin Dewayne Orion Thomas**

*Presented to a graduating student who has shown excellence in care, compassion and consideration for not only their patients, but also for the field of optometry.*

## **SOUTHERN COUNCIL OF OPTOMETRISTS CLINICAL EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**Gabriel Alexander McCuiston**

*Presented to a graduating student who has demonstrated outstanding clinical performance.*

## **OPTELEC EXCELLENCE IN LOW VISION AWARD**

**Anna Elizabeth Rowe**

*Presented to a graduating student who has excelled academically or has contributed to a university service, and has a special interest in low vision.*

## **VSP VISION PRIVATE PRACTICE AWARD**

**Carleigh R. Deitsch**

*Presented to a graduating student based on academic achievement, clinical and patient care and leadership qualities with a special focus on private practice.*



*Kentucky College of  
Osteopathic Medicine*

CLASS OF 2026

## *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 confidence and 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 by act cast imputations 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.

# 2026 Candidates for the Degree

## DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

- " ' Andrew Charles AbiRagi  
*Detroit, Michigan*  
*Hooded by Allen Haddad, M.D.*
- ' • Rimsha Jalees Afzal  
*Raleigh, North Carolina*  
*Hooded by Margaret Nelson, Ph.D.*
- Ceilidh Mary Barbara Ahearn  
*Independence, Kentucky*
- Afaaq Ahmed  
*South Setauket, New York*  
*Hooded by Ehsan Ahmed, Pharm.D.*
- Ayeshia Sidiquia Ali  
*Carpentersville, Illinois*
- Syed Zain-Ahmed Ali  
*Pembroke Pines, Florida*
- Summer Jordan Allahham  
*Danville, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by John Allahham, M.D.*
- " ' • Alexander Luke Alley  
*Maysville, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Consuela Alley, M.D.*
- Marc Robert Allison  
*Imlay City, Michigan*  
*Hooded by Jennifer Cavalli, Ph.D.*
- Kajol R. Anandani  
*Old Bridge, New Jersey*
- ' Andrew Mark Anderson  
*West Bloomfield, Michigan*  
*Hooded by Mark Brian Anderson, Ed.D.*
- ' • Ayah Adel Badawy  
*Queens, New York*  
*Hooded by Karim Badawy, D.P.M.*
- ' • Tajauna Lanell Marie Batchelor  
*Newport News, Virginia*
- " ' • Christina Joy Belcher  
*Jacksonville, Illinois*  
*Hooded by Michael Carnes, D.O., FAAO*
- " ' Matthew Nicholas Biernat  
*Elk Grove Village, Illinois*
- Christopher Jesus Borrero  
*Miami, Florida*
- " ' \* Madisyn T. Bronger  
*Winamac, Indiana*
- ~ " ' \* Madison E. Brown  
*Economy, Indiana*  
*Hooded by Chase Carpenter, D.O.*
- ' \* Victoria A. Burton  
*Dublin, Ohio*
- " • Justine M. Casola  
*Bloomsbury, New Jersey*
- Evan Michael Caspar  
*Shelbyville, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Dana Noland, Pharm.D.*
- ~ • Tanner Croix Charette  
*Mansfield, Ohio*  
*Hooded by Damian Cole, D.O.*
- Victor Chew  
*San Francisco, California*

- \* Sigma Sigma Phi Member
- OMT/Anatomy Fellow
- Gold Humanism Honor Society Member
- ' Graduating with Honors
- " Received All A's on Core Clinical Rotations
- ~ Veteran

