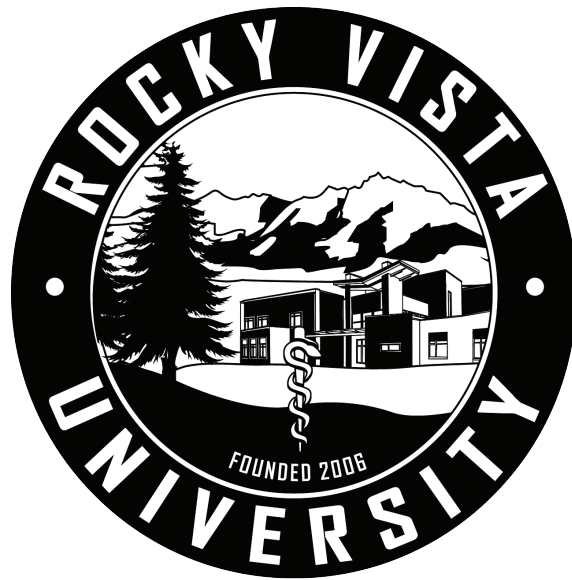


PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM
COMMENCEMENT
CLASS OF 2021



ACHIEVING NEW HEIGHTS IN
MEDICAL EDUCATION

MISSION STATEMENT

Rocky Vista University

provides quality healthcare education
while inspiring students to serve with
compassion, integrity, and excellence.



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM
CLASS OF 2021 COMMENCEMENT

TUESDAY, NINTH OF NOVEMBER
TWO-THOUSAND TWENTY ONE

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

PROCESSIONAL

WELCOME

Cathy Ruff, MS, PA-C

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Maha Sallam, PhD

Beth Smolko, DMSc, MMA, PA-C, DFAAPA

STUDENT COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Jasmine Hohl, MPAS '21

Introduced by Avery Soderberg, MPAS '21

STUDENT GIFTS PRESENTED BY CLASS LEADERSHIP

Sarah Heindl, MPAS '21

Angela Blevins, MPAS '21

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Lise Johnson, PhD

Introduced by Erin Layman, MPAS '21

AWARDS

Cathy Ruff, MS, PA-C

PRESENTATION AND HOODING OF THE MPAS CLASS

David Forstein, DO, FACOOG

Whitney Lambarri, MS, PA-C

Sarah Neguse, MS, PA-C

Cathy Ruff, MS, PA-C

CONFERRAL OF THE MPAS DEGREE

David Forstein, DO, FACOOG

OATH

Darcy Solanyk, MS, PA-C

CLOSING REMARKS

David Forstein, DO, FACOOG

RECESSIONAL

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Class of 2021, families, faculty, and members of the RVU community,

Today is a celebration, not only for the students, but for everyone who has played a foundational role in their lives. They wouldn't be here today if not for your support, love, and confidence.

Students: today, you graduate and you take the next steps in your career, entering the healthcare workforce at a time when you are most needed—ready and prepared to take your place alongside the rest of the medical team of which you have earned the right to be a part.

You came to Rocky Vista University with a goal and a dream to become a PA—to become the kind of PA that coworkers seek out, patients depend on, and communities need, and in whom they find collegiality and health. Along the way, you have learned anatomy and physiology, biochemistry, pharmacology, and pathology—achieving competency and proficiency in the basic and foundational science. You have cultivated your humility and humanity, placing the patient at the center of the process and prioritizing their values and preferences. You have achieved your goal, learning about science, patient care, and yourselves in the process.

The recent and ongoing health crisis has underscored the importance of healthcare workers, of caregivers willing to step up, to step in and say, “I am here, and I am here to help”. Not only do your future patients need you, but your future colleagues who have worked ceaselessly throughout the pandemic need you. Now is your time to answer that call, to honor your calling to be a Physician Assistant and to walk onto the front line with your eyes open, with your mind open, and with your heart open.

