

RVU MISSION STATEMENT

ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY
PROVIDES QUALITY HEALTHCARE EDUCATION
WHILE INSPIRING STUDENTS TO SERVE WITH
COMPASSION, INTEGRITY, AND EXCELLENCE.

PA PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE ROCKY VISTA PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
PROGRAM IS TO PREPARE CLINICALLY COMPETENT,
COLLABORATIVE, AND COMPASSIONATE PHYSICIAN
ASSISTANTS TO PROVIDE PRIMARY CARE.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Graduates of the Physician Assistant Program,

Congratulations on reaching this significant milestone! As the President and Interim Provost of Rocky Vista University, it is my honor to celebrate with you, your families, and your friends. Your dedication and resilience have culminated in this remarkable achievement, and I am incredibly proud of each one of you.

Becoming a Physician Assistant is more than a career; it is a lifelong commitment to learning, compassion, and service. Your time at RVU has equipped you with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel. You have shown exceptional ability in both academics and clinical practice.

Today, you begin a new chapter. You will apply your skills to address real-world health challenges. As integral members of healthcare teams, you will make significant contributions to patient care and public health. Your role will go beyond treating illnesses; you will advocate for prevention and wellness, bridging gaps in healthcare delivery.

Remember, the foundation of your practice is empathy and respect. In the face of rapid medical advancements, your compassion will be key to your success. Continue to cultivate kindness, empathy, and humility.

Stay curious and committed to lifelong learning. Medicine is ever evolving, and your adaptability will be crucial. Seek professional development, collaborate with peers, and engage with the broader medical community.

We are proud to have been part of your journey. Your hard work has prepared you to be outstanding Physician Assistants, setting a standard of excellence for future students.

As you enter your professional careers, carry our support and best wishes. Lead with integrity and serve with compassion. We believe in your potential to achieve remarkable success.

Congratulations, Class of 2025! You are the future of healthcare, and we are excited to see the impact you will make.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Forstein". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David A. Forstein, DO, FACOOG (dist.)
President and CEO
Interim Provost and CAO
Rocky Vista University

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Cassidy Punt, MSBS, MPAS, PA-C

Professor Punt serves as the course director for the Clinical Skills & Assessment and Intro to SCPE courses, where he teaches much of the 'hands-on' aspects of patient care including history taking, physical exam skills, and basic procedures.

Before entering academia, he practiced as a PA in orthopedic surgery for seven years, beginning his career at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN. His clinical expertise informs his teaching, particularly in musculoskeletal evaluation and procedural skills.

Professor Punt is a recognized leader in artificial intelligence (AI) in PA education, serving as Vice-Chair of the Institutional AI Committee and leading faculty development initiatives on AI integration. He has played a key role in shaping the PA program's policies on the appropriate use of AI tools in education. Nationally, he serves as the head of a special interest group on AI for PA educators, where he facilitates professional development and collaborative research on AI applications in PA education.

Professor Punt is actively engaged in research on AI in PA education and mentors students in their capstone research projects.

Beyond his AI-focused work, Professor Punt has a strong interest in wilderness and backcountry medicine. He has presented on this topic at regional and national conferences and conducts hands-on workshops in emergency and austere medical care.

Outside of academia, he loves spending time outdoors with his wife and dogs while hiking, backpacking, climbing, and touring the West in their self-made camper van.

COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

PROCESSIONAL

WELCOME

Cathy Ruff, MS, PA-C

PA Program Director and Chair; Associate Professor of PA Studies

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT

David Forstein, DO, FACOOG (dist.)

President and CEO

Interim Provost and Chief Academic Officer

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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

STUDENT COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Catherine Roche, MPAS

COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Cassidy Punt, MSBS, MPAS, PA-C

Assistant Professor of PA Studies

AWARDS

Cathy Ruff, MS, PA-C

PRESENTATION AND HOODING OF THE MPAS CLASS

David Eckhardt, MS, PA-C

David Forstein, DO, FACOOG (dist.)

Sarah Neguse, MS, PA-C

Cathy Ruff, MS, PA-C

CONFERRAL OF THE MPAS DEGREE

David Forstein, DO, FACOOG (dist.)

OATH

Darcy Solanyk, MS, PA-C

CLOSING REMARKS

Cathy Ruff, MS, PA-C

RECESSIONAL

MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES CLASS OF 2025

SHAWNA ARBUCKLE

CASEY BRUTON

KIMBERLY THIES DINEEN

CARLY DOENLEN

CONNOR DAVID GALBRAITH

JACQUELINE GUTIERREZ

KAYLAH HAMILTON

DANIELLE M. HAUTMAN

ALLISON JANEDIS

CONNOR JOHNSON

CAMILLE KNOTH

CONNER LANIER

ASHLEY ELIZABETH LUCAS

ANTHONY MAKHOUL

KATHRYN MAKOWSKI

EVAN SREEDHAR NAIR

JOSEPH PADDOCK

ALONDRA PALOMINO

HEATHER PETITMERMET

RIANNA PUNTURIERO

CATHERINE ROCHE

KATHERINE MAIREAD SARIEGO

MAKENZIE SAVNER

ABBIE SHERVA

JAMIE SMITH

GRACE SPURLOCK

SENA STILLMAN

JEANNIE THAN

CELINE TRAN

ANDREW VU

MATTHEW WATERMAN

MADY WHITCHER

DANIEL B. WILLIS

JUSTIN ZEEJTXWY YANG



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,
NON MALEFICENCE, 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.

COLLABORATIVE 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.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The award is for an outstanding student that embodies the University's Core Values of Collegiality, Compassion, Diversity, Equity, Excellence, Inclusivity, Innovation, Integrity, and Service.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM FACULTY AND STAFF

CARRIE CHANOS, MA, PA-C
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

ALISON COVAK, MSPAS, PA-C
Director of Clinical Education;
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

MEGHAN DAY, MS, PA-C
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

DAVID ECKHARDT, MS, PA-C
Director of Simulation;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

CHRISTY HARDT
Clinical Education Manager of PA Studies

JENNIFER HELLIER, PHD
Director of Basic Science and Research;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

KRISTEN HUNTER
Clinical Rotations Coordinator of PA Studies

SARAH NEGUSE, MS, PA-C
Associate Program Director, Director of Admissions,
and Assistant Professor of PA Studies

CASSIDY PUNT, MSBS, MPAS, PA-C
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

CATHY RUFF, MS, PA-C
Program Director;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

KATIE SHAW, MS
Operations Manager

KANDACE SHEPHERD, MS, PA-C
Student Success Facilitator;
Assistant Professor of PA Studies

DARCY SOLANYK, MS, PA-C
Director of Curriculum;
Associate Professor of PA Studies

STEPHEN SOLANYK, BSEE
Technical Program Manager of PA Studies