# 2026 Candidates for the Degree

## DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

- " ' Ian C. Clapp  
*Morganton, North Carolina*  
*Hooded by Christopher R. Clapp, M.D.*
- \* Taylor Marie Conrad  
*Perrysburg, Ohio*  
Jeffrey M. Cook  
*Shelbyville, Kentucky*  
Gabriella Maria Costantini  
*Hinckley, Ohio*  
*Hooded by Otto Costantini, M.D.*
- ' \* Morgan L. Courier  
*Delavan, Wisconsin*  
*Hooded by Deana Courier, M.D.*
- \* Nathan Joseph Covello  
*Tucson, Arizona*  
*Hooded by James Wesley Campbell, D.O.*
- \* Krupal Mayur Dholakia  
*Columbus, Ohio*  
*Hooded by Jaimini A. Dave, M.D.*  
Daniel James Dickerson  
*Louisville, Kentucky*  
Michael John DiCocco  
*Merrick, New York*  
Trenton R. DiFilippo  
*Jacksonville, Florida*  
Mark A. Dilai  
*Webster, New York*
- \* Betina Beatrice Isip Dobles  
*Manila, Philippines*  
*Hooded by Nonito Suarez Dobles,*  
*D.Min.*
- ~ Camden Doyle  
*South Bend, Indiana*  
Alexander C. Dragota  
*Canton, Ohio*
- " ' Arielle Drier  
*Petoskey, Michigan*
- Thomas Michael Eggleston  
*Shelbyville, Indiana*  
Nathan Charles Egler  
*Evansville, Indiana*  
*Hooded by Ashley Egler, M.D.*
- ' Kane H. Ferguson  
*Hornbeak, Tennessee*  
Emily Lee Freeman  
*Arnold, Missouri*  
Taylor Marie Gentz  
*Hastings, Minnesota*  
*Hooded by Otto Costantini, M.D.*  
Andrew Robert Geurts  
*Randolph, Wisconsin*
- ' Ross Alan James Gibson  
*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*  
Kieran Johnston Gormley  
*Damariscotta, Maine*  
*Hooded by Hal J. Cohen, D.O.*  
Alex Charles Graham  
*Louisville, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Stephen L. Graham, D.C.*  
Connor Alexander Gregory  
*Maumee, Ohio*

# 2026 Candidates for the Degree

## DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

- ‘ Chayla Nicole Hope Hacker  
*Manchester, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Caitlin Estep, Psy.D.*
- Logan Chandler Hacker  
*Manchester, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Caitlin Estep, Psy.D.*
- ” ” • \*Nicholas Jamshid Hamed  
*Zionsville, Indiana*  
*Hooded by Damian Cole, D.O.*
- ‘ Alivia Grace Hansford  
*Paintsville, Kentucky*
- Ibrahim Haque  
*South Bend, Indiana*
- ‘ Benjamin Michael Hargrave  
*Salina, Kansas*  
*Hooded by Emily Hargrave, O.D.*
- Loryn Nicole Hendershot  
*Chattanooga, Tennessee*
- David A. Hopkins, II  
*Bradshaw, West Virginia*
- ” ‘ James Morgan Howard  
*Salyersville, Kentucky*
- Kimbrionna Roytasia Hunter  
*Anderson, South Carolina*  
*Hooded by Adaku Ikoh, D.O.*
- Yazan A. Ibrahim  
*Orland Park, Illinois*
- Rana Zainab Imtiaz  
*Duluth, Minnesota*  
*Hooded by Imtiaz Mohamed, M.D.*
- ” ‘ Wendy Sue Jent  
*Spotsylvania, Virginia*  
*Hooded by Christopher M. Bailey, D.O.*
- Chan Kafkalia  
*Hanoi, Vietnam*
- ” ‘ \*Suraj Kandoth  
*Las Vegas, Nevada*
- ‘ Ian Mitchell Kania  
*Louisville, Kentucky*
- Pavithra Kathirvel  
*Piscataway, New Jersey*
- Kristina Robin Kaul  
*St. Louis, Missouri*
- Ashley Marie Kelner  
*Johnson City, Tennessee*  
*Hooded by Kathryn Mueller, Pharm.D.*
- Bailey Marie Kemme  
*Louisville, Kentucky*
- Elizabeth N. Kenny  
*St. Louis, Missouri*
- ” Fardin Khan  
*Woodside, New York*
- Hiba Hasan Khan  
*London, Kentucky*
- Jasur Mahmood Khan  
*Columbus, Ohio*  
*Hooded by Shahzad Khan, M.D.*
- Aria Khoshjabinzadeh  
*Reno, Nevada*

- \* Sigma Sigma Phi Member
- OMT/Anatomy Fellow
- Gold Humanism Honor Society Member
- ‘ Graduating with Honors
- ” Received All A's on Core Clinical Rotations
- ~ Veteran

