

Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine

White Coat Ceremony



September 26, 2026

2 p.m.

Mountain Arts Center

About KYCOM

Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine

Mission. The mission of the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine (KYCOM) is to provide men and women with an osteopathic medical education that emphasizes primary care, encourages research, promotes lifelong scholarly activity and produces graduates who are committed to serving the health care needs of communities in rural Kentucky and other Appalachian regions.

History. In September 1993, Chad Perry, a prominent attorney from Paintsville, and his wife, Judy Perry, conceived the idea of creating an osteopathic medical school in the Appalachian region of Eastern Kentucky. Together with a group of visionary leaders that included former Kentucky governor, the Honorable Paul Patton, and local businessman, Burlin Coleman, they began to investigate the possibility of a school in Eastern Kentucky. These leaders believed that creation of an osteopathic medical school was the best way to help alleviate the shortage of primary care physicians in the region. According to Chad Perry, his support of the development of an osteopathic medical school for this region arose from the fact that osteopathic physicians “tend to stay in rural areas and in family practice.”

White Coat Ceremony. It is now common practice among most U.S. medical schools to conduct a white coat ceremony to initiate medical students into the medical profession. White represents purity, healing and the professional ideals of the medical profession that focus on compassionate caregiving. The long white coat is the quintessential symbol of a physician and conveys to patients and the public the wearer’s identity as a physician. The short white coat indicates the wearer’s status as a medical student or student doctor. The white coat ceremony tradition among medical schools was led by the Arnold P. Gold Foundation in 1993 to promote humanism in medicine. The Gold Foundation provides a gold pin to our student doctors to wear on their white coats to symbolize commitment to providing compassionate and competent patient care. As a further initiation into the osteopathic medical profession, the KYCOM White Coat Ceremony traditionally includes recitation of its version of the osteopathic medical profession’s Pledge of Commitment.

Ceremony Program

Prelude Music.....	Phillip Todd Westgate, D.M.A. Professor of Music, University of Pikeville Pianist
* Academic Processional.....	Class of 2030 Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine
Invocation	Caleb Julien Allen, OMS II President, KYCOM Christian Medical & Dental Association Class of 2029
Welcome	Joe E. Kingery, D.O., MBA, FACOFP, FAAFP Vice President for Health Affairs Dean, Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine KYCOM Class of 2006
Greetings from the University	Burton J. Webb, Ph.D. President, University of Pikeville
Introduction of Platform Party	Marisa Greer, Ed.D. Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Pikeville
Presentation of Distinguished Summer Research Fellow Award	Dr. Kingery
Remarks & Introduction of Keynote Speaker	
Keynote Address.....	Richard Thacker, D.O. President, American Osteopathic Association
Greetings from the Student Body.....	Heather Whitlow, OMS II President, KYCOM Student Government Association Class of 2029
White Coat Presentation	Malgorzata Simm, Ph.D., M.Sc., FCM Associate Dean of Biomedical Sciences and Professor of Microbiology & Immunology
Coating of Students.....	Maleshea Hopkins, D.O. Associate Dean of Clinical Affairs KYCOM Class of 2005 and Heather Whitlow, OMS II
Greetings from Kentucky Osteopathic Medical Association	Selena Raines, D.O. President, Kentucky Osteopathic Medical Association KYCOM Class of 2015
Greetings from KYCOM Alumni Association	Frederick A. Stine, VI, D.O., MHA Vice President, KYCOM Alumni Association KYCOM Class of 2017
Pledge of Commitment	Laura Griffin, D.O., FAAO Associate Dean for Osteopathic Principles and Practices Integration Professor and Chair, Department of Osteopathic Principles and Practices
Closing Remarks	Dr. Kingery
* Recessional	Class of 2030

* *Audience please stand, if able.*

Richard Thacker, D.O., MACOI



Richard R. Thacker, D.O., MACOI, currently serves as the president of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). He is the associate dean of clinical sciences and associate professor of internal medicine at the Alabama College of Osteopathic Medicine (ACOM) in Dothan, Alabama. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing all four years of clinical education required for osteopathic medical students, while also teaching internal medicine and contributing to faculty development and core curriculum.

Thacker brings more than three decades of leadership in clinical practice, medical education and advocacy to the osteopathic profession. He has held key leadership roles, including chairman of the department of medicine, chief of staff and chairman of the board of trustees at Capital Regional Medical Center. He also served as associate medical director of Big Bend Hospice for 15 years and was recognized with the HCA Frist Humanitarian Award in 2015 for his community service and international medical mission work.

He practiced internal medicine for 23 years at Capital Regional Medical Group in Tallahassee, Florida, following service as a National Health Service Corps Scholar at a federally qualified health center in Madison, Florida.

A past president of the Florida Osteopathic Medical Association (FOMA), Thacker continues to serve on multiple FOMA committees and their board of trustees. In 2008, he was named FOMA's Physician of the Year. His state-level contributions include membership on the Florida Medicaid Pharmacy and Therapeutic Committee and advisory roles through the Department of Health.

