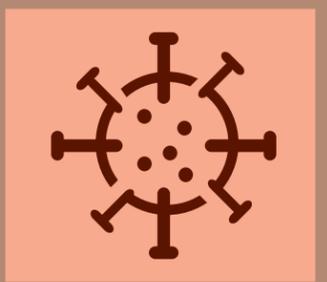




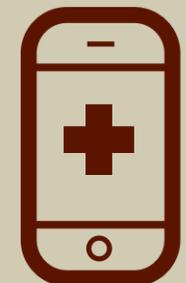
Rowan University

SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

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LEADING THE WAY



2020
ANNUAL REPORT

ROWAN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

CONTENTS

- 2 MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN
- 3 CARING & TEACHING IN CRISIS
- 5 LIVING OUR MISSION
- 7 RESEARCH INNOVATIONS
- 9 OPENING IN MARCH 2021
- 11 AWARDS, RECOGNITION & GRANTS
- 13 ROWAN MEDICINE DOCS LEADING THE WAY
- 15 PROMOTIONS/ ACCOLADES
- 17 STORIES OF ROWANSOM

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

As rich and expansive as our language is, words sometimes fail to adequately describe our experiences. This year certainly fits into that category.

To me, this year has often been a test of leadership.

During the pandemic, who are the leaders we have looked to? Scientists and public health officials certainly come to mind. Then, there are our police officers, first responders and the physicians, nurses, medical assistants, and hospital and nursing home workers who have battled on the front lines of the pandemic. I hope we never forget seeing people cheer from windows and balconies as these leaders moved humbly, sometimes exhaustedly, in and out of hospitals during shift changes.

And the pandemic brought new meaning to the phrase “essential workers” – the people we previously saw only as someone who delivered our mail, handed us our change at the grocery stores, or who made the takeout pizza – gave us some relief from another weekend of quarantine.

I am proud that, at RowanSOM, essential workers are everywhere. Throughout the pandemic, our researchers continue to discover, our faculty continue to teach, our physicians and health care staff continue to meet the needs of our patients, and our support staff continue to keep our lights on and our offices and campus clean and functioning.

I am also proud of the strong and unequivocal stance we have taken against racial injustice. The killing of George Floyd brought many people to the streets of our nation, and our response was clear. Racism is a pandemic that has, for too long, afflicted our nation. Prejudice and loss of respect for human life clearly violate all that we are at RowanSOM. Together, we each share the burden of leadership to stand against racism or anything that is a threat to human life.

Before 2020, we thought of leaders differently. But everyday people – the ones who marched peacefully in their solidarity against racism and the ones who, knowing the dangers of COVID that screamed from headlines and still put on their masks and gloves as they cared for the sick – are the leaders of 2020. If nothing else, their example leads us to examine the true meaning of our shared humanity.

This has been an unprecedented and tumultuous year and I am proud of the many ways our students, staff and faculty have helped lead us through it. I invite you to explore the following pages to see some of their stories.

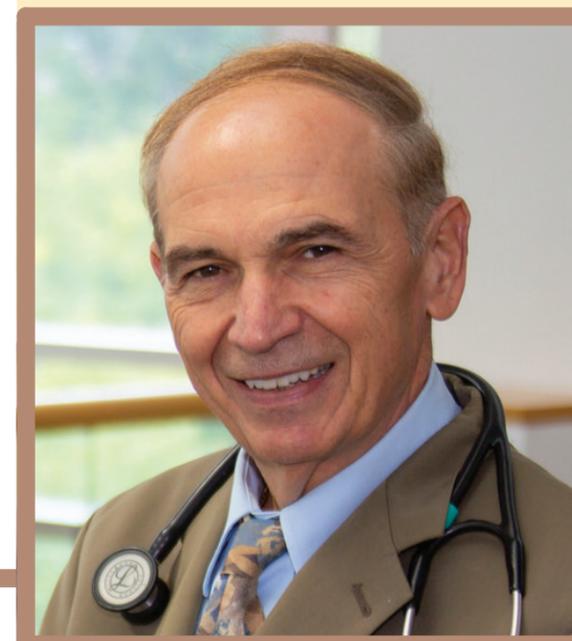
My best regards,

Thomas A. Cavalieri, DO

Thomas A. Cavalieri, DO, MACOI, FACP
Dean

‘THIS YEAR
HAS OFTEN
BEEN A
TEST OF
LEADERSHIP.’