# 2026 Candidates for the Degree

## DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

- Jacqueline Lea Kowalke  
*Versailles, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Michael Carnes, D.O.*
- Jason Kenneth Lanman  
*Freeland, Washington*
- Karmen Drew Loehr  
*Decatur, Illinois*
- Aliah Kei Hocog Manglona  
*Colorado Springs, Colorado*
- \* Alec J. Maupin  
*Lawrenceburg, Indiana*
- ~ Chase Malcolm McAninch  
*Carson City, Nevada*  
*Hooded by Gregg McAninch, M.D.*
- Robert Connor McGinnis  
*Ashland, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Alexandra Mansker, D.O.*
- Jack Patrick Mendel  
*Jasper, Indiana*
- Mila Mikalacki  
*Scottsdale, Arizona*  
*Hooded by Aleksia Mikalacki, J.D.*
- Noah Scott Lucas Mowbray  
*Chandler, Arizona*
- Muzammil Eqbal Muztar  
*Skokie, Illinois*  
*Hooded by Niaz Mohammad, M.D.*
- " Rabiya Rofina Nazarali  
*New Brunswick, New Jersey*
- " · Hera Niaz  
*Kalamazoo, Michigan*  
*Hooded by Shirin Fattah, MBBS*
- \* Kloie Doublin Nutt  
*Franklin, Indiana*  
*Hooded by Donovan Thompson, M.D.*
- Muhammad Abdullah Paracha  
*Ashburn, Virginia*  
*Hooded by Tayyab Paracha, M.D.*
- " · \* Megan Renee Parsley  
*Noblesville, Indiana*
- \* Vrunda Amitkumar Patel  
*Scranton, Pennsylvania*  
*Hooded by Dipti Samir Pancholy, M.D.*
- \* Jennifer Lynn Perrault  
*Mount Pleasant, Wisconsin*  
*Hooded by Daniel Perrault, M.D.*
- \* Mackenzie Laine Peterson  
*San Diego, California*  
*Hooded by Hollis Peterson, J.D.*
- " · \* David Rafacz  
*Oak Lawn, Illinois*
- ~ \* Logan Ram Ramjit  
*San Antonio, Texas*
- Abigail Elisabeth Reese  
*Broadview Heights, Ohio*
- Gregory Igor Rivin  
*Cincinnati, Ohio*
- Samantha Cameron Rogers  
*Louisville, Kentucky*
- William Zachery Rogers  
*Louisville, Kentucky*
- \* Alexandra Kate Rookey  
*Suffield, Connecticut*  
*Hooded by Marcy D. Rookey, Au.D.*

# 2026 Candidates for the Degree

## DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

- " ' Cassidy Ross  
*Murray, Utah*
- Leeann M. Samartino  
*La Vergne, Tennessee*  
*Hooded by Damian Cole, D.O.*
- Hamzah Sami  
*New Hyde Park, New York*  
*Hooded by Shazia Sami, M.D.*
- " ' Ethan Jacob Scammell  
*Stuart, Florida*
- ' Lucas John Walter Schratz  
*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*  
*Hooded by Walter Schratz, D.D.S.*
- Joseph Eldon Scott  
*Baltimore, Maryland*
- ' John Patrick Scully  
*Berea, Kentucky*
- Areebah Siddiqui  
*Chicago, Illinois*  
*Hooded by Maaz Raheem, D.P.M.*
- Sarabjot Singh  
*Grand Rapids, Michigan*
- Faith Marie Powell Slaybaugh  
*Lebanon, New Hampshire*  
*Hooded by Kenton Powell, M.D.*
- \* Kyle Steele  
*Washington, Pennsylvania*  
*Hooded by Tammy Steele, Ph.D.*
- " ' Astrid Marilyn Swensen  
*Beverly, Massachusetts*  
*Hooded by Deanna O'Dwyer-Swensen, D.C.*
- " ' Emily Childres Sydow  
*Redding, California*  
*Hooded by David Robert Sydow, M.D.*
- Omar Ahmed Syed  
*Brookfield, Wisconsin*
- Sanam Tabatabai  
*Santa Clara, California*
- " ' Logan Blaise Tackett  
*Pikeville, Kentucky*
- Zackary Tareky  
*Wayne, New Jersey*
- Sarah Tayazime  
*Naperville, Illinois*  
*Hooded by Helen Ibeawuchi, M.D.*
- Leon Trinh  
*Bowling Green, Kentucky*
- Rohan Tyagi  
*Winchester, Massachusetts*
- Pratyusha Rao Veldhi  
*Louisville, Kentucky*
- ~ \*Anthony Henry Veliz  
*Louisville, Kentucky*
- " ' • \*Olivia Ruth Vick  
*Versailles, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Doug Vick, D.O.*
- Conrad J. Walley  
*Adrian, Missouri*
- ' Zohal Wardak  
*San Francisco, California*