Thacker earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree from Nova Southeastern University Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine (NSU-KPCOM), where he served as SOMA president and freshman class president. He completed his residency at Delaware Valley Medical Center, where he was chief intern and chief medical resident. He was also honored as Resident of the Year. In 2024, he received the ACOM Student Advocate Award.

KYCOM Class of 2030

Sarah M. Abdellatif
Cairo, Egypt

Meena Ahmed Abdulrazak
Louisville, Kentucky

Hailey Abell
St. Paul, Indiana

Carson Adams
Whitesburg, Kentucky

Faris Adas
Farmington Hills, Michigan

Maame E. Addison
Bloomfield, New Jersey

Hunter Adkins
Pikeville, Kentucky

Jenna M. Adkins
Flatwoods, Kentucky

Muhammad H. Ahmad
Pikeville, Kentucky

Sabahat Ahsan
Dayton, Ohio

Simrah Ali
Atlanta, Georgia

Sara Alshalabi
Fishers, Indiana

Jessica Amezcua
Lexington, Kentucky

Emma K. Anderson
Lexington, Kentucky

Kenna Paige Anderson
Hazard, Kentucky

Tiarra Anderson
Cumberland, Wisconsin

Bennett Arza
Crystal Lake, Illinois

Paetyn K. Ashcraft
Ft. Mitchell, Kentucky

Farhan Ahmed Ashfaq
Lexington, Kentucky

Maha Babar
Rochester, Michigan

MaKenna Reece Bailey
Pikeville, Kentucky

MacKenzie Bailiff
Elkhorn City, Kentucky

Kiley Barrett
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Jessie Begley
Somerset, Kentucky

Anna Bell
Aberdeen, South Dakota

Makenna Berry
Anaheim Hills, California

Gemma Blake
Union, Kentucky

Lane C. Brawner
Madison, Indiana

Barrett Buchanan
Paducah, Kentucky

Ava Corrine Burton
Independence, Kentucky

Alexandra Byers
Kingsport, Tennessee

Madison Paige Calhoun
Paintsville, Kentucky

Piper Carl
Lexington, Kentucky

Annaliese Chitti
Union, Kentucky

Estelle R. Chock
York, Pennsylvania

Catherine Dene Coldiron
Covington, Kentucky

Robby Coleman
Pikeville, Kentucky

Lucas Combs
Hindman, Kentucky

Stephanie M. Comer
Ossining, New York

Molly Cook
Carmel, Indiana

Colby Cooley
Prestonsburg, Kentucky

Landon Wylie Cord
Mount Sterling, Kentucky

Corey Wilson Craig
Park Hills, Kentucky

Elijah Crompton
Hurricane, West Virginia

Ariel Briana Cuevas
Charlotte, North Carolina

Samer Yousef Daoud
London, Kentucky

Landen Elizabeth Davis
Johnstown, Ohio

Aubrey Dodds
Mosheim, Tennessee

Jennifer Duong
Phoenix, Arizona

Mayan Eartheart
Bloomington, Indiana

Paul G. Ellis
Richmond, Kentucky

Carla M. Favetto
Versailles, Kentucky

Cassie Finley
Mount Hermon, Kentucky

Cameron Gibson
Ashland, Kentucky

Grace Gibson
Ashland, Kentucky

Dana Goodman
Man, West Virginia

Ashley Brooke Hadley
Columbia, Kentucky

KYCOM Class of 2030

Ashley Bell Hamlet
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Ryan P. Hanzak
Concord, Ohio

Emma Nicole Harris
Belfry, Kentucky

Sarah Patricia McCaffrey
Hatchett
New York, New York

Matthew Hendrick
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Jonathan Hicks
Westfield, Indiana