DR. THOMAS CAVALIERI





COVID-19 impacted everything from the way students learned to the way Rowan Medicine physicians saw patients and how staff members answered phone calls. All normal operations had to be revised – and revised again – to adapt to the rapidly changing environment.

RowanSOM moved quickly to transition some clerkships to telemedicine encounters, enabling students to continue their training uninterrupted. These students were able to be directly involved in the care of patients during a global pandemic, while also receiving valuable experience with telemedicine.

Rowan Family Medicine was able to transition quickly to RowanSOM’s telemedicine technology. Called TeleHealth, the technology was in place before New Jersey’s stay-at-home order and the entire department was able to switch to that service in less than 24 hours.

While the Rowan Medicine patient experience and the RowanSOM educational experience were both altered by the pandemic, some areas of the school continued unabated. The officers of Rowan Public Safety continued their round-the-clock work securing the campus’ safety, Facilities staff kept all systems operating smoothly and Environmental Services helped make sure students, patients and staff were protected from the virus.

‘WE WERE ABLE TO MAINTAIN ACCESS FOR OUR PATIENTS IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT’

DR. JOSHUA COREN

“We were able to maintain access for our patients in a safe environment while reducing risk of transmission of COVID-19 to patients and employees,” says Rowan Family Medicine Chair and Interim Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs Dr. Joshua Coren. “In a way, access to care actually increased as transportation issues or commute times were eliminated. The technology enabled us to still see our patients face-to-face, which allowed us to continue building relationships with them.”

“We knew we had a job to do and how important it was to make sure our fellow staff and our patients had a clean and sanitized environment,” says Mark Muldrow, Executive Housekeeper at RowanSOM. “We quickly got our staff trained on the most recent technology, including electrostatic sprayers, that could

protect against any potential spread of the virus. I am proud to say that our staff showed great leadership in providing a safe environment for our school community.”

The pandemic was particularly disruptive to clinical rotations for third- and fourth-year medical students. While many medical schools sent students home to continue learning from videos and textbooks,



CARING & TEACHING IN CRISIS

When the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic struck, the impact was felt throughout the country, including the medical education landscape.

LIVING OUR MISSION

More than any other time in our history, the events of this year have shown that when a pandemic strikes, it cares little for an individual's skin color, socio-religious background or sexual orientation. At the same time, this year has reminded us that COVID-19 isn't the only pandemic in America.



“Racism is a pandemic that demonstrates a loss of respect for human life,” says RowanSOM Dean Dr. Thomas Cavaliere. “As physicians and other health professionals, we must be committed to stand against racism. Clearly, the events of this year show we all must do more to combat racism and to embrace diversity.”

RowanSOM is committed to a mission of developing clinically skillful, compassionate and culturally competent physicians from diverse backgrounds. Diversity is a core principle of the medical school and of Rowan University. But principles and minority recruitment are not enough.

Yvonne Ortiz recently joined RowanSOM as the school's first Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) to help lead efforts to advance the school's goals of those areas and in the development and execution of a new strategic plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

“There are important differences between diversity, inclusion, and equity,” she says. “Diversity is the presence of differences and represents who is in the room. Inclusion is an outcome that those in the room actually feel accepted and are valued as measured through full participation in decision-making and development opportunities. Equity is the removal of barriers of who accesses the room and changes the culture of an organization through a focus on processes, policies, and the distribution of resources. These distinctions are especially important in sustaining our successes over time and identifying the work that lies ahead.

“My role is to foster the teaching, learning, and working conditions for students, residents, faculty, and staff to thrive by guiding the evaluation of policies, procedures,

to positively impact these conditions and better prepare culturally competent physicians and scientists. Our mission cannot be realized without intentional, thoughtful introspection and action, regarding anti-Black racism, implicit bias, heterosexism, and transphobia to enhance our practice. The recurrent, senseless deaths of people of color, as well as racial and socioeconomic health disparities as evidenced with the COVID-19 pandemic, clearly demonstrate why equitable conditions matter in medicine.