You have trained for this. The communities are waiting. Your patients are waiting. You are most certainly ready for this.

Good luck out there – you will be great.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David G. Forstein".

David Forstein, DO, FACOOG

President, CEO, and Provost

Rocky Vista University

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Lise Johnson received her Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from the University of Oklahoma, followed by a doctorate degree in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Arizona. Additionally, she completed a postdoctoral training fellowship in Neurosurgery at the University of Washington.

Earlier in her career, Dr. Johnson worked as a Research Scientist in the Department of Neurological Surgery at the University of Washington and as an Undergraduate Education Manager at the Center for Sensorimotor Neural Engineering. Most recently, Dr. Johnson worked as an Investigator Scientist at the Colorado Neurological Institute. She currently works at Rocky Vista University as the Director of Basic Science Curriculum and an Associate Professor of PA Studies.

Dr. Johnson is also the co-author of two popular science books: [Brain Bytes: Quick Answers to Quirky Questions About the Brain](#) and [Worried? Science Investigates Some of Life's Common Concerns](#).



Photo taken on August 27, 2019

MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES CLASS OF 2021

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| ANGELA BLEVINS | JAMIE LANDRY |
| BREANNA BOLLAR | CAILLIE LAWRIE |
| STEPHANIE BRADFORD | ERIN LAYMAN |
| JOHN BURGMEIER | JULIA LEDERER |
| LORENA CASTRO LOPEZ | JESSICA MARTINEZ |
| NATALIE CRUMP | ASHLEIGH MUELLER |
| BARBARA FELDHAUS | HEATHER NUICH |
| DANA FILIAS | ELLE O'BRIEN |
| NICHOLAS FONG | NATALIE OLSON |
| SUSAN GIESKE | LUKE PAIK |
| ERIC HASKELL | PUJA PATEL |
| SARAH HEINDL | ELIZABETH RAUSCH |
| JASMINE HOHL | MARIELA RODRIGUEZ |
| MARIANNE JAOJOCO | AVERY SODERBERG |
| SHANNON JOHNSTAD | KATHRYN STEFANKO |
| DANIEL JONES | MOLLY WALKER |
| MICHELLE KAHLE | JULIE WOODS |
| BRAY KELLEY | |

THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSIONAL OATH

I pledge to perform the following duties with honor 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 all persons equally 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 to always 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 Physicians

I will share and expand knowledge within the profession.

These duties are pledged with sincerity and upon my honor.

STUDENT AWARDS

Compassion Award

This award is for a student who exemplifies the qualities of graciousness and humility, advocates for social justice, and works for the betterment of all members of their community whether internal or external to RVU.

Collaboration Award

This award is for a student with an outstanding contribution to their class or the PA program as a whole through their leadership, character, collaboration, and service endeavors.

Excellence Award

This award is for a student who exceeded the expected level of competency in all competency domains and relative to their cohort.

President's Award

The award is for an outstanding student that embodies the University's core values of integrity, collegiality, compassion, diversity, excellence, service, and innovation.

Program Director's Award

This award is given at the discretion of the PA Program Director to a student who exemplifies all aspects of the Mission of the program.



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF

Cathy C. Ruff, MS, PA-C
Program Director and Chair;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

David Eckhardt, MS, PA-C
Director of Simulation;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

Natalie Giannini, MSOL
Didactic Services Coordinator

Christy Hardt
Program Outreach Coordinator

Kristin Hunter
Clinical Rotations Coordinator

Lise Johnson, PhD
Director of Basic Science Curriculum;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

Whitney Lambarri, MS, PA-C
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

Sarah Neguse, MS, PA-C
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

Joel Roberts, MD
Assistant Professor of Physiology

Darcy Solanyk, MS, PA-C
Associate Program Director;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

Stephen Solanyk
Project and Data Manager

Joseph M. Stasio, DO, FACOFP
Medical Director

Peggy Walsh, MS, PA-C
Director of Clinical Education
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

