

# Still

MAGAZINE



## Human touch

Standardized patients prepare students for real-life care



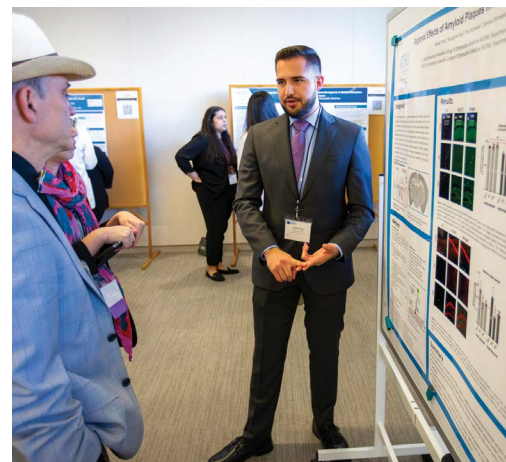
Second-year ATSU-KCOM student Alexander Enabnit checks patient records before entering a standardized patient encounter.

Learn what ATSU students have to say about their experiences with standardized patients by visiting [atsu.edu/sp-students](https://atsu.edu/sp-students)





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# From the CHANCELLOR



## Tech-driven, human-centered education

As we celebrate this latest issue of *Still Magazine*, we are excited to share the remarkable stories and achievements exemplifying the ATSU spirit. This edition highlights our innovative standardized patient programs, a cornerstone of our health sciences education. By simulating complex, real-world interactions, these programs empower students across campuses and disciplines to build confidence and enhance their ability to provide exceptional compassionate care before they even graduate.

illustrated how the University bridges education and research with real-world applications.

Looking toward the future, we are thrilled to showcase our newly renovated Synapse Tech Lounge. This space was designed to be a hub for philanthropy, collaboration, and the exploration of new technologies, a testament to ATSU's dedication to fostering environments for learning and community engagement.

As we navigate a world increasingly shaped by technology, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to you, our alumni and friends, for your unwavering support. It is through human connection and collaboration we continue to thrive, and your contributions play a vital role in enhancing our programs and enriching the lives of our students. Thank you for being an integral part of our university community.

Yours in service,

*Craig M. Phelps DO*  
 Craig M. Phelps, DO, '84  
 ATSU Chancellor



Top left, clockwise: Standardized patient Greg Chugg with ATSU-SOMA student Alexandra Sakhel; ATSU-MOSDOH students Keith Pereira, Chloe Vu, and Paige Tweddle at the Kirksville Healthcare Expo; Admissions staff Melissa Lopez and Desiree Dugger at the Phoenix 10K

# Still

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 A.T. Still University of Health Sciences serves as a learning-centered university dedicated to preparing highly competent professionals through innovative academic programs. The University is committed to continuing its osteopathic heritage and focus on whole person healthcare, scholarship, community health, interprofessional education, diversity, and underserved populations.

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 FIRST IN WHOLE PERSON HEALTHCARE

# Advocacy and unity

## MAOPS Gallery Hall dedicated to prominent osteopathic organization

By Samantha Gran

ATSU faculty and staff joined the Board of Trustees and University administration for a dedication of the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons (MAOPS) Gallery Hall on Thursday, Oct. 27, 2025, during Founder's Day activities. The dedication ceremony honored MAOPS' significant contributions to the Museum of Osteopathic Medicine and its continual advocacy on behalf of the osteopathic profession.

ATSU Chief Advancement Officer Bob Behnen, MBA, kicked off the ceremony by welcoming guests and recognizing those in attendance. In his remarks, Behnen highlighted the centrality of charitable support to the continued operation of the museum and preservation of osteopathic history.

"Through their generosity, donors support exhibits that inspire, educational programs that enlighten, and the preservation of artifacts that tell the remarkable story of osteopathic medicine's birth and

evolution," Behnen said. "Donor support not only sustains the museum's daily work but expands its reach, inviting students, professionals, and the public to discover how osteopathy continues to shape healthcare today."

ATSU Chancellor Craig M. Phelps, DO, '84, described the growth and influence of osteopathic medicine. Its current scale dwarfs its humble origins. Today, at least one in four medical students are studying to become doctors of osteopathic medicine (DOs), a number which would be unthinkable during the early days of the profession given the persistent resistance with which it was met. This being the case, it is more important than ever to preserve its history and heritage. Dr. Phelps emphasized how the museum is key to this preservation because it houses unique artifacts relating to the origins of osteopathic medicine and philosophy of A.T. Still, DO. Founded in 1934, the museum's collections include more than 100,000 objects, photographs,

Dr. Katie Davenport-Kabonic cuts the ribbon to the MAOPS Gallery Hall, which leads to Heritage Hall and the Museum of Osteopathic Medicine.





Dr. Katie Davenport-Kabonic addresses the crowd at the MAOPS Gallery Hall dedication ceremony.

documents, and books. These items extend back to the early 1800s and offer a diverse outlook on the discipline from its inception to the present day.

Through a generous six-figure donation, MAOPS contributes actively to these preservation efforts and, in doing so, helps maintain the osteopathic profession's integrity. However, this is not the only way MAOPS supports osteopathic medicine. In his speech, Dr. Phelps reminisced on the profound impact MAOPS had on him as a student and its continued outreach today.

"They're the folks who are doing the work every single day so the physicians can do what they need to do and enjoy what they do," Dr. Phelps said.

Since its inception in the late 19th century, osteopathic medicine has consistently been met with controversy. As Dr. Still began to develop his philosophy and sought to share his findings, those around him were quick to denounce the tenets of whole person healthcare he presented. One church went so far as to deem osteopathy as sacrilege, and universities forbid Dr. Still from sharing his ideas on their campuses. After struggling for some time to find a community where he would be accepted, Dr. Still eventually landed in Kirksville, Missouri, where he would establish his practice and, in 1892, the American School of Osteopathy, known today as ATSU's Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU-KCOM).



ATSU-KCOM students celebrate the MAOPS Gallery Hall dedication ceremony.

Founded a few years later in 1897, MAOPS works tirelessly to ensure DOs share the same rights as doctors of medicine (MDs). MAOPS provides DOs with an invaluable net of support and resources, enabling them to focus on their work, rather than the bureaucratic framework surrounding it. As an organization, MAOPS recognizes the importance of the University as common ground for DOs around the world. Katie Davenport-Kabonic, DO, '12, president of MAOPS' Board of Trustees and alumna of ATSU-KCOM, expressed appreciation for the association's recognition and reiterated the importance of advocacy.

"MAOPS is an organization of osteopathic physician members from all stages of training and from all specialties," Dr. Davenport-Kabonic said. "We are made of many members who have walked through this very hall and many members who originated from other colleges and

states, with their own halls of osteopathic knowledge having found their pathway to Missouri to serve our communities. We are fortunate to be a family of so many backgrounds, so many pasts, and futures. Whether or not we study or practice osteopathic medicine on these very grounds, we all share our common roots here in Kirksville."

Following Dr. Davenport-Kabonic's remarks, Dr. Phelps unveiled a plaque symbolizing the University's gratitude for MAOPS' unwavering support and generosity, with a ribbon-cutting held at the hall's entryway to Heritage Hall. The MAOPS Gallery Hall now serves as a testament to the power of advocacy and unity, and honors the commitment of an extraordinary group of individuals whose efforts will echo across the osteopathic profession for years to come.

# WALL OF HONOR

Museum of Osteopathic Medicine celebrates legacies, preserves history

Located in Kirksville, Missouri, the Museum of Osteopathic Medicine serves as the world's repository for the history, archives, and artifacts of osteopathic medicine. Beginning in 1934, the museum consisted of two glass display cases containing the personal effects of A.T. Still, DO, and early osteopathic items. Today, the museum's collection has grown to include more than 100,000 artifacts representing Dr. Still and the osteopathic profession.

The Wall of Honor offers a unique opportunity to recognize DOs, friends of the profession, and organizations and institutions supporting osteopathic medicine while contributing to the museum's mission. Each namesake plaque on the Wall of Honor represents a lasting tribute to those who have advanced the osteopathic profession, preserved its rich history, or supported the education of future physicians.



Dr. Paul Kimberly didn't simply teach osteopathic principles, he helped us understand the kind of physicians, and people, we were capable of becoming."

### Drs. Richard Koss and Monica Haines on their decision to recognize Dr. Kimberly on the Wall of Honor

To honor one of the icons of osteopathy, Richard Koss, DO, '82, and Monica Haines, DO, have issued a matching gift challenge to honor Paul E. Kimberly, DO, and his legacy on the Wall of Honor. By matching every dollar, up to \$15,000 contributed in Dr. Kimberly's honor, they hope to inspire others to join them in recognizing a teacher whose influence continues to shape osteopathic medicine.



To make a gift in honor of Dr. Kimberly, please visit [giving.atsu.edu/KimberlyMuseum](http://giving.atsu.edu/KimberlyMuseum)



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— Anthony K. Taylor, DHSc, '23  
Doctor of Health Sciences alumnus



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## FEATURES

### IN THIS SECTION

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- Running for a cause
- Record-breaking research
- First steps
- Places & spaces:  
Kirksville, Missouri

In collaboration with Mentorships in Dentistry Inc., ATSU’s Diversity & Inclusion department welcomed local students to the Mesa, Arizona, campus, for the 2025 Mentorship in Dentistry Youth Summit on Friday, Nov. 7. Middle and high school students from historically underrepresented backgrounds spent the day at ATSU’s Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health (ATSU-ASDOH), exploring what a future in dentistry can look like.

Guided by practicing dentists and ATSU-ASDOH students, attendees engaged in hands-on activities, including learning how to fill cavities, and took part in interactive conversations about dental anatomy and oral health. The day also included a lunchtime Q&A with current students and dentists, culminating in a celebratory white coat ceremony honoring each participant’s achievement.

# The human curriculum

ATSU's standardized patient programs prepare students for real-life care



## ENCOUNTER DIALOGUE

**Student:** “Hello, I’m Student Doctor Peyton Grant. What brings you in today?”

**Patient:** “I’ve been having some pain in my shoulder.”

**Student:** “Can you tell me exactly where your pain is located?”

**Patient:** “It’s my right shoulder. I fell on it a few days ago, and it’s not getting better.”

**Student:** “Can you describe your pain?”

**Patient:** “It’s a sharp pain when I move it, but a constant, dull ache when I’m resting.”

**Student:** “On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being very little pain and 10 being the most pain you’ve ever experienced, how would you rate your pain?”

**Patient:** “Right now, maybe a 4. But when I try to lift my arm, it’s a 7 or 8.”

**Student:** “What caused you to fall?”

**Patient:** “I was walking my dog. She chased a squirrel, and I tripped over the leash and landed on my right side ...”



**E**very healthcare professional remembers the first time they sat face to face with a patient. They remember the nerves, the uncertainty, and the responsibility. At ATSU, students experience that moment earlier than most, through standardized patient (SP) programs designed to help students build confidence and enhance skills before they ever step into real-world practice.

An SP encounter looks like a routine clinical visit: a patient, a student provider, and a conversation about symptoms and concerns. But behind the scenes, every word and response is carefully designed to help ATSU students learn the practice of quality patient care. Across campuses, SP visits turn simulated educational encounters into powerful learning experiences.

SPs are real-life people who are taught to portray patients in realistic and repeatable ways. They are given character names, personalities, and scripts to follow with specific histories, conditions, and symptoms. SP encounters allow students to apply their knowledge and skills in a safe, simulated environment without jeopardizing real patients. These encounters also allow students to reflect, build confidence, and improve their interactions with patients, ultimately preparing them to provide high-quality healthcare on day one.

**SPs are real-life people who are taught to portray patients in realistic and repeatable ways.**

SPs have been part of medical education for decades, with ATSU's first standardized patient program beginning at Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU-KCOM) more than 25 years ago. Today, SP programs have spread across ATSU campuses for many academic programs, including Osteopathic Medicine (DO), Physician Assistant Studies (PA), Physical Therapy (PT), Occupational Therapy (OT), Dental Medicine, Audiology, and Speech-Language Pathology (SLP).

ATSU's SP encounters are set up in individual patient rooms designed like those of a real clinic. Nearby, a control room equipped with an audio-visual system allows staff members to monitor encounters and record interactions between students and patients. Once encounters are complete, students receive feedback and watch their recordings to see what they did well and what aspects could be improved.

The SP program based in Kirksville, Missouri, is housed in the Byron & Helena Greenberg Performance Assessment Center (PAC), designed specifically for SP encounters. Lisa Archer, BSN, RN, CHSE, director of simulation & performance assessment, ATSU-KCOM, oversees the Missouri SP program. She and her team work year-round to ensure SPs are well prepared to portray real patients and to ensure students gain valuable experience and quality feedback.

Since joining ATSU in 2014, Archer has led the expansion of all Missouri-based simulated learning experiences, including SP encounters. Not only do medical students at ATSU-KCOM complete encounters, but so do dental students from ATSU's Missouri School of Dentistry & Oral Health (ATSU-MOSDOH), as well as nursing students from Truman State University and local family medicine residents. Bringing together students from different disciplines allows opportunities for interprofessional education (IPE), including mental health SP encounters for DO and nursing students. Additionally, the SP program includes Spanish-speaking SPs for the ATSU-KCOM Medical Spanish elective course, where SP encounters are conducted entirely in Spanish.