‘AS PHYSICIANS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, WE MUST BE COMMITTED TO STAND AGAINST RACISM.’

DR. THOMAS CAVALIERI

“DEI helps create great physicians and scientists ready to meet the health care demands and needs of our communities. The better a patient is represented and understood, the better they can be treated and the better we conduct research in the sciences and dismantle health disparities. These actions support the RowanSOM mission, including RowanGSBS and Rowan Medicine. When done with fidelity, DEI work also fosters working conditions where everyone is treated with respect, we recognize and utilize the diverse talents across the organization, enhance employee morale and individual motivation, improve problem solving, and yield better results.”

Under the Division of DEI, RowanSOM offers opportunities for professional learning on a variety of topics, including implicit bias, microaggressions, and being an ally, advocate or accomplice. RowanSOM's DEI work includes a focus on four areas – leadership, instruction, systems, and culture.

The DEI recently launched an informative section on the RowanSOM website that was developed with contributions from the DEI Committee and the Black Collective. It includes helpful resources and links for reporting issues and is available at go.rowan.edu/somdei



RESEARCH INNOVATION

This year Rowan University continued to distinguish itself as the fourth fastest-growing research university in the nation, an achievement fueled in no small part by the RowanSOM research faculty. For fiscal year 2019, funding of research at RowanSOM contributed approximately one-third of all extramural funding received by the University. During the first quarter of the current fiscal year (July 1 thru September 30), that contribution amount increased to 42 percent of the extramural research funding received by the University.

At RowanSOM, research supports both our academic and patient care missions, providing dynamic opportunities where student can make critical contributions to discoveries in biomedical science, which help to enhance patient care by bringing innovative research from the “bench to the bedside.” Despite the challenges and interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, RowanSOM received many new and continuing research awards this year.



THIS YEAR'S FUNDED RESEARCH PROGRAMS

\$248,990

(year 1 of 3 years)

NEURAL CIRCUITRY MEDIATING BEHAVIORAL FLEXIBILITY

Elizabeth West Niedringhaus, PhD
Cell Biology & Neuroscience

\$305,900

(cumulative total over 4 years: \$1,223,600)

DISSECTING THE ORIGINS OF A COMPLEX REPRODUCTIVE TRAIT

Ronald Ellis, PhD
Molecular Biology

\$275,854

(year 1 of 5 years)

THE ROLE OF SUPEROXIDE DISMUTASE SOD-1 IN MICROBE-GUT-BRAIN INTERACTION

Howard Chang, PhD
Dept: Cell Biology & Neuroscience

\$338,100

(year 1 of 5 years)

RPA-DIRECTED DNA REPAIR MECHANISMS

Brian Weiser, PhD
Molecular Biology

\$402,500

(cumulative total over 3 years: \$1,207,500)

ANTIMICROBIAL MECHANISMS OF SPECIALIZED PRORESOLVING MEDIATORS

Kingsley Yin, PhD
Cell Biology & Neuroscience

\$314,025

(cumulative total over 5 years: \$1,608,482)

TRANSLATIONAL RESCUE MECHANISMS IN EUKARYOTES

Natalia Shcherbik, PhD
Cell Biology & Neuroscience

\$180,000

NEGATIVE IMPACT OF MILD TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURIES ON RISK-BASED DECISION MAKING AND POTENTIAL THERAPEUTIC STRATEGIES

Rachel Navarra, PhD
Cell Biology & Neuroscience

\$248,999

(cumulative total over 3 years: \$746,997)

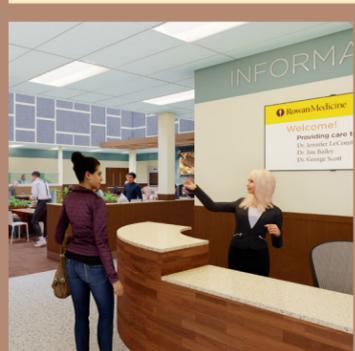
FUNCTIONAL NEUROANATOMY UNDERLYING PSYCHOSOCIAL STRESS-INDUCED COCAINE SEEKING

Daniel Manvich, PhD
Cell Biology & Neuroscience



OPENING IN MARCH 2021

Eighteen months after the first shovels dug into the ground, the new Rowan Medicine – Sewell building is nearing completion of its first phase of operations. All expectations are the first floor of the 55,000 square foot facility, located on the Sewell campus of Rowan College of South Jersey (RCSJ) will open its doors for clinical services on March 1, 2021.