- \* Sigma Sigma Phi Member
- OMT/Anatomy Fellow
- Gold Humanism Honor Society Member
- ' Graduating with Honors
- " Received All A's on Core Clinical Rotations
- ~ Veteran

## 2026 Candidates for the Degree

### DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

- ° ' \* Jakob Hunter Warren  
*Henryville, Indiana*
- ° • \* William Garrett Watson  
*Spartanburg, South Carolina*  
*Hooded by James Evan Watson, D.P.T.*
- ' Hannah Elizabeth Weber  
*Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*
- ' • \* Nicole Kiran Werner  
*Boone, North Carolina*  
*Hooded by Angela Maggard, M.D.*
- Cassidy Renee White  
*London, Kentucky*  
*Hooded by Amanda Blankenship,*  
*Pharm.D.*
- Kasey Lee Williams  
*Gardnerville, Nevada*  
*Hooded by Byron Thomas, D.O.*
- ' Luke A. Williams  
*Louisville, Kentucky*
- Jack Erie Wilson, II  
*Beech Grove, Indiana*  
*Hooded by Michaela Wilson, Ph.D.*
- Ally DaNae Windland  
*Prestonsburg, Kentucky*
- ° Mackenzie Breann Yohey  
*Fort Wayne, Indiana*  
*Hooded by Damian Cole, D.O.*
- ° ' • \* Rodolfo Gabriel Zevallos  
*Frisco, Texas*  
*Hooded by Michael Carnes, D.O.*
- Ling Jessica Zheng  
*New York, New York*

# 2026 Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine Awards

## **DEAN'S AWARD**

**Syed Zain-Ahmed Ali**

*Awarded to the student whose leadership, humanity and loyalty to the profession exemplify the ideals, mission and goals of the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine.*

## **PRESIDENT'S AWARD**

**Andrew Charles AbiRagi**

*Presented to the student who has demonstrated clinical excellence, earning the highest average score on clinical rotations.*

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES' AWARD**

**Matthew Nicholas Biernat**

*Awarded for academic excellence to the student earning the highest grade point average during the first two years of medical school.*

## **JOHN A. STROSNIDER, D.O., MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

**Christina Joy Belcher**

*Presented to a KYCOM graduate who exemplifies Dr. Strosnider's commitment to family medicine and his love and dedication to osteopathic medicine and the osteopathic profession.*

## **STEPHEN M. PAYSON, M.S., MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

**Alex Charles Graham**

*Presented to a KYCOM graduate from the Appalachian region who exemplifies Mr. Payson's commitment to the mission of KYCOM and the promotion of the osteopathic profession.*

## **BOYD R. BUSER, D.O., EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**Alexander Luke Alley**

*Awarded for overall excellence in academics and service.*

## **DONNA JONES MORITSUGU AWARD**

**Payton Black**

*Awarded to the spouse of a graduating student who best exemplifies the role of a professional's partner, in being a person in their own right, while being supportive of mate, family and profession.*

## **JAMES E. CAMPBELL, D.O., AWARD**

**Alivia Grace Hansford**

*Presented by the James E. Campbell Education Fund to a deserving Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine graduate from the Appalachian region of Kentucky.*

## **MR. DHARAM PAL KASHYAP MEMORIAL AWARD**

**Summer Jordan Allahham**

*Instituted in 2001 by Seema Sachdeva, M.D. in memory of her father. Awarded to the student who demonstrates excellence in pediatrics and pursues residency training at the top healthcare programs for children in the nation.*