Maren G. Howorka
Burlington, Kentucky

Nathan A. Huffman
Cincinnati, Ohio

Isaiah Hull
Wilmore, Kentucky

Samuel Humphrey
Middletown, Ohio

Manuel Hurtado
Palacios, Texas

Ali Muhammad Ikram
Louisville, Kentucky

Kenton Isaac
Salyersville, Kentucky

Haley Ison
Viper, Kentucky

Shweta Iyer
Edison, New Jersey

Vansh Nikesh Jani
Centerville, Ohio

Shelby Danielle Jarvis
London, Kentucky

Mallory Johnson
Louis, Kentucky

Jobi Jose
Louisville, Kentucky

Hanna Justice
Logan, West Virginia

Kinna Justice
Lenore, West Virginia

Killian Scott Kay
Fort Lewis, Washington

Anna Catherine Knollmeyer
Jefferson City, Missouri

Naisha Kohli
Alpharetta, Georgia

Margarita Kopshteyn
Mequon, Wisconsin

Tara Puja Lauther
Hampton Bays, New York

Hana Lee
Honolulu, Hawai'i

Roxanne Lockard
Georgetown, Kentucky

Kristen Machado Diaz
Akron, Ohio

Quinn Mahone
Cary, North Carolina

Kiara Faith Marker
Wakarusa, Indiana

Lauren E. Marks
Trout Run, Pennsylvania

Nyckoletta Christina Martin
Santa Cruz, California

Gabriel Nicolas Maurer
Owenton, Kentucky

Matthew Dale McCarty
Salyersville, Kentucky

Connor McGuire
Rockcastle, Kentucky

Chandralekha Mekala
Olney, Maryland

Zoe I. Meyer
Tiffin, Ohio

Kinsey Michael
Indianapolis, Indiana

Amanda Miller
Lexington, Kentucky

Chantale N. Miller
Teaneck, New Jersey

Simar Monga
Metuchen, New Jersey

Angela Marie Nauss
Wise, Virginia

Ryson Neeley
Glencoe, Kentucky

Sarah Nice
Worcester, Pennsylvania

Piper Melody Bellottie Nickoli
Milan, Ohio

Chukwuemerie
Nnabugwu-Ezumah
Leesburg, Virginia

Adam Nomoto
Louisville, Kentucky

Kaitlyn Osborne
Williamsburg, Kentucky

Dillon Osgood
Maysville, Kentucky

Tyler Parks
Independence, Kentucky

Kiran C. Patel
Lexington, Kentucky

Parth H. Patel
Bardstown, Kentucky

Savan Patel
Glasgow, Kentucky

Lauren C. Petrosky
Las Vegas, Nevada

Sandy Phi Yen Quach
Oakland, California

Kopila Rai
Lexington, Kentucky

KYCOM Class of 2030

Madison Caroline Ramey
Pineville, Kentucky

Waleejah Rana
Independence, Kentucky

Anjali Rangi
Columbus, Ohio

Morghan Ann Relich
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Alvina Ali Rizvi
Washington Township, New Jersey

Ashley M. Robertson
Fishers, Indiana

Colette O. Robinson
Hershey, Pennsylvania

Clara Elizabeth Rogers
Owingsville, Kentucky

Sofiya Romanivko
Wilmore, Kentucky

Spencer Roof
Louisville, Kentucky

Mia Rouse
Hazard, Kentucky

Manzar Rzayeva
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Eveleen Sachdeva
Canton, Michigan

Emma Diane Sanchez
Owensboro, Kentucky

Hayleigh Saulmon
Lebanon, Indiana

Luke A. Schmitt
Mooresville, Indiana

Fallon Kayt Scott
Salyersville, Kentucky

Antonio D. Serevitz
New Haven, West Virginia

Meera Sethi
Youngstown, Ohio

Sarah Faiz Sherman
Cincinnati, Ohio

Allison Elizabeth Shockley
Paducah, Kentucky

Leila Ahree Elaine
Sidahmed
Louisville, Kentucky

Madeline Simcox
Bristol, Tennessee

Mankirth Singh
Crown Point, Indiana

Carey Beth Smith
London, Kentucky

Geoffrey Smith
Lexington, Kentucky

Kameron Springfield
Louisville, Kentucky

Oana Sterp
Troy, Michigan

Kayley Stowers
Louisville, Kentucky

Aiden Straus
Alexandria, Kentucky

Julia Strine
Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Sebastian Tabisz
Hanover, Maryland

Kylie Jade Tackett
Hi Hat, Kentucky

Grace Tebbe
Johnson City, Tennessee

Madison Thornsberry
Martin, Kentucky

Ikshitha Tippi
Louisville, Kentucky

Gabriel Tipton
Kingsport, Tennessee

Dustin B. Todd
Winchester, Kentucky

Peyton Tomassi
Benton, Kentucky

Cesar Tovar Torre
Clifton, New Jersey

Rori Traugott
Lexington, Kentucky

Landon Trinh
Bowling Green, Kentucky

Lauren G. Troutman
Owensboro, Kentucky

Paul Silas Turley
Lexington, Kentucky

Alexandra Valdes
Treasure Island, Florida

Sadaf Wali
Yorktown, Virginia

Rylee Louise Wallace
Lexington, Kentucky

Kaiser Kate Alo Weafer
Owensboro, Kentucky

Erica Werth
Pikeville, Kentucky

Ballard Wheatley
Louisville, Kentucky

Katelyn E. Whitwell
Hohenwald, Tennessee

Justin L Winarski
Webster, Kentucky

Gabrielle Wood
Long Beach, California

Brayden Yarnell
Portsmouth, Ohio

Kayla L. Yerlioglu
Hinsdale, Illinois

Jeffrey Zamora Elvir
Dallas, Texas

Leah Ziliak
Evansville, Indiana

Pledge of Commitment

As I embark upon the study of medicine at the Kentucky
College of Osteopathic Medicine, I will:

Enter into a relationship of mutual respect with my teachers and my colleagues to enhance the learning environment and gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes of a competent osteopathic physician.

Accept responsibility only for those matters for which I am competent, maintain the trust expected of an osteopathic physician and never take advantage of the patient-doctor relationship.

Show compassion and respect for all others.

Set worthy examples in the application of humanistic principles in my relationships with patients and others within the Appalachian medical community.

Work toward improving my sensitivity and skills in human interaction, understanding and respecting the differences among my patients and colleagues.

Value the knowledge and wisdom of the physicians who have preceded me in the profession and endeavor to contribute to the osteopathic tradition.

Recognize my weaknesses and strengths and strive to develop those qualities that will earn the respect of my patients, my colleagues, my family and myself.

Continue learning throughout all the days of my life.