“This project has the potential to transform health care in South Jersey,” said Rowan University President Ali Houshmand. “This new campus uniquely positions our School of Osteopathic Medicine to both provide quality care to vulnerable populations and respond to the region’s physician shortage, especially in primary care disciplines.”

Southern New Jersey, with its combination of close proximity to urban centers and wide expanse of rural areas and culturally diverse population, has long exemplified the health care challenges in the United States, including uneven access to health care services, a shortage of physicians and health care professionals, and escalating costs of health care delivery and education.

Although located not far from the RowanSOM campus, the convenient access to major highways presents opportunities for Rowan Medicine–Sewell to transform health care and improve the quality of life for thousands of residents across a wide swath of Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland counties.

Along with clinical services that include Family Medicine, Pediatrics, Internal Medicine, Pain Management, Psychiatry, and RowanSOM’s New Jersey Medication-Assisted Treatment Center of Excellence,

the new location will feature Rowan Integrated Special Needs (RISN) Center, the first primary care practice in Southern New Jersey that is dedicated to the serving the medical and behavioral health care needs of individuals with physical, intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Pending approval of the medical school’s accrediting body, the second floor of Rowan Medicine–Sewell will be home to a second location of Rowan University’s nationally acclaimed School of Osteopathic Medicine. Students at the Sewell location will benefit from a unique medical education experience that combines problem-based learning with hands-on clinical experience. With a planned opening in July 2022, the expansion will increase the overall annual enrollment at RowanSOM from 200 to 272 medical students per class, making it the largest medical school in New Jersey.

The medical school’s location on the campus of a community college places the school firmly at the leading edge of the future of health care delivery. The close proximity of

Rowan College of South Jersey will also serve as a catalyst to create interprofessional educational opportunities involving students in the health care profession programs at RCSJ. Research has consistently shown that team-based care yields better health outcomes for patients.

“THIS PROJECT
HAS THE
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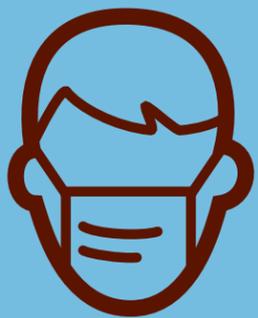
ALI HHOUSHMAND



AWARDS, RECOGNITION & GRANTS

HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS

Consistent with the school's Mission and Vision, RowanSOM continued to develop and expand programs that benefited at-risk and vulnerable populations in the State. Whether it was training first responders and health care professionals on the proper administration of life-saving medications, expanding geriatric workforce development in response to the COVID pandemic or continuing to develop health care pathway programs for area high school students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds, RowanSOM continued to lead in living its Mission.



The Southern New Jersey Medication-Assisted Treatment Center of Excellence was established at the **NeuroMusculoskeletal Institute (NMI)** as part of New Jersey's response to the public health crisis created by the opioid epidemic. The NMI also received several grants, totaling over \$1,200,000 this year alone, to provide overdose treatment training to first responders, improve access to overdose treatment for individuals in high risk populations, and to provide training for health care professionals in the best practices for co-prescribing naloxone.

The **New Jersey Institute for Successful Aging** was awarded \$755,000 from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), supporting the second year of the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program along with an additional \$90,000 COVID-related supplemental grant.

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families awarded \$221,440 to the **Rowan Integrated Special Needs (RISN)** Center to help support RISN's efforts to meet the primary and behavioral health care needs of individuals with physical, intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Dr. Judith Lightfoot, Interim Chair of the **Department of Medicine**, received \$200,000 year one grant from SAMHSA to develop a substance abuse and HIV prevention program for high-risk African American and Hispanic youth. This will be a five-year program with a potential funding of \$1,000,000.

In November, Dr. Robert Nagele was awarded an Edison Patent Award from the Research and Development Council of New Jersey for "Diagnostic Biomarker Profiles for the Detection and Diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease."