"The school has long invested in the program to make sure it has all the resources needed to develop and grow it," says ATSU-KCOM Dean

Margaret Wilson, DO, '82. "This includes hiring dedicated SPs who are well prepared to portray real-life scenarios and able to critically evaluate student performance."

Kathy Schroeder has served as the Missouri SP educator since 2015. Prior to this role, she was an SP for eight years, which gave her firsthand experience with the SP learning curve. Drawing on her expertise, she has helped build a team consisting of 57 SPs, along with nine Medical Spanish SPs. Additionally, Marianne Romprey serves as the SP support specialist, scheduling encounters and running the software, and Rob Long serves as the simulation specialist, ensuring the technology functions smoothly.

Additionally, the Missouri SP team includes 10 SP mentors, who are highly experienced SPs. These mentors are paired with new SPs to help them learn their role and support them throughout the orientation process, ensuring a consistent level of quality among team members.

"From the beginning, Dr. Wilson has believed so strongly in this program that we've pulled out all the stops, and this is what we pour into our students' education," Archer says.

The approach to quality education and well-prepared graduates extends throughout ATSU to its Mesa, Arizona, and Santa Maria, California, campuses. In 2007, ATSU's School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (ATSU-SOMA) officially began its SP program with the graduating class of 2011. In 2019, the Clinical Performance Center (CPC) opened on the Arizona campus, providing a dedicated home for SP encounters, skills labs, and classroom instruction.

"SPs are foundational to how we train osteopathic physicians at ATSU-SOMA," says Christina Weaver, DO, '14, assistant dean, innovation & clinical curricular integration. "From the very first week of medical school, students develop communication skills, empathy, and clinical presence through meaningful interactions with SPs, followed by thoughtful feedback that supports their growth. While technology plays an important role in simulation, SPs offer the highest level of realism, mirroring the complexity, nuance, and humanity of real clinical encounters."



In addition to ATSU-SOMA, SPs are used by several programs at ATSU's Arizona School of Health Sciences (ATSU-ASHS), including PA, PT, OT, SLP, and Audiology. ATSU's Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health uses SPs for interviewing applicants to the School and for students to practice patient-centered interviewing.

"Within the CPC, students engage in realistic patient encounters in fully equipped clinical examination rooms, allowing them to apply clinical knowledge in an authentic environment," says Brittney Hulseley, DMSc, '22, MSPAS, '15, MS, PA-C, program director and associate professor, physician assistant studies. "At the conclusion of each clinical medicine course, students are formally assessed through observed encounters with SPs, with performance evaluated by faculty proctors."

Kathy Schroeder monitors SP encounters from the Missouri campus control room.

With the variety of programs on the Arizona campus, the CPC provides IPE opportunities using SPs. For example, the OT program collaborates with the SLP program for its Basic Patient Care Skills course where OT and SLP students conduct an intake evaluation with SPs to practice their evaluation skills. Also, DO and dental students collaborate on SP-based activities to learn from each other and improve patient outcomes.

Although programs incorporate SPs differently into their curricula, the purpose is the same: enhance student learning to produce well-rounded, high-quality healthcare providers.

Faculty across disciplines echo the benefits of the CPC's impact on student learning and assessment.

"The use of the center, along with the participation of multiple SPs, has been invaluable, and we have received outstanding support from the CPC staff throughout each experience," says María A. Centeno-Vázquez, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, chair, program director, and associate professor, speech-language pathology. "Our faculty are actively involved by directly observing students during these encounters and facilitating structured debriefing sessions afterward."



On the Arizona campus, SPs are incorporated into a variety of educational experiences for many academic programs.

The Arizona campus employs about 70 SPs, all educated and coordinated through the CPC. The CPC is led by Lorena Navarro, BSN, MSHS, CHSE, who joined ATSU in January 2025. Navarro works closely with four other team members: Lindsey Bowen, CPC operations coordinator; Josie Penrod, CPC SP coordinator; David Godziela, CPC simulation & technology specialist; and Moira Caswell, CPC simulation coordinator & technologist.

"What I enjoy most about our SP program at the CPC are the people - the team, the SPs, and the learners they help shape," says Navarro. "Our SPs bring an extraordinary level of authenticity, professionalism, and commitment to healthcare education."

Bowen and Penrod, both with years of experience as SPs themselves, lead much of the SP instruction. They both joined the team in 2019 after being SPs for seven years. Together, they ensure SPs are taught to portray patients authentically and provide meaningful, patient-centered feedback. Godziela, who joined the team in October 2025, ensures each encounter runs smoothly and students and faculty can focus on learning.

"I love being able to build and train an amazing team of SPs who know how to portray a patient in so many different aspects," says Bowen. "They are trained to help students be prepared to go out into the real world and not only how to interact with their patients on a doctor level but also on a level that connects them with their patients compassionately and empathetically."

Caswell focuses on creating high-fidelity environments, ensuring the environment looks and feels real. Like Bowen and Penrod, Caswell also has SP experience. Before joining ATSU in November 2025, she worked as an SP for two years at other local institutions. She says working in the CPC is the one place where her "quirky" resume makes sense.

"I love using my theater background to set the stage and my clinical background to ensure it's medically accurate. There is a thrill in creating a high-fidelity environment, whether through moulage or tech, that helps a student suspend

disbelief and learn how to save a life," Caswell says. "On a personal level, I love the reputation of this specific program. When I was working as an SP at other institutions, actors always spoke of ATSU as the 'gold standard.' Now that I am here as a tech, I see why. The SPs are incredibly dedicated, and it is a privilege to support a team that strives for that level of excellence."

The number of SP encounters students complete varies by academic program, and several programs require students to demonstrate clinical competencies to graduate. DO students complete between 38-45 encounters in their programs, while PA students participate in about 15. Dental, SLP, OT, and PT students usually complete fewer than 10 SP encounters across their programs, and the Audiology program uses SPs 3-4 times a year. Additionally, both campuses follow best practices established by the Association of Standardized Patient Educators to ensure the growth, integrity, and safe application of SP encounters.

On the California campus, ATSU's College for Healthy Communities is establishing its SP program for PA students. Currently, students are playing the role of SPs, acting as both clinician and patient and alternating roles across two clinical cases of equivalent complexity. To maintain clinical unpredictability and preserve the assessment's integrity, peer pairs are randomized, ensuring students cannot anticipate their partner's presentation or communication style. Jacqueline Dancy, MPAS, PA-C, associate professor, says moving forward, their program will adopt a hybrid model, integrating community members and peer SPs to provide a multifaceted, longitudinal learning experience preparing students for the transition from classroom to clinic.

"While community SPs provide a higher degree of realism, the peer-led model offers distinct pedagogical advantages," says Dancy. "The presence of a known peer provides a degree of psychological safety, allowing students to refine their clinical skills in a supportive, low-stakes environment while gaining a dual perspective that enhances both medical acumen and professional empathy."

## THE SP FAMILY

At ATSU, SPs are not merely paid actors; they are community members of all backgrounds and professions who are invested in their local students' education. They spend hours studying and preparing to become valuable pieces of the educational experience.

"I look at being an SP as something special and valuable that I can contribute to this world where healthcare is a global concern," says Jessie Cragg, a Missouri campus SP of 14 years and an SP mentor. "I think of my SP job as helping student doctors learn to help people everywhere."

Greg Chugg has been an Arizona campus SP for about 18 years. He always had an affinity for the medical field and joined the program after an early retirement. One of his favorite aspects of the SP program is watching students grow and contributing to their education.

"When they first come in, they're totally lost," he says. "But within a few weeks, they really catch on. It's exciting to see how quickly they progress."

In addition to seeing the students grow, Chugg has also seen the SP program grow. He started as one of the original Arizona campus SPs.

He also worked full time as a simulation technician for many years. Today, he continues serving as an SP, working on a part-time basis.

For many SPs, longevity in the role is tied not only to its flexibility but also its impact. Heidi Buckmister, who's been an SP on the Arizona campus since 2017, says being an SP allows her to work and still prioritize her family. She also says being an SP has opened her eyes to patient needs across the country.

"Through this program, I was able to learn about food deserts and barriers to access to healthcare," Buckmister says. "I didn't know anything about that until I worked in this program and saw the real everyday struggles people go through. It's been very humbling."

Taking on the role of an SP is eye-opening for many reasons. Tammy Whitworth, a Missouri SP mentor, was a registered nurse who decided to change careers after the pandemic. She wanted a career that would be flexible and still allow her to make a difference.

"Having worked with hundreds of providers over a 36-year career, I know what good bedside manner looks like," she says. "I had to take off my nurse hat completely and put myself in the shoes of a patient."

Eric Ensign, also a Missouri SP mentor, has gained a greater understanding of medical issues as well as the process students go through to provide appropriate care. Because of this knowledge, he says he will never experience his personal doctor appointments the same way he did before becoming an SP.

"It's impossible for me to sit in an exam room and not evaluate the process of care," he says. "At the same time, I have a greater appreciation for what the nurses and doctors have to accomplish in the relatively short time they are interacting with me."

In SP encounters, students have a checklist of questions to ask their patient, along with time limits. Similarly, SPs have a checklist of structured feedback to provide to students after their encounter, along with written

SPs are used as family members of simulated patients to improve students' bedside manner.



feedback describing observed behaviors paired with suggestions for improvement. One of the many important aspects of educating SPs for their roles is how they must evaluate students according to the standards, not their personal preferences.

"What has surprised me is how these students' personalities really come forth in the encounters," Cragg says. "The students all have the same guidelines, and the SPs all have the same 'script,' yet every encounter is a fresh new experience!"

Across campuses, SPs echo a sense of pride in being part of the University and part of a process to enhance the quality of future healthcare providers. Missouri SP mentor Peggy Gerhold says while it may appear SPs are just sitting on the exam table playing their role with a look of pain on their face, inside, they are cheering on each student.

"They treat you like a real patient, and they take it seriously," says Mia Mickley, an Arizona SP since 2014. "They are so open to feedback and are very invested in their future."

"I really enjoy my interactions with everyone, whether it's other SPs, the facilitators, or the students," says Kathy Walker, an Arizona SP. "It feels like a family, it always has since day one."

The SP teams on each campus have naturally formed their own "family" units. Besides working together, they support and celebrate each other, and even spend time together outside of their SP roles.

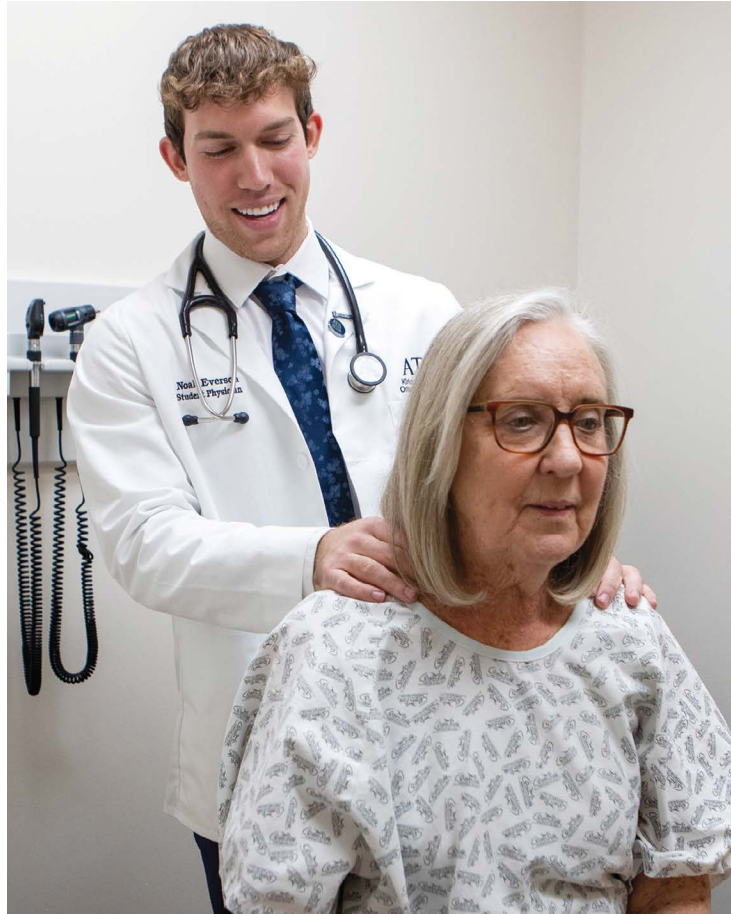
"These are people who love ATSU," Archer says. "They love being part of something that has such a strong purpose - educating the future physicians of our community and our world."

SPs portray a wide range of symptoms and personalities to prepare students for real-life encounters.

To learn what SPs have to say about their roles and preparing ATSU students for real patient care, visit the URL below.



[atsu.edu/sp-patients](https://atsu.edu/sp-patients)



### THE FUTURE PHYSICIANS

Libbi Kleitz, a second-year ATSU-KCOM student, felt a mix of excitement and nervousness before her first SP encounter. Much like every “first” of medical school, she felt encouraged by the faculty and peers around her who assured her this would be a beneficial learning experience. Once her encounter began, she says her nerves seemed to calm and her newly formed muscle memory took over.

“I felt like I could connect with my patient on a personal level while simultaneously scribbling through COPMAPS, our mnemonic for history taking,” she says. “There is a certain empowerment that comes with feeling yourself grow in real time; that is what SP encounters are all about.”