**MS. SWADESH KASHYAP MEMORIAL AWARD**

**Matthew Nicholas Biernat**

*Instituted in 2020 by Seema Sachdeva, M.D., in memory of her mother.  
Awarded to the student with the highest score in the didactic pediatrics course.*

**MRS. SWARAN KANTA SACHDEVA MEMORIAL AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE OF WOMEN IN SPECIALTY MEDICINE**

**Rimsha Jalees Afzal**

*Instituted in 2022 by Rakesh Sachdeva, M.D., in memory of his mother. Awarded to a graduating female medical student who has demonstrated excellence in pursuing a residency in specialty medicine.*

**CHRISTINA WIKA, D.O. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

**Rimsha Jalees Afzal**

*Instituted in 2025 in memory of KYCOM Alum, Christina Wika, D.O. Awarded to a graduating medical student who has demonstrated excellence in pursuing a residency in oncology.*

**GREGORY V. HAZELETT, D.O. MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

**Logan Blaise Tackett**

*Awarded to a graduate of KYCOM pursuing a career in Otolaryngology / Surgery.*

**EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARD**

**Rimsha Jalees Afzal**

*Selected by KYCOM's research faculty. Awarded to a KYCOM graduate for excellence in research.*

**KYCOM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARD**

**Kimbrionna Roytasia Hunter**

*Awarded to the graduating student who has shown strong involvement both at KYCOM and in the community and hopefully will remain involved with KYCOM through the Alumni Association.*

**EXCELLENCE IN EMERGENCY MEDICINE AWARD**

**Gabriella Maria Constantini**

*Sponsored by the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine. Awarded for excellence in emergency medicine.*

**KAFP OUTSTANDING SENIOR STUDENT AWARD**

**Olivia Ruth Vick**

*Sponsored by the Kentucky Academy of Family Physicians. This award is presented to an outstanding senior student going into Family Medicine.*

**THE MERCK MANUAL AWARD FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

**Jakob Hunter Warren**

**Madisyn T. Bronger**

**Cassidy Ross**

*Sponsored by Merck & Company, Inc., to recognize scholastic achievement in medical education.*

**RAM'S HEAD AWARD**

**Christina Joy Belcher**

**Emily Childres Sydow**

**Mackenzie Breann Yohey**

**Ian Mitchell Kania**

**William Garrett Watson**

**Rodolfo Gabriel Zevallos**

*Presented for Fellowship Program in recognition of outstanding achievements in Osteopathic Principles and Practices.*

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## *History & Mission*

Pikeville College was established in 1889 as an outreach of the Presbyterian Church after an extensive survey of the religious and educational needs of Eastern Kentucky. An 1887 scouting party, which included Dr. W. C. Condit, Rev. Samuel B. Alderson and Rev. James P. Hendrick, set forth, in Condit's words, to "select the location for an institution of higher learning for the youth of the mountains."

September 16, 1889, was the first day of class at Pikeville Collegiate Institute, located in a four-room brick building situated on three acres of land in Pikeville, Ky. It functioned as both school and church and was not originally intended to confer degrees, but to give "good practical education to those persons who pursue its courses." At that time, the institute offered schoolwork in primary, preparatory and "college" departments.

In 1909, the structure of the school changed and the articles of incorporation were amended to make Pikeville College a chartered college, empowered by the state of Kentucky to offer four years of college work and confer baccalaureate degrees. The school maintained its commitment to primary and secondary education by sustaining the Pikeville Collegiate Academy for grades 1-12. Pikeville College admitted its first college freshman class in 1916, adding the final two years of college in 1955. The first baccalaureate graduation was held in 1957, a year that also marked the closing of the Pikeville Collegiate Academy.

Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine opened its doors on September 8, 1997, as the 19th osteopathic medical school in the country. The school was the dream of Paintsville attorney G. Chad Perry III, a visionary whose generosity and perseverance paved the way for a new generation of doctors to provide primary care in medically underserved areas in Eastern Kentucky and Appalachia. On May 12, 2001, these medical students were the first at Pikeville College to receive the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree.