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation supported RowanSOM with two grants announced this year. The **CARES Institute** received a three-year \$249,835 grant for a training program that incorporates self-care for mental health professionals and, in October, the Foundation awarded a \$1.68 million grant to help support RowanSOM's expansion to a Sewell campus as it launches clinical operations in March 2021.

The **Department of Family Medicine** received a \$444,705 HRSA grant to continue its essential support of the Area Health Education Centers (AHEC).

HRSA also awarded \$665,227 to Dr. Linda Boyd, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, as the third installment of a five-year grant supporting the Health Careers Opportunity Program at RowanSOM.

ROWAN MEDICINE DOCS LEADING THE WAY

Their patients and peers have spoken and nearly three dozen Rowan Medicine physicians have the honor of being named a 'top doc' this year in regional publications, including SJ Magazine, Philadelphia Magazine, South Jersey Magazine and New Jersey Monthly. Of particular note was the accolades bestowed on physicians in Rowan Medicine signature programs of geriatrics and child abuse along with areas, like rheumatology and urogynecology, that are relatively new programs for Rowan Medicine.

ADOLESCENT MEDICINE
Tanya Kadrmas-Iannuzzi, DO

**BARIATRIC SURGERY/
WEIGHT LOSS**
Adarsh Gupta, DO

CHILD ABUSE
Martin Finkel, DO
Maria McColgan, MD
Rachel Silliman Cohen, MD
Lydia Vender, DO

**ENDOCRINOLOGY, DIABETES
& METABOLISM**
Joseph Fallon, MD

FAMILY PRACTICE
Jennifer Caudle, DO
Danielle Cooley, DO
Aubrey Olson, DO
Meagan Vermeulen, MD

GERIATRIC MEDICINE
Jesse Abesh, DO
Thomas Cavalieri, DO
Anita Chopra, MD
Terrie Ginsberg DO
Adaora Okoli-Umeweni, MD
Kevin Overbeck, DO
Prameela Palli, MD
Leonard Powell, DO

GERIATRIC PSYCHIATRY
Martin Forsberg, MD
Stephen Scheinthal, DO
Christian White, DO

INFECTIOUS DISEASE
Judith Lightfoot, DO

INTERNAL MEDICINE
Jennifer LeComte, DO

OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY
Karen Krieg, DO
Anthony Salerno, MD

PALLIATIVE MEDICINE
John Bertagnolli, DO

PEDIATRICS
Eileen Condren, DO

**PHYSICAL MEDICINE
& REHABILITATION**
James Bailey, DO

PSYCHIATRY
Nazli Gulab, MD
Rachel Shmuts DO

RHEUMATOLOGY
Linda Brecher, DO

SPORTS MEDICINE
Kathryn Lambert, DO

UROGYNECOLOGY
Adam S. Holzberg, DO

PROMOTIONS AND ACCOLADES

Normally celebrated with classmates and family members, this year's graduating physicians gathered online to share their success during

Match Day 2020. The first class to participate in the single accreditation program through the National Resident Matching Program, the Class of 2020 continued RowanSOM's decade-long record of near 100 percent match rates.

In May, **Commencement** ceremonies for RowanSOM and RowanGSBS students moved from the University's Green to a virtual ceremony that still included much of the pomp and circumstance of an in-person ceremony, including the presentation of student awards, recognition of military graduates and the reciting of the Osteopathic Oath by RowanSOM graduates.



Additionally this year, RowanSOM welcomed a number of individuals who accepted leadership positions and congratulated others who assumed new or additional roles at the school.

Yvonne Torruella Ortiz, MEd, joined RowanSOM as the school's first Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) to help lead the school's efforts to advance the school's goals in those areas and to lead in the development and execution of a new strategic plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Dr. George Scott was selected as the Campus Associate Dean of RowanSOM-Sewell, the proposed additional campus of RowanSOM. Pending approval of accrediting agencies, RowanSOM-Sewell expects to welcome its first class of medical students in the summer of 2022.

Steve Garwood, EdD, was appointed as the founding Director of Faculty Development in the Department of Academic Affairs.

Charles Greenberg, MLS, MEd, AHIP, became the Director of the RowanSOM Health Sciences Library.