ATSU-KCOM’s method for ensuring a comprehensive patient assessment is COPMAPS, a mnemonic used by students for taking a patient’s history. It follows the order of complaint (quality, location, severity, quantity), onset (how, when), progression, mitigating factors, associated symptoms, previous occurrence/pertinent other, and summarize. Students are encouraged to write this mnemonic down the side of their paper before they go into patient rooms to take notes.

“There are real patients who are tight-lipped, stoic, and shy, and if the doctor doesn’t ask the question, they won’t divulge that information,” Archer says. “We have to train our students to get a good history with all the data points they need, and COPMAPS helps us accomplish that.”

For ATSU-SOMA and ATSU-ASHS PA students, their mnemonic for patient assessment is OLDCARTS. This memory aid follows the order of onset, location, duration, characteristics, aggravating/alleviating factors, radiation, timing, and severity.

First-year ATSU-SOMA student Tim McGinley says working with SPs has been an invaluable part of his education. In addition to having the opportunity to learn from mistakes in a controlled environment, he believes the SP experience provides important self-awareness.

ATSU-KCOM students Michael Pollack (left), Noah Everson (top), and Libbi Kleitz (right) practice physical examination skills on SPs.



“The best part about working with SPs is seeing where I’m strongest and where I can improve,” he says. “I really value the interpersonal aspect of medicine, and being able to work with SPs is a real honor.”

Marshall Brace, an ATSU-KCOM medical education fellow, recalls the moment where all aspects of an SP encounter fell into place for him. He was performing a neurological examination on his SP and asked her to make a face. When she did, only part of her face moved. At first, he thought she misheard him, and he repeated the instruction, observing the same result.

“It was then it finally clicked and I realized that I was observing an abnormal result, jotting down in my notes ‘Right CN VII out,’” he says. “That was a great moment because we are so used to seeing the normal results of exams that being able to observe the abnormal findings gives a sort of ‘aha’ moment.”

For Noah Everson, a first-year ATSU-KCOM student, a similar moment shifted his mindset. In one of his SP encounters, the SP responded emotionally to a question, and instead of moving on to the next item in the checklist, he paused and acknowledged what the SP was feeling.

“I stopped thinking about points and objectives and focused on the patient in front of me,” Everson says. “The conversation became more natural, the patient opened up, and the encounter felt far more meaningful.”

Over time through multiple SP encounters, students learn to incorporate their mnemonic more smoothly into their patient interviews, and they find their own rhythm and flow. History taking becomes second nature, and each encounter becomes more of a conversation rather than a mere checklist.

“These encounters are showing me how important trust and consistency are over time,” says second-year ATSU-MOSDOH student Thomas Beddard. “They have also helped me learn how to calm patient anxiety, which can make a big difference in a patient’s willingness to accept treatment and come back in the future to maintain their oral health.”

Not only do students benefit from the repeated exposure to SPs and the variety of cases, but they also benefit from their feedback. Peyton Grant,



Lisa Archer instructs ATSU-KCOM student Marshall Brace before entering an SP encounter.

an ATSU-KCOM medical education fellow, says after reading feedback from the SPs, she was reassured she was becoming the thoughtful and compassionate physician she hopes to be one day.

“I am confident that these experiences have equipped me to enter clinical rotations and subsequent patient care settings with greater confidence, compassion, and resilience,” she says.

Fourth-year ATSU-KCOM student Kathryn Carey says the feedback from SPs has significantly influenced how she communicates with her patients during clinical rotations, particularly in developing more professional and intentional language.

“During my first year, my friends and I frequently used the phrase ‘a little’ in casual conversation, and I did not initially realize I brought this into an SP encounter when I said, ‘I see you’re having a little chest pain,’” Carey says. “The feedback helped me understand that minimizing language like this can feel dismissive or demeaning to patients, even when that is not the intent.”

Carey also says SPs provided feedback about using too much medical jargon when explaining diagnoses or plans. This kind of feedback reinforces the importance of identifying health literacy and ensuring patients truly understand their condition so they can participate in their own care.

“The honesty of SPs makes this feedback especially valuable, as they often share perspectives that real patients may not feel comfortable expressing directly, allowing for reflection and the opportunity to meaningfully improve patient care,” she says.

Students recognize SPs are critical to their success as they transition from classroom to clinic. Katie Wilson, a second-year ATSU-KCOM student, says she saw this in action during a summer shadowing experience where she used COPMAPS while also tailoring her questions to fit the patient’s chief complaint.

“The physician I worked under was impressed with my abilities to do patient interviews, especially as an incoming second-year student, and allowed me to see most of their patients first, then give a report,” Wilson says.



Practice makes perfect, and SP encounters start that practice early.”

**Ellie Cumpton, ATSU-KCOM medical education fellow**

Not only do students appreciate the roles SPs play, but they also acknowledge how well they perform those roles. The variety of symptoms they present and the range and intensity of emotions they convey, including conversations on difficult topics, all contribute to the realism of these encounters.

“Our SPs are very clinically aligned with real patients, especially when it comes to communicating pain,” says first-year ATSU-SOMA student Jennifer Lanza. “I really feel like we’re in our rotations or working as an attending physician. It gives us that real-life feeling of being a doctor.”

## LESSONS THAT LAST

Matt Burnett, DO, '25, a resident physician at Trinity Health Ann Arbor, recalls the nerves and stress of participating in SP encounters as an ATSU-KCOM student. He remembers feeling the pressure of balancing multiple demands and the uncertainty each encounter brings. He also remembers feeling the evaluations were subjective to some degree.

“My counter to that now is that every real patient encounter is subjective, shaped by the patient’s beliefs, impressions, and emotions at the time,” Dr. Burnett says. “SP encounters teach students that how they behave, present themselves, and communicate always leaves an impression.”

Dr. Burnett believes students get out what they put into their encounters. When students approach their encounters with a positive attitude, it almost always benefits them in the long run. Furthermore, he says ATSU-KCOM’s curriculum is very intentional in how it progressively increases the level and amount of responsibility students take on before clinical rotations.



“SP encounters emphasized patient connection, building rapport, listening, introducing yourself and your role, performing a thorough physical examination, and communicating clearly,” Dr. Burnett says. “These fundamentals remain the foundation of every patient interaction I have today, and they now feel natural and reflexive.”

Michael Megafu, DO, MPH, '24, an orthopedic surgery resident at the University of Connecticut, says he was fortunate to have many early patient experiences at ATSU-KCOM, including SP encounters, to enhance his skillset. Even in the midst of a busy day, he remembers to take time to speak with his patients, and not just about their pathology.

“I still rely on interpersonal skills and the ability to connect with patients, a soft skill I believe offers a valuable return on investment when used correctly,” Dr. Megafu says. “Patients appreciate a knowledgeable physician, but they

are likely to continue with a doctor who actually listens to them, rather than one who has all the answers but is in a rush to see the next patient.”

Dr. Megafu says the volume and variety of encounters shouldn’t be taken for granted, even though they may be time consuming to prepare for and complete. He advises diligently working on assimilating all the information the patient provides to make a succinct, but thorough, summary of the patient’s presentation. By doing so, students will be able to arrive at a diagnosis quickly and manage their patients efficiently.

“I appreciate all the SPs who have taken the time to be a help and an asset to our education,” Dr. Megafu says. “Without them, we will greatly miss out on the importance of communication and will not be the quality student doctors and doctors that have been evident throughout the different clinical sites.” ■

SPs on each ATSU campus become a family. Some members of the Missouri SP family include (left to right) Jessie Cragg, Kathy Schroeder, Tammy Whitworth, Eric Ensign, Lisa Archer, and Peggy Gerhold.

## INTERESTED IN BECOMING AN SP?

**Opportunities are available at all of ATSU’s campuses. Please contact the following for more information:**

Kirkville, Missouri: Lisa Archer at [larcher@atsu.edu](mailto:larcher@atsu.edu)

Mesa, Arizona: Lorena Navarro at [lorenanavarro@atsu.edu](mailto:lorenanavarro@atsu.edu)

Santa Maria, California: Jacqueline Dancy at [jacqualinedancy@atsu.edu](mailto:jacqualinedancy@atsu.edu)

To view behind-the-scenes footage of ATSU’s SP encounters, visit the URL below.



[atsu.edu/sp-bts](https://atsu.edu/sp-bts)

# Running for a cause

ATSU students and employees participate in annual Phoenix 10K

By Arselia Gales

Students, staff, and faculty from ATSU's Mesa, Arizona, campus, woke up bright and early on Sunday, Nov. 9, 2025, to participate in the 50th annual Phoenix 10K and Marathon, one of Arizona's original road races. Founded in 1976 by Art Mollen, DO, the event began as a small local race and has grown into a large-scale community event.

Each year, participants have the option to run or walk a 5K (3.1 miles), 10K (6.2 miles), or half marathon (13.1 miles), and in 2025, the event added a full marathon (26.2 miles). Additionally, children ages 3 through 12 have the opportunity to participate in the Mollen Mile. Proceeds from the event benefit the Mollen Foundation, a nonprofit organization

dedicated to preventing childhood obesity and promoting healthy lifestyles in local schools.

Beginning with the first race at 6:30 a.m. and throughout the event, attendees and race participants strolled through the expo and visited vendor booths hosted by local and national sponsors, including ATSU.

In addition to volunteering, ATSU students, faculty, and staff represented the University on the course, including Tamara Valovich McLeod, PhD, ATC, FNATA, FNAK, FNAP, director, professor, and chair, athletic training, ATSU-Arizona School of Health Sciences (ATSU-ASHS), who ran the 10K.

To view the race start, visit the URL below.



[atsu.edu/2025-race-start](https://atsu.edu/2025-race-start)

ATSU student participants and volunteers at the race include (left to right) Alyssa Ghose, Selina Mohanty, Korey Schneider, Avni Upadhyaya, Omkar Kardani, and Taylor Genera.



Clockwise, starting top left: ATSU-ASHS physician assistant students Emma Zobitz, Connor Matzke, and Hannah Farrow complete the 10K. ATSU-ASHS physical therapy student Eddie White completes the half marathon. ATSU-ASDOH student Akosua Afriyie stops by the ATSU booth before running the 10K.



"It's been a while since I've done some races, and this was a great opportunity to come back out, support ATSU, and support this race," Dr. McLeod said.

Ann Lee Burch, PT, EdD, MPH, FNAP, ATSU-ASHS' dean, also ran the 10K alongside Ami Mikhail, MS, PA-C, '03, assistant professor, physician assistant studies, ATSU-ASHS. Like Dr. McLeod, Dr. Burch had participated in a handful of previous races and decided to support ATSU at this milestone event.

Some students on the course included Shannon Madden, a first-year student in ATSU's School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona, and Eddie White, a second-year student in ATSU-ASHS' Physical Therapy program, both of whom ran the half marathon. Madden used the November race as a tool to prepare for a full marathon. Meanwhile, Akosua Afriyie,

a third-year dental student in ATSU's Arizona School of Dentistry & Oral Health, ran her first 10K.

"I ran today just to push myself," Afriyie said. "I used to be an athlete, and I saw this as an opportunity to get back into my training and be healthy."

ATSU runners highlighted the sense of accomplishment that comes with completing a race, as well as the enjoyment of participating in an event that brings the community together. Student racers noted how running helps them stay focused in school and serves as an outlet during particularly demanding times. With community spirit and stamina on full display, the race offered a meaningful opportunity to step outside the classroom, prioritize wellness, and represent ATSU. ■



# Record-breaking research

17th annual Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Symposium held in Kirksville

By Katie Hubbard

**A**T. Still Research Institute (ATSRI) hosted its annual Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Symposium (IBRS) on Saturday, Nov. 15, 2025. Held at the Interprofessional Education Building on ATSU's Kirksville, Missouri, campus, this symposium marked 17 consecutive years of bringing together researchers from across the U.S., and now around the world. More than 300 participants attended the symposium in person and virtually with 128 abstracts submitted, breaking records from previous years.

Throughout the day, the symposium featured oral and poster presentations of research studies from ATSU students, faculty, and staff; Still OPTI resident physicians; Truman State University undergraduate students; and biomedical students and researchers from other institutions. For those who attended virtually, IBRS used the platform "Gather" to facilitate participation and interaction seamlessly in real time.