The Pikeville College Board of Trustees authorized the creation of the institution's first master's degree program, a Master of Business Administration (MBA), in 2011. At the time, the board acknowledged that the college, by definition of the programs offered, was a university. On July 1, 2011, Pikeville College officially became the University of Pikeville, also known as UPIKE.

As part of the plan for growth, the university was reorganized into two schools – the College of Arts and Sciences and the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine. The inaugural MBA class, the first to earn master's degrees from the institution, graduated in 2013. The Coleman College of Business was also established in 2013, named in honor of Trustee Emeritus Burlin Coleman, a business leader who spent more than 50 years developing the banking industry in Eastern Kentucky, and his wife, Jean Coleman, a Pikeville College alumna and retired educator.

In 2014, the university announced the Kentucky College of Optometry, a mission-focused strategic initiative to provide for the underserved in Central Appalachia and other rural areas of the country. Considered the "birthplace of rural optometry," the school is the first in Kentucky and the 22nd in the nation. On May 2, 2020, these students became the first at the University of Pikeville to receive the Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) degree.

The Patton College of Education was established in 2015, named in honor of Kentucky's 59th governor, Paul E. Patton, who has been recognized as a national leader in education policy. As UPIKE's president from 2009-2013, Patton led the historic transition from college to university status and currently serves as chancellor.

In 2022, UPIKE announced that it would expand its service-minded mission with the addition of the Tanner College of Dental Medicine.

This year's commencement is a culmination of 134 years of service. Like those before us, we are caretakers of this great institution, committed to advancing the University of Pikeville in a purposeful way, one that honors the founding promise to educate the youth of the mountains.

## *Academic Regalia*

Those who don academic regalia join a long procession of capped and gowned scholars reaching back in time over eight centuries. In 1895, a group of American colleges and universities standardized the academic regalia and developed a code of academic dress. 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. The modern dress consists of a gown, headpiece and hood.

Originally thought to be worn against the chill and dampness, the gown identifies holders of a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree by the type of gown worn as well as by the hood. The bachelor's gown has long sleeves and is designed to be worn closed. The master's gown has an oblong sleeve, open at the wrist. The rear part of the oblong sleeve is square cut and the front has an arc cutaway. The gown may be worn open or closed. The gown for the doctoral degree has bell-shaped sleeves. Like the master's gown, it may be worn open or closed. The doctoral gown is faced down the front with black velvet with three bars of the same across the sleeves.

The headpiece, always black and of either the soft or mortarboard style, attests to the dignity of the wearer and the responsibility for maintaining the highest ethical standards. The tassel, worn with the cap, has three variations: black; gold, restricted to doctors and governing officials of the institution; or the color of the discipline in which the degree was granted.

It is the hood that adds meaning to the academic regalia. Changed little since the Middle Ages, the hood is worn falling from the shoulders down the back of the gown in a display of color. It is edged in velvet, which by its color denotes the discipline in which the wearer's degree was earned. Green, the color of life and growth, represents medicine. It is lined in one or two colors of silk, which represent the college or university from which the degree was awarded. Black and orange are the colors of the University of Pikeville.

## *Mace*

The ceremonial mace has origins dating to the Middle Ages when the bodyguards of kings used a mace as an element of protection. Gradually, universities adopted the use of a mace to signify the right of the academic institution to grant degrees to graduates.

Our mace was designed by faculty and students at Pikeville College School of Osteopathic Medicine, now the University of Pikeville-Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine, and created by master carver and retired Presbyterian minister Jerry Cooper of Berea, Ky.

The cherry wood shaft, entwined by a snake – the symbol of medicine – ascends to a ring of walnut thistle leaves symbolic of the Scottish Presbyterian roots of the University of Pikeville. Parallel to the snake are the institution's historic 99 steps.

The university seal dominates the walnut sphere. Between each is carved a Celtic knot, symbolizing the Scotch-Irish heritage of the area. Coal black mountains and valleys ascend from the top of the sphere. Sealed within the orb is a list of the names of the medical school's first graduating class, along with the names of faculty and staff.

A gift to the school from the Pikeville College School of Medicine's class of 2001, the mace is displayed outside the president's office on campus.