Dr. Rachel Shmuts was appointed the Department of Psychiatry's first ever Vice Chair for Education. She also serves as the department's Residency Director.

Dr. Judith Lightfoot, FACOI, assumed the role of Interim Chair for the Department of Medicine. She is also continues to serve as Chief of Infectious Disease at RowanSOM.

Dr. Joshua Coren, MBA, FACFP, was named Interim Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs. Along with this new role, Dr. Coren remains Chair of Family Medicine and Director of Continuing Medical Education.

Psychiatry Resident **Dr. Danielle Weitzer** was selected by the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) and the American College of Osteopathic Neurologists and Psychiatrists as the 2020 Outstanding Resident of the Year in Neurology and Psychiatry.

Student Doctor Jamila Holston was named the recipient of AOF William G. Anderson, DO, Minority Scholarship.

Student Doctor Shikha Patel was selected to participate in the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine's Osteopathic Health Policy Intern Program.

2020 FACULTY PROMOTIONS

Pamela Basehore, EdD, to Professor, Geriatrics and Gerontology

John Bertagnolli, DO, to Professor, Geriatrics and Gerontology

Philip Collins, DO, to Associate Professor, Family Medicine

Rebecca Moore, DO, to Associate Professor, Family Medicine

Rachel Shmuts, DO, to Associate Professor, Psychiatry

Yahaira Marquez, PhD, to Assistant Professor, Psychiatry/CARES

STORIES OF ROWANSOM

It is an understatement to claim that the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. But, it did.

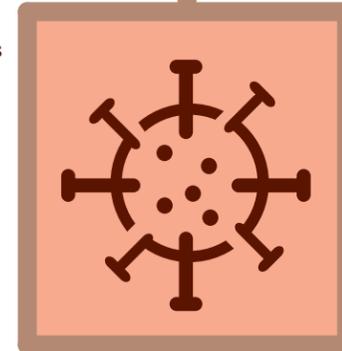
One thing that did not change was the sense of commitment and dedication at RowanSOM. From our physicians and health care staff and the people who delivered our mail, to those who kept our offices clean and safe for patients, and to those who continued teaching our students or made certain our systems remained operational, the pandemic was a challenge – at times, a frightening one – that they faced every day.

Looking back on 2020, here is what some of those everyday leaders – people whose heroic acts may have been simply showing up – have to say about their experience.

“The Covid-19 Pandemic has changed so much of HOW we do things at Rowan Medicine, but it hasn’t changed WHY we do them. I am proud to work in a department that still places optimal patient care at the forefront of what we do, now paired with an emphasis on keeping all of our patients, staff, faculty and students safe from Covid-19.” – **Alison Mancuso DO, FACOFP, Associate Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Family Medicine**

“We have to look to our mission. To achieve excellence in education, research and patient care, there is never the option to shut down, but to modify. In the era of COVID 19, there are no certainties just challenges. We have an amazing team of professionals who always put our mission on the forefront and that made all the difference. Not so much business as usual, but business nonetheless.” – **Richard Jermyn, DO, FAAPMR, Director NeuroMusculoskeletal Institute.**

“Facilities and Logistical Services have been supporting RowanSOM throughout the pandemic and will continue to provide support services to our students, patients, visitors, staff members and to the Rowan community. Our dedicated staff continually adjusted to the challenges presented each day, providing solutions to keep everyone safe while providing seamless building operations and maintenance.” – **Andrew M. Wagner, CEFP Director of Facilities for Medical School Operations.**



“During the pandemic, the Office of Student Affairs quickly shifted to virtual student experiences, from Commencement to Orientation and everything in between. It is important now, more than ever, that students receive our guidance and support as we navigate the ‘new-norm.’ We want to ensure they get a full experience, both in and outside the classroom, and that we

celebrate their tremendous achievements in a way that honors their hard work and dedication to osteopathic medicine. I could not be more thankful to be part of making these experiences a reality for our students.” – **Brittany L. Quintana, Program Development Specialist**

“I found this months ago, and posted it in our department as a reminder and to truly motivate us through these challenging times: Ultimately, the greatest lesson that Covid-19 can teach humanity is that we are all in this together.” – **Patrolman Maurice Anderson, Rowan University Public Safety**