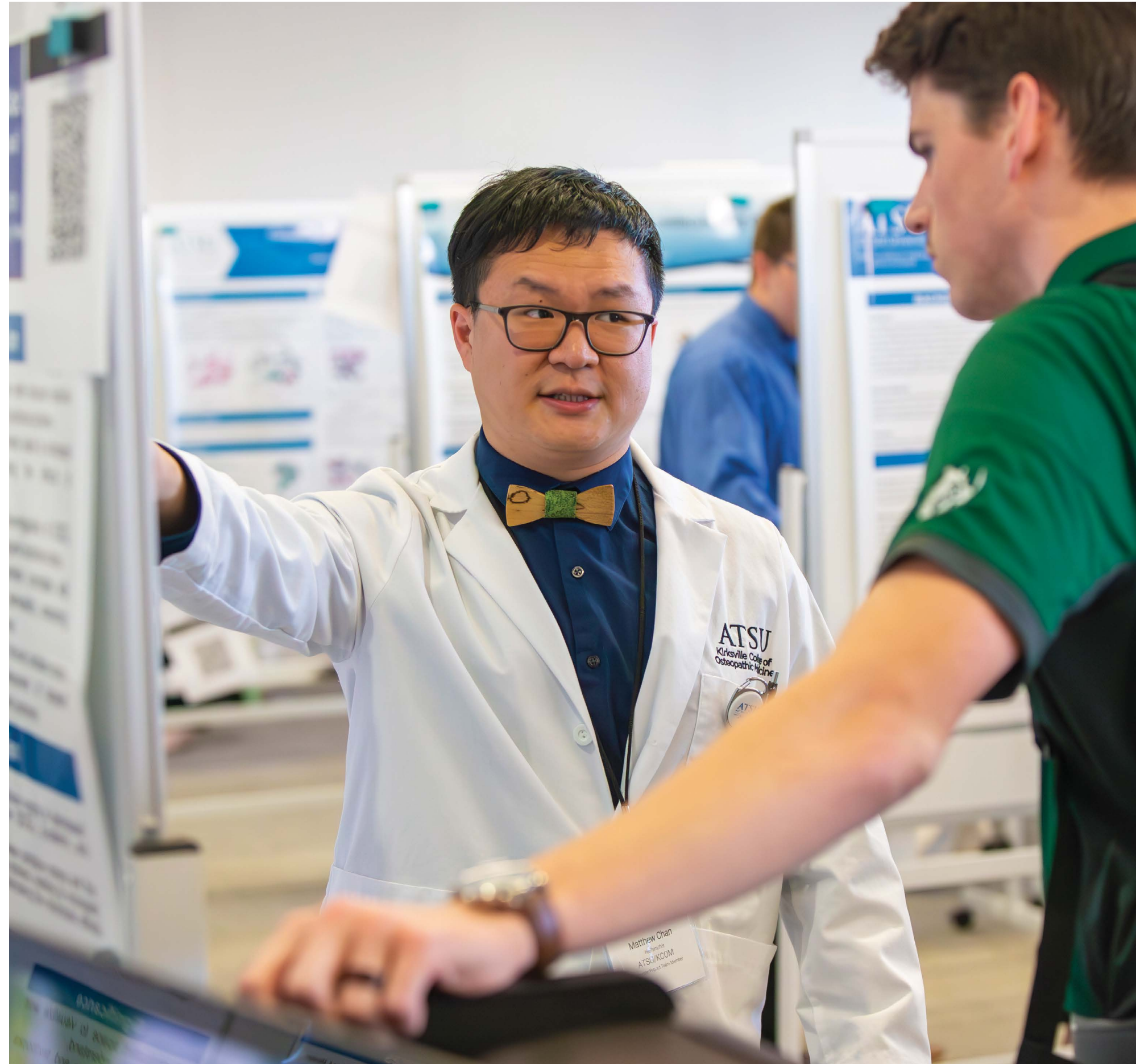
"Each of these posters, each of these efforts and works continue to improve humanity," said ATSU Chancellor Craig M. Phelps, DO, '84. "There is so much amazing research tying wellness and osteopathic medicine together, including undergraduate and graduate research and excellent work by faculty and staff."

Over the years, IBRS has become a cornerstone of research excellence at ATSU. Its goals are to celebrate student research achievements, foster interaction among students across multiple educational levels, provide experience in presenting research, and increase awareness of research methods, scope, and significance. In addition, the symposium highlights opportunities for students to gain advanced research experience.

"The breakthroughs we need for the challenges of tomorrow are sitting in this room," said Marie Jackson, PhD, MBA, director, ATSRI, who encouraged attendees to engage openly, think boldly, and connect with their fellow researchers.

Jeffrey C. Winer, MD, MA, MSHS, MHIIM, FAAP, delivered the keynote speech titled "Innovating Scholarship by Going Back to Basics." Dr. Winer is chief medical informatics officer at Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare and an adjunct associate professor at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. With degrees from Harvard, Yale, George Washington University, and Tennessee, he integrates clinical expertise, data science, and health informatics to advance healthcare.

Matthew Chan, OMS II, presents his research during a poster session.



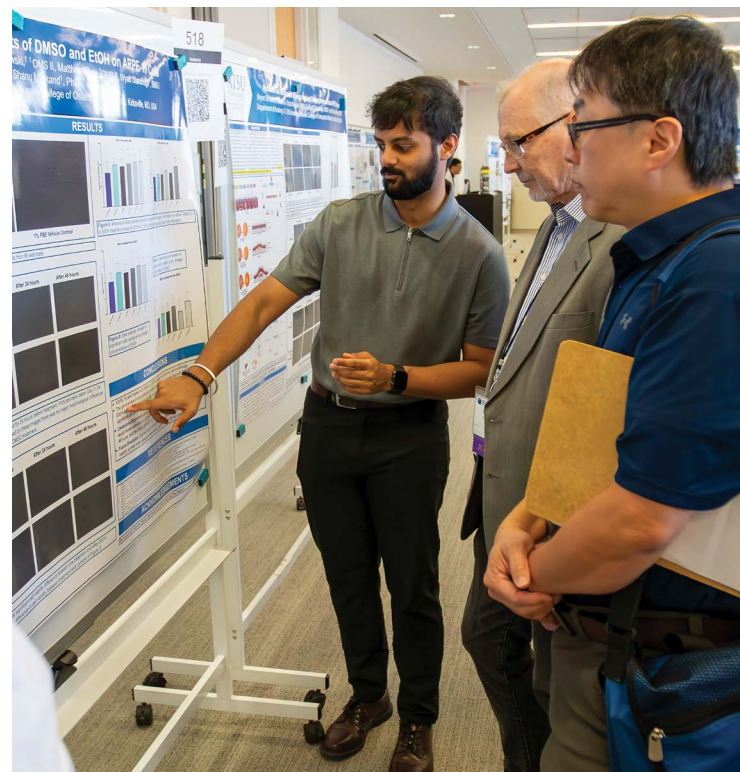


An author of more than 40 peer-reviewed publications and 60 invited reviews, Dr. Winer is recognized particularly for his dedication to academic mentorship. He supports more than 50 medical students, residents, fellows, and faculty in launching and sustaining scholarly projects in clinical research and quality improvement.

"I really liked the keynote speaker," said one participant. "I am actually starting to write a manuscript on my research (that I presented at this conference!), so he gave some good advice on that."

Additional feedback from those who attended IBRS included notes about the increasing quantity and quality of innovative research presented and how students were well versed in their research topics. A virtual participant said it was the first time an online event felt as engaging and present as an in-person one.

"Simply put, IBRS was the highlight of the year - awesome content, brilliant people, and an incredibly successful event," Dr. Jackson said. "We thank our entire 'village' for their generous support, without which this event would not have been possible." ■



Students, residents, and researchers present their interdisciplinary projects to an international audience.

# SHARE YOUR MEMORIES

Who influenced you the most during your ATSU education?



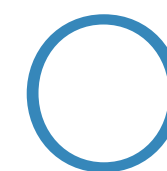
Email your answer to [stillmagazine@atsu.edu](mailto:stillmagazine@atsu.edu)

Responses may be shared in the next issue.

# First steps

Inaugural Kirksville Healthcare Expo provides opportunities for connection, collaboration, and discovery

By Samantha Gran



On Saturday, Sept. 6, 2025, ATSU hosted its inaugural Kirksville Healthcare Expo in collaboration with Northeast Regional Medical Center and Northeast Missouri Health Council. This event served as a unique opportunity for visitors to engage with a variety of different innovations, ideas, and resources in the healthcare field.

Since beginning in 2022 on ATSU's Mesa, Arizona, campus, the ATSU Healthcare Expo has successfully united community members, students, and healthcare professionals of varying specialties. At the Kirksville event, which was developed in response to the success of the Mesa event, over 700 guests explored exhibits and attended lectures and demonstrations. One demonstration featured Adam Story, PT, DPT, OTR/L, OTD, MTC, FNAP, an assistant professor of occupational therapy at ATSU's Arizona School of Health Sciences and chair of the ATSU Healthcare Expo in Arizona, alongside Doug Boswell, a Missouri farmer. Drawing on their combined practical and professional expertise, they demonstrated the ReWalk exoskeleton – a wearable robotic system enabling individuals with limited mobility to stand and walk.



Missouri farmer Doug Boswell and Dr. Adam Story demonstrate the exoskeleton and other mobility equipment.



Boswell was paralyzed from the waist down after an ATV accident irreversibly bruised his spine. He uses a variety of medical technologies to maintain his active lifestyle, including his wheelchair and his personal ReWalk exoskeleton, which has several advantages. The exoskeleton allows him to reach a walking speed of up to three miles per hour, ascend steps and curbs, and navigate uneven terrain. This versatility enables use in all areas of his life.

“You can use it to get up and walk around, go to the mall, hang out with your wife somewhere, have a barbecue, or even herd cattle,” Boswell says.

Prior to the expo, Boswell appeared on KTVO, a news station servicing parts of southeastern Iowa and northeastern Missouri, to perform a brief ReWalk demonstration. Many of the guests who attended the expo were drawn by this TV appearance – eager to



watch Boswell pilot his exoskeleton in person. He demonstrated maneuvering from his wheelchair into the exoskeleton and, with assistance of forearm crutches, took his first steps across the parking lot.

Despite his confidence in piloting the ReWalk today, Boswell faced a rocky road on his way to recovery. Immediately after his injury, he felt completely hopeless. Simple tasks were now impossible without assistance. For the first hay-cutting following his injury, he was forced to hire people to take on his duties. As a fiercely independent person, it was a massive blow to his self-esteem. According to clinicians, the nature of his injury made a full recovery impossible since spinal bruising is irreversible if the pressure is not alleviated within the first 24 hours of the injury. This news might have crushed Boswell's hopes entirely were he not introduced to exoskeleton technology. During physical therapy sessions, he had the opportunity to use the machine, which provided intense relief after months spent using a wheelchair.

“You know when you ride around in a car for an hour or two, then you stand up and you hurt?” Boswell says. “It's kind of the same feeling.”

Standing and walking have important benefits for wheelchair users, including increased strength and endurance and improved digestion and circulation. Prior to regular exoskeleton use, Boswell noticed leg wounds could take months to heal. However, after routine exoskeleton use, he said wounds closed at a significantly expedited rate. These improvements led him to become interested in acquiring his own machine. When the ReWalk exoskeleton model became available for at-home use, Boswell immediately submitted his name for consideration. Within a month, the ReWalk team invited him to a consultation.

Community members and event volunteers enjoy an up-close look at emergency response vehicles and participate in activity stations.



Northeast Missouri Health Council staff share information and service offerings with attendees, as well as a look at their mobile dental unit.

Boswell's experience with the ReWalk has led him to develop a passion for sharing his story. This brought him into contact with Dr. Story, who travels the country with his research team to meet people who use their ReWalk models in unconventional ways. The team identifies the product's advantages and areas for improvement, which they convey to developers. Dr. Story heavily prioritizes accessibility in his research and outreach efforts through the ATSU Healthcare Expo.

“My job at ATSU is building a platform for people to come have conversations,” Dr. Story says.

The expo is intended as scaffolding for these conversations. The interprofessional exhibits offer a broad perspective of innovations and resources typically restricted to their respective fields. Dr. Story believes providing clinicians with the opportunity to network outside their specialties will result in better patient care.

After meeting Boswell, Dr. Story recognized his experience would contribute strongly to the expo's goals. Not only did Boswell's recovery demonstrate the life-changing power of innovation in healthcare, his rural, agricultural background made him a good fit for the Kirksville Healthcare Expo. Additionally, his perspective offered insight for ATSU students, many of whom go on to serve rural populations after graduation.

“Some people don't even know things like the exoskeleton exist, and there are communities that could benefit from them,” Dr. Story says.

Through his outreach efforts, Boswell transformed his life-altering injury into an opportunity not only for himself but for the healthcare community at large. His testimony is invaluable in spreading awareness for exoskeleton technology, opening doors for future patients and providers while ensuring the best quality of care. His partnership with Dr. Story signifies a new beginning for ATSU's communities by extending the same network of interprofessional innovation and community outreach founded in Mesa directly to Kirksville. ■



# Places & spaces: Kirksville, Missouri

## The Synapse Tech Lounge

A recently renovated, cross-departmental initiative serves as a hub for students, faculty, and staff to convene, study, and collaborate across disciplines.

## TECH ZONE

A virtual and augmented reality area offers a guided, hands-on experience to acquaint students with the latest technologies and inspire innovative applications in healthcare education.

## STUDY SPACE

Complete with adaptable, modern seating and charging stations, the huddle space is designed for small-group collaboration and video conferencing, as well as studying and relaxation.

## PHILANTHROPY FOCUS

Monthly Bridge Builder Break-Time events connect students with donors to learn firsthand the power of philanthropy and the value of giving back to the people, causes, and communities they support.

— **synapse**  
noun (*sin-aps*)  
: the junction point at which an impulse passes from one neuron to another



Top: A student practices using virtual reality technology.

Left: ATSU-KCOM and ATSU-MOSDOH students collaborate on a project at a videoconferencing station.

Right (seated, left to right): Nancy Parrish, Marianna Giovannini, and Bob Behnen discuss the importance of philanthropy and supporting students.



### PHILANTHROPY IN ACTION

The Synapse Tech Lounge is more than a renovated space; it is a hub for innovation, connection, and community. Located at the heart of ATSU's Kirksville, Missouri, campus, the lounge serves as a gathering place for Bridge Builder Break-Time events, where students and donors come together to share stories and explore the lasting impact of philanthropy on healthcare education.

Conversations extend beyond scholarships and University support. Students hear directly from those who choose to invest in their futures and who believe education, innovation, and human connection builds healthier communities. For donors, the experience is also meaningful because they have an opportunity to visit face to face with students whose lives are being transformed by their generosity.

"Through engaging conversations with generous ATSU donors, students gain firsthand insight into the heart and purpose behind their support, including why they give, what they believe in, and how their contributions shape the future of the University and its students," says Brad Chambers, director of development. "These encounters illuminate the profound impact that giving

can have, not only on education but on lives and communities."

The name Bridge Builder draws inspiration from a poem by Will Allen Dromgoole, a reminder that true giving is not about recognition but about establishing pathways for those who will follow. Donors help build bridges of opportunities for future healthcare professionals to reach their dreams.

David Young, DO, '81, and his wife, Jill Young, were featured donors at a Bridge Builder Break-Time event in spring 2025. They are recipients of the Diplomate Lifetime Giving Award and are passionate about supporting Dr. Young's alma mater, ATSU's Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU-KCOM).

"Giving should be a guiding principle for anyone able to do so, as there is deep personal fulfillment in helping others," says the couple. "Our family has been fortunate to provide for ourselves and share with others. ATSU-KCOM has profoundly shaped our lives, and supporting the school has always felt essential. Ensuring its financial strength is vital to educating and training the next generation of osteopathic physicians." ■

“**ATSU  
made my  
lifelong  
dream of  
helping  
others a  
reality.**”

— Preeti C. Nayyar, DPT, '25  
Postprofessional Doctor of Physical Therapy alumna



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## CONNECTIONS

### IN THIS SECTION

- Reconnect
- Class notes
- Meet the board
- Chancellor's Circle
- Faculty & staff news
- In memoriam

Students from ATSU's Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU-KCOM) and Missouri School of Dentistry & Oral Health donned their white coats and passed through the gates to Forest-Llewellyn Cemetery in Kirksville, Missouri, for the annual Gift of Body ceremony on Oct. 22. These students gathered alongside faculty, staff, and alumni to honor those who donated their bodies to science.

“Your loved ones have not been forgotten, nor will they be,” said Allison Goldenstein, DO, MPH, '22, former anatomy fellow. “In our labs, their presence is felt each and every day, not just in the knowledge that they provide but in the way that they remind us to care for one another, and to treat the body, each patient, and each life in a sacred way, with the utmost care and dignity.”

## RECONNECT

When members of the ATSU family gather, a common thread emerges. Friends reconnect, new bonds develop, and students find inspiration. From coast to coast and many points in between, recent events brought energetic, diverse, accomplished groups of individuals together – enriching and reinforcing the tapestry of social and professional networks that bind the University community together.

### Fall 2025-Winter 2026

**DO Alumni, Students & Friends Reception | American Osteopathic Association Osteopathic Medical Education (AOA OMED) Conference**  
Omni Hotel  
Nashville, Tennessee

**DO Alumni, Students & Friends Reception | American College of Osteopathic Internists Annual Convention**  
JW Marriott Marco Island Beach Resort  
Marco Island, Florida

**ATSU Founder's Day 2025**  
ATSU Missouri campus  
Kirksville, Missouri  
ATSU Arizona campus  
Mesa, Arizona

**Dental Alumni Informal Meet-up | National Network for Oral Health Access**  
San Antonio, Texas

**Speech-Language Pathology Alumni, Students & Friends Reception | American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention**  
Washington, D.C.

**Physical Therapy Alumni, Students & Friends Reception | American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Combined Sections Meeting**  
Anaheim, California

**ATSU Alumni, Students & Friends Reception | American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) Congress**  
Houston, Texas



AOA OMED 2025



Founder's Day reunion, ATSU-KCOM class of 1975



ASHA reception



APTA reception



ACHE reception

### Upcoming alumni events

**Alumni, Students & Friends Reception | American Association of Physician Associates (AAPA) Annual Conference**  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
May 17, 2026

**Dental Alumni Informal Meet-up | American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD)**  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
May 2026

**Athletic Training Alumni, Students & Friends Reception | National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Convention**  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
June 30, 2026

**ATSU Founder's Day 2026**  
**ATSU Missouri campus | Kirksville, Missouri**  
Oct. 15-17, 2026  
**ATSU Arizona campus | Mesa, Arizona**  
Oct. 29, 2026



## Attention job seekers and employers!

Alumni employment opportunities are available across the U.S.

The University provides an online job board for ATSU alumni seeking employment and for employers searching for ATSU graduates to fill vacant positions. These job opportunities are shared by external employers and other alumni who value the skills and expertise of ATSU graduates. As a free resource for employers and job seekers, check back often when you are looking for a new opportunity or when you have positions at your organization or company to advertise.

Please contact [alumni@atsu.edu](mailto:alumni@atsu.edu) with any questions.



[atsu.edu/alumni-jobs](https://atsu.edu/alumni-jobs)

**ATSU** | ALUMNI RELATIONS



Save the date!

FOUNDER'S DAY 2026



A.T. Still University

Kirkville, Missouri, campus | Oct. 15-17, 2026  
Mesa, Arizona, campus | Oct. 29, 2026



### Founder's Day memories

Thank you for making Founder's Day 2025 unforgettable. Please join us again, or if you haven't attended recently, please celebrate with us this year!



## CLASS NOTES



Dr. Steele '78

## 1960s

**Keith D. Peterson, DO, '60**, was posthumously inducted into the University of Montana Athletic Department Hall of Fame at its 2025 homecoming celebration. Dr. Peterson's son, **Chris Peterson, DO, '92**, accepted the award on his behalf.

## 1970s

**Karen Steele, DO, '78**, received the 2025 Alumna of the Year award from the Kirksville Osteopathic Alumni Association. Dr. Steele has devoted her career to the advancement of osteopathic medicine, particularly osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM).

## 1980s

**Patricia Bell, DO, '88**, was ordained as an elder in full connection with the United Methodist Church in Denver in June 2025. A breast cancer survivor, Dr. Bell received her call from God in 2016 during chemotherapy treatment to retire from practicing obstetrics and gynecology and pursue her spiritual journey, including obtaining a master of divinity degree.

**Scott Weber, DO, FAFAP, '89**, was honored with the Edward J. Batt, MD, Memorial Teaching Award from the University of South Dakota



Dr. Workman '96

Sanford School of Medicine (SSOM). Dr. Weber is a clinical professor at SSOM and maintains a full-time practice in family and sports medicine at Yankton Medical Clinic PC. The surprise award presentation was held at the Yankton clinic with Dr. Weber's wife, Jo; son, Alex; granddaughters, Marie, Zelig, and Claire; and colleagues and clinic staff in attendance.

After more than 34 years as a practicing clinician, Dr. Weber plans on retiring in 2026. In reflecting on what has made his career as an educator so successful, Dr. Weber points to his own osteopathic education. He has made whole person care the basis of his practice and teaching, something he hopes he has impressed upon his own students, several of whom he now works alongside at the Yankton clinic. He considers mentorship a blessing and his skill as a physician a gift, the rewards of which have been exponential.

"It's been a tremendous honor, and a real surprise," Dr. Weber said.

## 1990s

**Frederick Workman, DO, '96**, a team physician for U.S. Figure Skating, was selected to represent Team USA at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan, Italy.

## 2000s

**Amit Gosalia, AuD, '06**, was named a distinguished fellow of the American Academy of Audiology, one of the profession's highest honors. Dr. Gosalia is a board-certified audiologist who is the co-owner of West Valley Hearing Center in Woodland Hills, California, and CEO of AudBoss, an international organization dedicated to empowering private-practice doctors through education, collaboration, and leadership development.

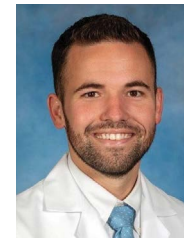
**Kimberly Paddock-O'Reilly, DHEd, '08**, a graduate of ATSU-CGHS, was named vice president for academic affairs at Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska.

## 2010s

**Josh Honeyman, DO, '12**, is one of four new members of Essentia Health's Board of Directors. Dr. Honeyman is an emergency medicine physician who has served as an attending physician at Essentia Health in Fargo, North Dakota. Dr. Honeyman is also certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine and licensed in North Dakota and Minnesota. He is an active member of the North Dakota Medical Association and the American College of Emergency Medicine.



Dr. Johnston '16



**Daniel Diaz, DO, '14**, joined Essentia Health-Duluth Clinic, specializing in orthopedics and sports medicine. Dr. Diaz is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.

**Bethany Brooks, DMD, MS, MPH, '16**, was featured in *Incisal Edge's* 15th annual 40 under 40 feature. A board-certified periodontist, Dr. Brooks was nominated because of her history as a mentor, innovator, and advocate for access. A Navy veteran, she has served aboard the USNS Mercy during a humanitarian mission in South Asia. She currently practices at The Dental Center in Hanover and Manchester, New Hampshire, and is in the Vermont Air National Guard.

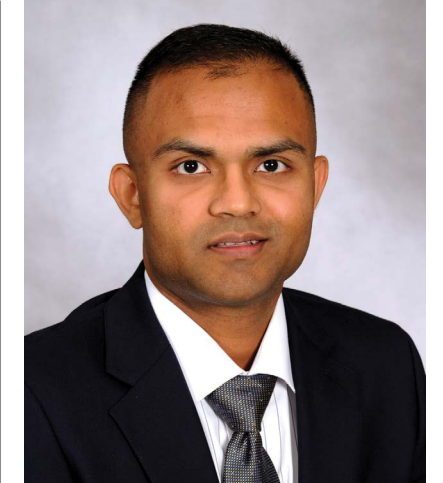
**Curtis L. Johnston, DO, '16**, was honored as a Pinnacle Lifetime Member by The Inner Circle. A graduate of ATSU-KCOM, Dr. Johnston specializes in osteopathic manipulative medicine and is an associate professor at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, practicing at the university's family medicine outpatient clinic. He also serves on the board of directors for the Illinois Osteopathic Medical Society.



Dr. Cloet '17

**Wanda Cloet, DHSc, '17**, Hastings, Nebraska, was recognized as one of the American Dental Hygienists' Association's (ADHA) 2025 Standout Seven Award recipients. Dr. Cloet was recognized for her dedication to shaping future registered dental hygienists. Her passion for education and commitment to advancing the profession through innovative teaching exemplifies excellence in dental hygiene education. The ADHA Standout Seven Awards are sponsored by Henry Schein.

**Marvin R. Mitchell Jr., DHSc, LCSW, BCD CDR, '17**, published an article with colleagues in *Food Control*. Dr. Mitchell was the lead author of the manuscript. At the time of the study, Dr. Mitchell was a health scientist for the Food and Drug Administration Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation network. He currently serves as



Dr. Wadud '17

director of psychological health at Marine Corps Base and Air Station Camp Pendleton.

**Mohammad Wadud, DO, '17**, a graduate of ATSU-SOMA, is one of two new board-certified family practice doctors joining the Franciscan Physician Network Dyer Family Health Center in Dyer, Indiana. His clinical interests include acute and chronic condition management, holistic health, preventive care, and social determinants of health.

**Alex Casiano, EdD, DHSc, MHA, MSW, '18**, San Juan, Puerto Rico, was appointed chancellor of Inter American University of Puerto Rico's Metropolitan Campus, effective Nov. 1, 2025. Dr. Casiano earned his doctor of health sciences degree with a concentration in leadership and health services from ATSU-CGHS.



The osteopathic principles of treating the person as an integrated being – mind, body, and spirit – have shaped my approach to academic leadership, emphasizing empathy, integrity, and evidence-based decision-making.”

**Dr. Alex Casiano, '18,**  
on his appointment as chancellor

## CLASS NOTES



Dr. Ragam '19

**Maryann Forsell, DMD, '18**, a graduate of ATSU-MOSDOH, received the Wisconsin Dental Association New Dentist Leadership Award. In addition, she was granted fellowship into the American College of Dentists, International College of Dentists, and Pierre Fauchard Academy.

**Shy C. Ni, DMD, '19**, a periodontist based in Exeter, New Hampshire, joined the DiBona Dental Group. She is a member of the Omicron Kappa Upsilon National Honor Society. An ATSU-MOSDOH graduate, her clinical focus includes bone and soft tissue regeneration across a wide spectrum of cases, benefiting patients needing advanced periodontal therapy.

**Kaushik Ragam, DDS, MS, '19**, a graduate of ATSU-ASDOH's Postgraduate Orthodontics program, joined the Community Health Center of Eagle Grove. He earned his dental degree overseas in 2011 and worked in clinical and research settings before relocating to the U.S. in 2015, completing his dental residency at ATSU-ASDOH in 2019. Dr. Ragam provides a wide range of dental services, including preventive care, restorative treatments, and family dentistry for patients of all ages.



Dr. Youngblood '20

## 2020s

**Ludwig Frontier, MD, DHSc, '20**, published the article "Paying blood donors in the 21st century: Ethics, policy and the global reality of recruitment" in *The Ethical Pulse: Blood, Biotherapies & Beyond*.

**Brittany Helmbrecht, DHEd, '20**, was named dean of the School of Professional Studies and Applied Sciences at Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska. She previously served as interim dean.

**Kyle Porter, MS, '20**, served as assistant director of sports performance at Grand Canyon University (GCU) following graduation from ATSU-CGHS' Kinesiology program. He worked with men's soccer, men's and women's tennis, and the dance team for two years, won four Western Athletic Conference Championships, went to four NCAA Tournaments, and won a Universal Dance Association National Championship.

After GCU, Porter was hired by the Colorado Rapids professional soccer club as the first ever academy strength and conditioning coach. He was promoted to the first team strength and conditioning coach/manager, then to director of player performance, and recently finished his first year overseeing the Performance department and acting as lead performance coach.



Dr. Peckham '22

**Shannon Youngblood, EdD, '20**, is president-elect of the Technologies Section of the Society of Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging (SNMMI). Dr. Youngblood teaches at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock, Arkansas, and has been involved with the SNMMI since 2012.

**Elizabeth St. Laurent, DO, '21**, a board-certified OB/GYN, joined Tideland Health in Myrtle Beach and Georgetown, South Carolina. Dr. St. Laurent will provide a wide range of women's health services, including pregnancy management and preventive care. Dr. St. Laurent is a graduate of ATSU-SOMA.

**Alexandra Gauer, DO, '22**, a graduate of ATSU-KCOM, joined Prairie Lakes Healthcare System's primary care team in her hometown of Watertown, South Dakota. Dr. Gauer looks forward to treating patients of all ages, with a focus on pediatrics and women's health.

**Ryan Pavelka, DO, '22**, a graduate of ATSU-SOMA, joined Kearney Regional Medical Center's emergency medicine team in Kearney, Nebraska.

**Derek Peckham, DO, '22**, a graduate of ATSU-KCOM, joined HaysMed's emergency department in Hays, Kansas. He previously worked for HaysMed as a phlebotomist from 2016-18.



Dr. Rasmussen '22

**Janae Rasmussen, DO, '22**, a graduate of ATSU-SOMA, was awarded the 2025 Outstanding Resident of the Year in Orthopedic Surgery by the American Osteopathic Foundation.



**April Stouder, EdD, MHS, PA-C, '23**, a graduate of ATSU-CGHS, was named program director and division chief of the Duke University Physician

Assistant program. Dr. Stouder previously served as associate program director and interim director.

**Debbie Booton, DHSc, '24**, and **Jeffrey Alexander, PhD, FAACVPR, ASM-CEP**, professor, health sciences, ATSU-CGHS, presented a poster titled "Incorporating Visual Arts into Respiratory Care and Dental Hygiene Programs to Improve Patient Assessment and Communication Skills" at the American Association of Respiratory Care conference in Phoenix.

**Dina Jarjees, DHA, '25**, collaborated with **Lihua Dishman, DBA, MBA**, professor, health administration, ATSU-CGHS, on publication of Dr. Jarjees' doctoral research project manuscript in the *Patient Experience Journal*. The manuscript is titled "Do Allied Health Professionals'

Workplace Experiences Affect Their Decisions to Stay? A Quantitative Investigation into the Relationship Between Wellness and Employee Retention in United States Hospitals."

**Ahmad Khan, DHSc, '25**, and faculty mentor **Melanie Tidman, DHSc, MA, OTR/L**, adjunct faculty, health sciences, ATSU-CGHS, published a study titled "A Hospital-Based Study on Attitude and Knowledge of Blood Donation and Practice of Blood Donation Among People in Kabul City, Afghanistan," in the 2025 issue of *Anemia*.

**Javan Nelson, DHA, MHA, LNHA, '25**, Portland, Oregon, was appointed as the new administrator of Madrona Grove at RoseVilla Senior Living. Additionally, Dr. Nelson and **John Fick, EdD, FACHE**, professor, health administration, ATSU-CGHS, co-published an abstract titled "Institutional Special Needs Plans and Organizational Performance: A Systematic Literature Review" in *Michigan Academician*.

## SHARE YOUR NEWS!

Have you recently met up with a fellow ATSU alum? Did you get a promotion, reach a milestone, or earn recognition? Maybe you have a story you'd like to share. Tell us about it at [stillmagazine@atsu.edu](mailto:stillmagazine@atsu.edu)

## THE BOOKSHELF



## The Total Healthcare Supply Chain Makeover

By Will Gregory, DHA, '24  
Self-published, May 2025

Combining evidence-based methods with real-world tools, Dr. Gregory offers a playbook for transforming a hospital supply chain into a strategic engine for margin, quality, resilience, and sustainability. Written for CEOs, materials managers, clinicians, data scientists, or anyone in between, this book provides a blueprint to become a supply-chain change agent.



## Resilient Wellness: Sickness Sucks. Wellness Wins!

By Dana Obos, DHA, RN, CWC, '21,  
adjunct faculty, health administration,  
ATSU-CGHS  
Platypus Publishing, August 2024

Focused on taking control of health and well-being, this book empowers readers with knowledge and tools to build a happier, healthier life. Dr. Obos includes practical strategies for addressing root causes of poor health, tips for self-care routines and holistic approaches to wellness, and techniques for managing stress and promoting mental resilience.

# A family tradition

Second-generation ATSU-KCOM graduate Dr. Jonathan Cleaver carries forward a family legacy of dermatologic care, education, and service

By Arselia Gales

Kirkville, Missouri, is where Jonathan Cleaver, DO, FAOCD, FAAD, FASMS, '08, began his journey in osteopathic medicine – and where it continues today.

“When I grew up, all I knew was osteopathic medicine,” he says. “It was what my family lived and breathed.”

Dr. Cleaver, a member of ATSU's Board of Trustees, is a second-generation graduate of ATSU-Kirkville College of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU-KCOM), following in his father's footsteps.

In addition to knowing he wanted to be a doctor of osteopathic medicine, Dr. Cleaver also knew what he wanted to specialize in. As a kindergartner, he placed a note in a time capsule declaring his dream of becoming a dermatologist. That dream became a reality, and today, Dr. Cleaver works alongside his father and brother David at Cleaver Dermatology in Kirkville. His younger brother, Nathan, practices in Georgia while continuing to support the family practice through dermatopathology. The family also directs the dermatology residency program.

“My passion, as well as my family's, is to provide high-quality healthcare in rural and underserved areas,” he says. “Our mission has always been to remain in Kirkville and train residents who want to provide dermatological care in underserved areas.”

This mission also extends beyond the clinic walls. The practice operates outreach clinics at six locations within a 90-mile radius, bringing specialized dermatology services to patients who might otherwise go without care.

Half of Dr. Cleaver's practice is surgical, while the other half is medical, a balance he finds especially rewarding.

“I like the variety of being in an outpatient setting,” he says. “We get to talk to our patients and develop personal relationships. In dermatology, we're lucky patients can see themselves getting better. It tends to be a very gratifying specialty.”

In addition to maintaining his practice, Dr. Cleaver is currently in his seventh year of serving on ATSU's Board of Trustees. His decision to serve was rooted in a deep sense of community and loyalty to both Kirkville and the institution that shaped his career. As a trustee, he values the opportunity to help preserve ATSU's traditions while supporting its continued growth and innovation.

“I think one of the most rewarding things is just seeing how well ATSU is doing and what impact it's made in creating healthcare professionals who serve all over the U.S.,” he says. “ATSU is on a great trajectory and has great leadership from top to bottom. It's easy to be on a board when the University is run so well.”

Dr. Cleaver hopes the ATSU legacy doesn't end with him and that one, if not all three, of his children experience the same calling he did and become ATSU-KCOM alumni.

“I love medicine, and I love osteopathic medicine,” he says. “It has a special place in my heart.”



Dr. Cleaver brings a high level of experience and perspective to the board. His contributions strengthen our programs and benefit our students.”

**Craig M. Phelps, DO, '84**  
ATSU Chancellor



# Welcome to the board

Meet ATSU's two newest Board of Trustees members

By Arselia Gales

ATSU's Board of Trustees serves as the University's governing body, providing strategic leadership and guidance in support of its mission. Board members are appointed annually and serve nine-year terms, during which time they help shape the University's long-term direction. In August 2025, ATSU appointed two new members to its Board of Trustees: Helen J. McBride, PhD, and Kari S. Bernard, PhD, PA-C, '04.



## Helen J. McBride, PhD

Location: Woodland Hills, California

Education: Texas A&M University, University of Utah, and California Institute of Technology

Occupation: Venture capital investor

### What inspired you to join ATSU's Board of Trustees?

I was inspired by how deeply ATSU lives its mission of whole person healthcare and service to others. Having trusted a DO with my own care for more than 20 years, I have seen firsthand how osteopathic training changes the way clinicians listen, partner, and treat the whole person.

I also felt I could contribute a complementary perspective as an early-stage healthcare investor, helping the board think about innovation, equity, and sustainability to benefit students, patients, and communities.

### What do you hope to achieve during your time on the board?

I hope to help ATSU stay ahead of where medicine and healthcare are heading. As an early-stage healthcare investor, I'm fortunate to see emerging science, technology, and care models (often a decade before they become mainstream). I want to share those insights so ATSU can thoughtfully navigate rapid change, including the rise of artificial intelligence. Most of all, I hope this work helps equip students to lead with both clinical excellence and compassion in whatever the future of healthcare holds.

### Fun fact:

As a young adult, my motorcycle was my main ride and my favorite kind of freedom – right up until the snowy winters in Salt Lake City finally convinced me it was time to trade two wheels for four.



## Kari S. Bernard, PhD, PA-C, '04

Location: Norfolk, Virginia

Education: Eastern New Mexico University, ATSU-ASHS, and Walden University

Occupation: Physician assistant, associate professor, and director of the Doctor of Medical Science program at The College of Idaho

### What inspired you to join ATSU's Board of Trustees?

A mentor saw my potential to serve the board, which inspired me to get involved. I completed my physician assistant education at ATSU's Arizona School of Health Sciences and have admired the University and its graduates ever since, so the opportunity to give back in this way felt both meaningful and natural. I am also at a stage in my career where contributing to organizational leadership at the board level feels both appropriate and well-timed.

### What perspectives or experiences do you hope to bring?

I am honored to bring both the physician assistant and alumni perspective to the board. With 20 years of clinical practice experience and 11 years in higher education, I look forward to contributing insights reflecting both the realities of patient care and the evolving needs

of students and health professions learners. I hope to contribute insights that align patient care, workforce preparation and well-being, and student development.

### Fun fact:

I lived in Mongolia for 1.5 years when my husband was stationed at the U.S. embassy in Ulaanbaatar. While there, we adopted a street dog and named her Altai after the mountain range bordering Russia and China in western Mongolia. When we returned to the U.S., Altai came with us. We don't know when she was born, so we celebrate her birthday on March 8, International Women's Day, which is a cherished holiday in Mongolia.



We are thrilled to welcome Drs. McBride and Bernard to the board. We look forward to their unique contributions and insights, which will move the University forward."

**Craig M. Phelps, DO, '84**  
ATSU Chancellor

# Chancellor's Circle

Your support paves the way for the next generation of whole person healthcare leaders. As a Chancellor's Circle member, you provide essential support for ATSU and its programs. By contributing \$1,000 or more annually to any University fund or initiative, you join a distinguished group of individuals who are making a powerful impact. Your generosity helps ensure ATSU remains at the forefront of whole person healthcare.

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Brian M. Lake, DO, '04 & Jeanie Lake  
Medley A. Larkin, DO  
Hans G.D. Laursen, DO, '03  
Dr. Don, '77 & Evelyn Lawrence  
Howard M. & Phyllis L. Levine CRT  
Charles A. Lewis, DO, '78 & Mrs. Judy Lewis  
K. Talmage Lewis, DO, '98 & Mrs. Robyn L. Lewis  
Suzanne H. Lin, DO, '97  
Bruce D. Lirones, DO, '82 & Mrs. Lisa Lirones  
Dr. & Mrs. Steven Livingstone, '84  
Mrs. Susan London  
Deborah S. Manne, MSN, RN, RDH, FADHA  
Duke Tsukasa Matsuyama, DO, '03 & Kelly Marie Van Fossen, DO, '04  
Janet Matuszek, DO, '92 & Bob Clark

Bruce A. McElhinney, DO, '87 & Sharon Dykstra, DO, '87  
Dwight McLeod, DDS & Dr. Karen Richardson  
Richard G. Meier, DDS & Mrs. Margaret Meier  
Merrill Lynch Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc.  
James C. Meyer, DO, '88 & Mrs. Ann Marie Meyer  
Paul D. Miller, DO, '13  
Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons  
Morgan Stanley Global Impact Funding Trust Inc.  
Morpheus Co. Ltd.  
Faryar Moshtaghi, DO, '70 & Mrs. Nancy Moshtaghi  
Gerard & Brigette Moufflet  
Dr. Bradford J., '79 & Tricia S. Murphy  
Mutual Insurance Company of Arizona  
The Mylander Foundation  
National Charitable Endowment Inc.  
Isaac R. Navarro, DMD, '08  
New Concepts Open MRI LLC  
Clinton J. Normore, EdD, MBA, '25 & Becky Normore  
Northeast Missouri Health Council  
Northeast Missouri Osteopathic Charitable Trust  
Dr. Joseph, '89 & Sandra Novinger  
Mrs. Marlene O'Bryan  
Marian Osterweis, PhD  
Lt. Col. Patrick G. Owen  
Patrick Albert Palmieri, DHSc, MBA, MSN, '12 & Ms. Sara R. Huaman  
Eric S. Palosky, DO, '94  
PDS Health  
Ms. Laurie Pearson  
Richard G. Pepe, DO, '62 & Mrs. Margaret V. Pepe  
Christine Perry, DO, '03  
Kimberly G. Perry, DO, '91 & Christopher M. Perry, DO, '89  
Trisha Lynn Perry, DPT, '07  
Craig, '84, Stacy & Zach Phelps  
Phelps Health  
Dr. Thomas J. Piskorowski, '79 & Mrs. Diane M. Piskorowski  
Deborah Jane Power, DO, '97  
Uttam Prajapati, DDS & Kusum U. Prajapati  
Wayne T. Prokott, DO, '89 & Mary Prokott  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald W. Prosser  
Quad Cities Community Foundation  
RAAA LLC  
Rachor Education Foundation Ltd.  
RAY America Inc.  
Renaissance Charitable Foundation  
Dr. & Mrs. Jeff Rettig, '87  
Chester Ridenour, DO, '81 & Mrs. Shelley Ridenour  
Thomas J. Ringenberg, DO, '83 & Birdena F. Ringenberg  
Rockwell Financial Group LLC  
Felix J. Rogers, DO, '73 & Caroline Rogers  
Binyamin Rothstein, DO  
Saint Louis Community Foundation  
Les T. Sandknop, DO, '78 & Claudia Poore Sandknop  
Dr. Gary L. Sattman, '67 & Mrs. Toni Sattman  
Eric L. Sauer, PhD, '97 & Andrea Lopes Sauer, PT, PhD  
Lynn T. Schachinger, DO, '87 & Sheryl Schachinger  
Michael L. Schreiber, DO, '04  
Schwab Charitable Fund  
Linnette Joyce Sells, DO, '82 & Brian S. Vanderhoof, DO, '90  
Bryan N. Sewing, DO, '98 & Jennifer P. Sewing, DO, '98

Shepherd Clinic, PLC  
Eric Shirley  
William L. Shisko, DO, '76 & Fotina Shisko  
Marc Shlossman, DMD, MS  
Stephen Destan Sides, DO, '98 & Jenny Side  
William F. Sill, DO, '70 & Mrs. Bette L. Sill  
Herbert Silva, DMD  
Douglas N. Smith, DO, '78 & Mrs. Cynthia T. Smith  
Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert & Cathy Smith  
Dr. & Mrs. Paul Grayson Smith Jr., '75  
Todd Wesley Smith, DO, '98 & Jennifer Smith  
Solstra Communities California LLC  
Mr. Dave Sproat  
David V. Stahle, CIMA  
Starbucks Coffee Company  
John M. Stedman, DO, '69 & Mrs. Esther B. Stedman  
Carolyn Sue Stees  
Fred L. Steinbaum, DO, '68 & Mrs. Eleanor Steinbaum  
Conrad Stephens  
Mary H. Strizzi, DO, '09 & Mr. Mike Strizzi  
Alfred W. Studwell, DO, '62 & Regina A. Studwell, EdD  
Gaylah & Werner Sublette  
SUMMA Health System  
Jeff L. Summe, DO, '87  
Renee K. Sundstrom, DO, '91  
John R. Sutton, DO, '89  
Taisei Suzuki, DO, '15  
David J. Swofford, DO, '78 & Mrs. Patrice Swofford  
John Tod Sylvara, DO, '91 & Karen A. Sylvara, DO, '91  
K. Sylvara Family Practice LLC  
Paul Teget, DO, '04 & Jennifer Teget  
Teget Foundation  
Jonathan B. Terry, DO, '09  
Mr. Stephen E. Thorne IV & Pamela Thorne  
John R. Thurman Jr., DO, '12 & Ms. Audrey Thurman  
Jerome W. Toler, DO, '15  
Michael Torgan, MBA, NHA  
Kenneth Tuong T. Truong, DO, '96  
United HealthCare Svs Inc.  
United Way of the Capital Region  
US Orthodontics Products  
Felix M. Valbuena, MD  
Dr. Eric von Hoven & Mrs. Sarah von Hoven  
William H. Voss, DO, '58 & Mrs. Helen J. Voss  
Leslie L. Walsh, DO, '82 & Ms. Lisa L. Walsh  
Frederick Watson, DO, '97 & Mrs. Anne Merrill Watson  
Lynn Weinberg, AuD, '02  
O.T. Wendel Jr., PhD & Ms. Janet C. Wendel  
Gihan Wetzel, DO, '95 & Jerry Wetzel  
Wetzel Memorial Osteopathic Foundation  
Larry Anthony Wickless, DO, '67 & Carol Crosby Wickless, JD  
Heather Williamson, DO, '00 & Mr. James D. Quirk  
Margaret Wilson, DO, '82 & Charles Lemley III  
Philip Joseph Wilson II, DO, '78 & Wanda Gayle Wilson, DO, '77  
Mitch & Cindi Woolery  
Donald F. Yoder, DO, '69 & Marian Yoder  
Dr. Andrew, '79 & Mary Rose Zazaian  
Lois M. Zonderman

# Upcoming continuing education opportunities

For a full list of upcoming opportunities, please visit [atsu.edu/ce](https://atsu.edu/ce)

## ATHLETIC TRAINING

Best Practices for Managing Mental Health Conditions in the Collegiate Athlete

Clinical Documentation in Athletic Training

Clinical Outcomes Assessment in Athletic Training: An Overview

Concepts of Diagnostic Accuracy in Athletic Training

Elevating Concussion Care in Practice: The NATA Bridge Statement

Evidence-Based Practice in Athletic Training

Examination of Concussion Reporting Influences and Educational Programs

From Research to Practice: Insights and Strategies for Salary Negotiation

Got Data? Using Patient Care Documentation to Drive Clinical Decisions and Improve Care

Health Information Technology in Athletic Training

How Much Information is Too Much? The Role of Unlearning in Athletic Healthcare

Incorporating EBP into Athletic Training: Overview of Practice-Based Partnerships

Incorporating the 6th International Conference on Concussion in Sport Recommendations into Practice

Learner-Centered Care: A Holistic Framework for Improving Equity in Athletic Training Education

Lower Limb Preventive Training Program Best Practice and Implementation

Medicolegal Considerations for Sport-Related Concussion

Menstrual Symptoms and Dysfunction: Clinical Strategies for Athletic Trainers

Optimizing Lateral Ankle Sprain Rehabilitation

Pain: How it Affects Stability and Movement

Promoting Patient Mental Health: Lessons and Considerations from a Sport Psychology Perspective

PROs, You Have Taken Them ... Now What?

Quality Improvement in Athletic Healthcare

Role of Sports Specialization on Injury, Overtraining, Burnout, and Mental Health Considerations

Social Determinants of Health in Athletic Healthcare

Synergy in Learning: Unlocking the Potential of Bidirectional Mentorship in Athletic Training Clinical Education

The Nervous System in Motion: Integrative Approaches to Somatic Healing and Athletic Performance

Using the AT Milestones to Guide Professional Development

**Home study courses are available year-round and are web-based. Please email [atce@atsu.edu](mailto:atce@atsu.edu) for more information.**

## DENTAL *Programs offered by ATSU-MOSDOH*

Diabetes Mellitus: Etiology, Medical Management, and Dental Implications  
May 27, 2026

Infectious Stomatitis: What's Old, What's New, and What You Shouldn't Miss!  
June 3, 2026

Pulp Potential: Clinical and Biological Insights into Vital Pulp Therapy  
June 12, 2026

Ethics Dilemmas in Patient Care ... A Multiple Case-Based Review  
June 16, 2026

**ATSU-MOSDOH is ADA CERP and AGD PACE approved.**

**All opportunities are held virtually. For more information, please email [mosdohce@atsu.edu](mailto:mosdohce@atsu.edu) or call 314.685.3557.**

## MEDICAL *Programs offered by ATSU-KCOM*

Margaritaville KC - Primary Care Update  
July 24-26, 2026  
Margaritaville Hotel | Kansas City, Kansas

Founder's Day  
Osteopathic Strategies for Sports/Musculoskeletal Medicine, Concussion Rehabilitation, and Chronic Pain Management  
Oct. 15-17, 2026  
ATSU Missouri campus | Kirksville, Missouri

Big Cedar - Primary Care Update  
Dec. 3-5, 2026  
Big Cedar Lodge | Ridgedale, Missouri

**ATSU is accredited by the American Osteopathic Association to provide osteopathic continuing medical education for physicians.**

**For more information, please email [continuingeducation@atsu.edu](mailto:continuingeducation@atsu.edu) or call 660.626.2232.**

## PHYSICAL THERAPY

Complexities of the Knee Complex  
May 16-17, 2026  
ATSU Arizona campus | Mesa, Arizona

Functional Biomechanics of the Lower Quarter  
June 6-7, 2026  
ATSU Arizona campus | Mesa, Arizona

Are We Lowering the Red Flags Too Soon?  
Screening for Sinister Medical Conditions in Physical Therapy with Diagnostic Imaging and Medical Laboratory Evaluations  
July 18, 2026  
ATSU Arizona campus | Mesa, Arizona

**For more information, please email [ptceu@atsu.edu](mailto:ptceu@atsu.edu) or call 480.265.8035.**

## FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

### ATSU

**Hailey Buesser** was promoted to lead environmental service worker in Environmental Services.

**Carlo Caroli**, library technician II, A.T. Still Memorial Library, retired from the University after 17 years of service.

**Jamie Carroll**, senior graphic artist, academic technologies, received the Missouri campus 2024 Distinguished Service Award at the annual ATSU employee recognition ceremony held in 2025.

**Sarah Crossgrove**, MBA, was named assistant vice chancellor of research & sponsored programs.

**Brian Degenhardt, DO**, assistant vice chancellor for osteopathic research, professor, and endowed chair for the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation, A.T. Still Research Institute, received the 2025 Living Tribute Award from the Kirksville Osteopathic Alumni Association.

**Amy DeLeon**, general accountant, finance, received the Missouri campus Employee Excellence Award for the third quarter of 2025.

**Christopher Ferguson**, analyst, administrative computing, information technology services development, received the Missouri campus Employee Excellence Award for the fourth quarter of 2025.

**Justin Hodgkins** was promoted to skilled general maintenance II of St. Louis plant operations.

**Lane Kephart** was promoted to HVAC mechanic in Maintenance.

**Emma Long, MA**, was promoted to museum registrar at the Museum of Osteopathic Medicine.

**Dean Maag**, manager, academic technologies, received the 2025 Distinguished Service Award from the Kirksville Osteopathic Alumni Association.

**Andrew Marble** was promoted to senior biostatistician in Research Support.

**Stephanie McGrew, DHSc, '25, MHA, '15, MPH, '24**, assistant director, diversity & inclusion, was selected to be a Department of Defense STEM ambassador. She traveled to Washington, D.C., to collaborate with other ambassadors and obtain resources to further STEM curriculum and education. Additionally, she was chosen as the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) Field of STEM ambassador, which gives her the opportunity to speak at the NSTA national conference about ATSU's Dreamline Pathways™ program.

**Sara McVay, MBA**, assistant director, payroll, human resources, received the Missouri campus Employee Excellence Award for the second quarter of 2025.

**Kaylee Morgenstern, MBA**, was named interim assistant vice chancellor of enrollment services.

**Sara Seifert, MA**, joined ATSU as director of campus safety. Seifert will be based on the Kirksville, Missouri, campus and will oversee safety and security for all ATSU campuses and locations.

**Donna Sparks**, director, admissions processing, admissions, retired from ATSU after 29 years of service.

**Lisa Yount, MA**, was promoted to human resources information systems analyst & auditor.

### ATSU-ASDOH

**Jean Brady, MA, RDH**, instructor, dental hygiene, retired from ATSU-ASDOH in January.

**Alyssa Esquer** was promoted to inventory coordinator for on-site clinical education.

**Yuli Gonzales, DMD**, joined the School as a full-time prosthodontics faculty member.

**Brandy Horak** was promoted to clinic operations manager for orthodontic clinical education.

**Dan Indech, DDS**, joined the School as a full-time periodontics faculty member.

**Erin Maruska, DMD, MPH**, assistant professor, and **Janet Woldt, PhD, MS**, associate dean for student success, associate professor, received the Teaching & Learning Center's 2025 Innovation in Teaching for Learning Award for their project titled "Innovative Approach to Professionalism and Ethics Education: AI Role-Playing."

**James Nelson** was promoted to sterilization manager for on-site clinical education.

**Melissa Nieves, MBA**, was promoted to director of business operations & clinic analytics.

**Jae Hyun Park, DMD, PhD, MSD, MS**, professor and chair, postgraduate orthodontics, was honored with the 2025 Arthur A. Dugoni Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pacific Coast Society of Orthodontists. This award recognizes exceptional personal effort to advance the art and science of the orthodontic specialty and is given only under exceptional circumstances. Recipients must have at least 20 years' experience in the practice of orthodontics and must exemplify a commitment to the pursuit of excellence and adherence to the highest ethical standards.

**Craig Schwaderer** was promoted to education specialist for preclinical education.

**Rebecca Temp, DMD**, was promoted to assistant professor for predoctoral instruction.

**Devin Whipple** joined the School as the business process analyst.

### ATSU-ASHS

**Jeffrey Andrion, PhD**, associate professor, physical therapy, received the Teaching & Learning Center's 2025 first runner-up Innovation in Teaching for Learning Award for the project titled "Embracing Vulnerability: The Art of Empathy."

**Curt Bay, PhD**, professor and biostatistician, interdisciplinary health sciences, retired from the School after 19 years of service.

**Jennifer Beal, MEd**, assistant director, postprofessional physical therapy, received the Arizona and California campus Employee Excellence Award for the second quarter of 2025.

**Rachel Geoghegan, DAT, MSHRD**, assistant professor, athletic training, received the Teaching & Learning Center's 2025 second runner-up Innovation in Teaching for Learning Award for the project titled "Empowering Learning: AI Tutors for Flexible and Engaging Online Learning."

**Rashida Grayson**, department manager, physician assistant studies, received the Arizona campus Employee Excellence Award for the fourth quarter of 2025.

**Kellie C. Huxel Bliven, PhD, ATC, FNAP**, professor, chair of interdisciplinary health sciences, and director of clinical anatomy, completed the Teaching & Learning Center's Level Up! certificate program, becoming an ATSU-certified health sciences educator.

**Sunna Khokhar**, clinical student liaison, physician assistant studies, received the Arizona and California campus Employee Excellence Award for the third quarter of 2025.

**Zarin Mehta, PhD, CCC-A, FAAA**, associate professor, audiology and speech-language pathology, was named a distinguished fellow of the American Academy of Audiology, one of the profession's highest honors.

**Marlene Salas-Provence, PhD, MHA, MA, CCC-SLP, FNAP, FASHA**, vice dean and professor, was elected to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Board of Directors as vice president for planning. She will serve as liaison to three boards, including the Multicultural Issues Board, International Issues Board, and Financial Planning Board.

**Kimberly Skinner, AuD, PhD**, associate professor, audiology, completed the Teaching & Learning Center's Level Up! certificate program, becoming an ATSU-certified health sciences educator.

**Amy J. Spies, PhD**, assistant professor, clinical anatomy, interdisciplinary health sciences, earned board certification as a diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology (ABFA), the field's highest recognized professional credential. By earning this D-ABFA credential, Dr. Spies joins fewer than 200 professionals who have achieved this distinction since the ABFA's founding in 1977.



Caroli  
ATSU



Carroll  
ATSU



Dr. Degenhardt  
ATSU



Maag  
ATSU



Dr. Indech  
ATSU-ASDOH



Dr. Park  
ATSU-ASDOH



Whipple  
ATSU-ASDOH



Dr. Andrion  
ATSU-ASHS



Dr. Huxel Bliven  
ATSU-ASHS



Dr. Spies  
ATSU-ASHS

## FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

**Victoria Smith, PA-C**, was promoted to assistant professor in the Physician Assistant Studies department.

**Tamara Valovich McLeod, PhD, ATC, FNATA, FNAK, FNAP**, professor and chair, athletic training, completed the Teaching & Learning Center's Level Up! certificate program, becoming an ATSU-certified health sciences educator.

**Malathy Venkatesh, PhD, CCC-SLP**, assistant professor, speech-language pathology, received the 2025 Marilyn Quintana Moline Mentorship Award from the Arizona Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

### ATSU-CGHS

**Lihua Dishman, DBA, MBA, FACHE**, professor, health administration, was elected to another one-year term as chair of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters' Health and Human Services section.

**John Fick, EdD, MS, FACHE**, professor, health administration, was elected to another one-year term as vice chair of Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters' Health and Human Services section. Dr. Fick was recertified as a fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and was re-elected to serve a two-year term as a member at large on the Midwest Chapter of the ACHE board of directors. Additionally, he was appointed to serve on the

Association of University Programs in Health Administration's (AUPHA) Gary L. Filerman Prize for Educational Leadership Selection Committee for 2025-26, as well as on an AUPHA certification review team.

**Julie Frantsve-Hawley, PhD, CAE**, joined the College's Public Health department as an assistant professor. Additionally, Dr. Frantsve-Hawley served on the American Association of Dental Educators and Journalists' stakeholder panel, which released guidance on generative artificial intelligence use in dental publishing.

**Jolynn Gardner, PhD, CHES**, associate dean of academics, assessment & curricular innovation, associate professor, was accepted to a global health leadership program offered by In-Sight Collaborative. The program focuses on development of an accompaniment model of humanitarian work.

**E. LaVerne Manos, DNP, MS, NI-BC, FAMIA**, joined the College as chair of the Health Administration & Nursing department. Dr. Manos has more than 14 years' experience managing graduate nursing and health programs. She is nationally recognized for advancing accreditation standards, fostering faculty development, and driving student success in online and hybrid learning environments.

**Sue McDaniel, MS**, instructional designer, received the 2024 ATSU-CGHS Adjunct of the Year award at the annual ATSU employee recognition ceremony held in 2025.

**Patrick Palmieri, DHSc, EdS, MBA, MSN, ACNP, RN**, adjunct faculty, health sciences, was seated as a member of Florence Nightingale International Nursing Foundation's board of directors, which is affiliated with the International Council of Nurses.

**Jason Salas, MAEd**, instructional designer, received the 2024 ATSU-CGHS Outstanding Employee Award at the annual ATSU employee recognition ceremony held in 2025.

### ATSU-KCOM

**Sara Funk, DPT**, assistant professor, anatomy, received the 2024 A.T. Still Staff Award for Excellence in Teaching at the annual ATSU employee recognition ceremony held in 2025.

**Timothy Geisbuhler, PhD**, associate professor, physiology, retired from the College after 34 years of service.

**Richard J. LaBaere II, DO, MPH, FAODME**, associate dean, graduate medical education, received the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners' (NBOME) Santucci Award, the organization's highest honor. The Santucci Award is presented to members of NBOME's board, staff, or

committees with 10 or more years of service in recognition of outstanding contributions to the organization's mission.

**Patricia Sexton, DHed, MS, FNAOME, '08**, associate dean of medical education, professor of family medicine, served as the Holt Distinguished Lecturer in Professionalism in Ethics as part of the Humanism in Medicine Symposium at University of the Incarnate Word. Dr. Sexton's talk was titled "The Healing Touch: Humanism in Medicine Today."

**Margaret Wilson, DO, '82**, dean and professor, family medicine, was named Osteopathic Family Physician of the Year by the Missouri Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (MSACOF). As MSACOF's most prestigious honor, this award recognizes an osteopathic family physician who has exemplified the principles of osteopathic family medicine and has achieved outstanding accomplishments and service for the betterment of the profession. Dr. Wilson was nominated for her Missouri roots and dedication to serving her patients and community, locally and beyond.

### ATSU-MOSDOH

**Marsela Aliaj, MS**, was promoted to clinical system analyst at the St. Louis Dental Center.

**Sara Bullock, MHA**, project manager, accreditation, received the 2024 ATSU-MOSDOH Elsie Gaber Compassion & Integrity Award at the annual ATSU employee recognition ceremony held in 2025.

**Brenda Burns** was promoted to lead sterilization technician at the St. Louis Dental Center.

**Sahaja Gannamaneni** was promoted to education manager at the St. Louis Dental Center.

**Hanan Omar, BDS, PhD, MSc**, professor, was named associate dean of academic affairs & research. Additionally, Dr. Omar received the 2024 ATSU-MOSDOH Elsie Gaber Compassion & Integrity Award at the annual ATSU employee recognition ceremony held in 2025.

**Adepitan Owosho, BChD, DABOMP, FAAOMP, FAAOM**, professor of oral and maxillofacial pathology and oral medicine, specialty care unit director for oral medicine, dental oncology, and urgent care, was inducted as a fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences of Nigeria. Additionally, he served as the distinguished guest speaker for the 27th annual Shepard Lectureship at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

**Shaista Rashid, BDS, MS, MPH**, associate professor, was named assistant dean of clinical affairs.

**Kneka P. Smith, EdD, MPH, '19**, was named dean of ATSU-MOSDOH, effective June 22, 2026. Dr. Smith returns to ATSU from MaineHealth in Portland, Maine, where she has served as vice president for academic affairs since 2021. An accomplished leader and former dental director for the state of Arizona, Dr. Smith's extensive background includes senior academic roles at the ATSU-KCOM, ATSU-MOSDOH, and University of New England College of Dental

Medicine. Her deep roots with ATSU also include serving as associate dean for education and as a member of the inaugural leadership team at ATSU-ASDOH.

Dr. Smith earned her doctor of education in health professions education from ATSU-CGHS in 2019, and her master of public health in health policy and administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2006. Additionally, she currently holds a faculty appointment in public health and community medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine.

**Danielle Williams** was promoted to clinic care education manager for the Clinical Education department.

### ATSU-SOMA

**Andrew Grass, PhD**, associate professor, was named chair of the Anatomy department.

**Catherine Patrick, DO**, clinical assistant professor and regional director of medical education, joined Wayne Memorial Community Health Centers (WMCHC) in Honesdale, Pennsylvania, as a primary care provider and associate program director of WMCHC's Family Medicine Residency program.

**Submit faculty & staff news to [stillmagazine@atsu.edu](mailto:stillmagazine@atsu.edu)**



Dr. Venkatesh  
ATSU-ASHS



Dr. Dishman  
ATSU-CGHS



Dr. Gardner  
ATSU-CGHS



Dr. Palmieri  
ATSU-CGHS



Dr. Geisbuhler  
ATSU-KCOM



Dr. Sexton  
ATSU-KCOM



Aliaj  
ATSU-MOSDOH



Dr. Owosho  
ATSU-MOSDOH



Dr. Smith '19  
ATSU-MOSDOH



Dr. Patrick  
ATSU-SOMA

## IN MEMORIAM

*Still Magazine* remembers

those who have passed  
away and extends deepest  
sympathies to their families  
and friends.

Visit [stillmagazine.atsu.edu](http://stillmagazine.atsu.edu)  
to read full-length obituaries.

## 1950s

**Bruce C. Brink Sr., DO, '52**  
Feb. 9, 2025  
Patoka, Indiana

**Julian R. Gershon Sr., DO, '52**  
July 1, 2025  
Clare, Michigan, and  
Englewood, Florida

**John J. Passias, DO, '55**  
Feb. 1, 2026  
New Albany, Ohio

**James M. Short, DO, '55**  
May 24, 2025  
Owasso, Oklahoma

**Harold S. Stinson Jr., DO, '57**  
July 21, 2025  
Eureka, Missouri

**Richard P. Valuck, DO, '57**  
Sept. 4, 2025  
Hannibal, Missouri

## 1960s

**Robert A. Evans, DO, '61**  
July 28, 2025  
Middlefield, Ohio

**Franklin D. Burriss, DO, '62**  
May 30, 2025  
Prior Lake, Minnesota

**Burton T. Mark, DO, '63**  
March 25, 2025  
Thornton, Pennsylvania

**Chester F. Mynes, DO, '63**  
April 13, 2025  
Hurricane, West Virginia

**Don S. Angelo, DO, '64**  
Aug. 16, 2025  
Cantonment, Florida

**James R. Steele, DO, '64**  
Aug. 7, 2025  
Erie, Pennsylvania

**Ralph C. Banner, DO, '65**  
April 19, 2024  
Ormond Beach, Florida

**Keith W. Harvie, DO, '65**  
Dec. 18, 2024  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**David R. Tschopp, DO, '65**  
Nov. 9, 2025  
Brookfield, Wisconsin

**Bernard H. Smith, DO, '66**  
Jan. 8, 2026  
Akron, Ohio

**Tommy L. Summe, DO, '67**  
Jan. 23, 2026  
Edmonds, Washington

**Richard L. Carruthers, DO, '68**  
June 13, 2025  
Rancho Mirage, California

**Carter Page Fenton Sr., DO, '68**  
Jan. 11, 2026  
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

**Charles J. Crosby, DO, '69**  
Oct. 28, 2024  
Lynchburg, Virginia

## 1970s

**Billy E. Cunningham, DO, '71**  
June 28, 2024  
Blue Ridge, Texas

**Vanna M. Powell, DO, '72**  
April 29, 2025  
Palisade, Colorado

**Richard B. Esler Jr., DO, '73**  
May 17, 2025  
Powell, Ohio

**Samuel W. Price Sr., DO, '76**  
July 27, 2025  
Springdale, Arkansas

**John E. Murphy III, DO, '77**  
Dec. 5, 2024  
Dayton, Ohio

**Brent D. Schlapper, DO, '78**  
Jan. 9, 2025  
DeLand, Florida

**Michael K. Smith, DO, '79**  
Nov. 19, 2024  
Twin Lake, Michigan

## 1980s

**Mark E. Hunt, DO, '80**  
Jan. 21, 2026  
Kent, Washington

**John R. Smart III, DO, '81**  
Feb. 11, 2026  
Somerset, Kentucky

**Steven W. Howe, DO, '83**  
February 3, 2026  
Marietta, Ohio

**John W. Huffman, DO, '85**  
Oct. 1, 2025  
Ozark, Missouri

## 1990s

**Marcia A. Drewry, DO, '93**  
Nov. 25, 2024  
Sanford, Florida

## 2010s

**Tacey E. Griffin, MS, PA-C, '15**  
June 23, 2024  
Winthrop, Washington

**Colleen P. Rundell, DHSc, '16**  
Aug. 4, 2025  
Phoenix, Arizona

Faculty, staff  
& friends

**Richard J. Cenedella, PhD**  
Dec. 31, 2025  
Denver, Colorado

**Daniel Rowley**  
Jan. 21, 2026  
Mesa, Arizona

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AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC  
INFORMATION ASSOCIATION





ATSU-CHC students participate in their stethoscope ceremony, left to right: Charles Odenigbo, Josiah Zabala, Jordan Walker, Jackline Kissi, Inglyand Snell-Anderson, Ashley Jamison, Te Asia Battle-Miller, Ashlie Filemond, Melisa Nakato, and Katherine Urrutia.

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just talk  
the talk,  
we actually  
walk the  
walk.”

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— Renée J. Crawford, DO, '20  
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine alumna



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