



THE WHITE COAT CEREMONY

Class of 2030

JOPLIN HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
JOPLIN, MISSOURI | AUGUST 15, 2026



OUR MISSION

Kansas City University is a community of professionals committed to excellence in education, research, patient care and community service while

Improving the well-being of the communities we serve.

OUR VISION

Changing health care for good.

OUR VALUES

EXCELLENCE

Striving for quality, integrity and innovation

EQUITY

Supporting an inclusive and collaborative environment

EMPATHY

Caring for our students, our colleagues and our community

The White Coat Ceremony

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Emily Larson

Director of Philanthropy and Community Relations

WELCOME

Linda C. Niessen, DMD, MPH, MPP

*Founding Dean of the College of Dental Medicine,
Vice Provost for Oral Health Affairs & Professor of Dental Medicine*

GREETINGS

Robert Arnce, MD

Vice Dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine

STUDENT GREETINGS

Student Doctor Shi Cochran

*President of the College of Dental Medicine
Student Government Association, Class of 2028*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Sheila Riggs, DDS, DMSc

*Associate Professor of Dental Public Health,
University of Minnesota School of Dentistry &
Member of the KCU Board of Trustees*

WHITE COATING

Cierra D. Barton, DMD

*Assistant Director of Patient Care &
Assistant Professor of Dentistry*

Brad Burleson, DDS

Assistant Professor of General Dentistry

William Dennis, MBA, DMD

*Group Practice Leader &
Assistant Professor of Dentistry*

Colin Eliot, DDS, MS

Assistant Professor of Endodontics

Maliheh Nikzad, DDS, MSc

Assistant Professor of Dentistry

Jacksie Short, DMD

*Director of Dental Simulation &
Assistant Professor of Dentistry*

Jared Southwell, DMD

*Group Practice Leader &
Assistant Professor of Dentistry*

Sheila Riggs, DDS, DMSc

*Associate Professor of Dental Public Health,
University of Minnesota School of Dentistry &
Member of the KCU Board of Trustees*

ADMINISTRATION OF THE DENTAL MEDICINE OATH

Dennis Abbot, DDS

Assistant Dean of Integrated Clinical Sciences

PRESENTATION OF THE CLASS CREED

Shawn Hull, MA

Program Manager & Evaluation Specialist

Jeanne Chung, DMD, MPH

Assistant Professor of General Dentistry

PRESENTATION OF THE CLASS OF 2030

COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE CLASS OF 2030

Lucas Adcock <i>Holton, Kansas</i>	Ryan Davis <i>Olathe, Kansas</i>	Yazin Kahook <i>Plantation, Florida</i>
Zainab Alzubaidi <i>Aurora, Colorado</i>	Daniel Dennis <i>Lee's Summit, Missouri</i>	Sara Katicha <i>Tampa, Florida</i>
Ethan Anderson <i>Magrath, Alberta</i>	Whitney Dollins <i>Decatur, Texas</i>	Dominik Kosican <i>Ellisville, Missouri</i>
Rogeh Bathoush <i>Jacksonville, Florida</i>	Danielle Drisker <i>Colorado Springs, Colorado</i>	Samantha Kubes <i>New Prague, Minnesota</i>
Mohamed Berro <i>Dearborn, Michigan</i>	Jacob Eisenhauer <i>Wichita, Kansas</i>	Grace Kuhn <i>Lake Oswego, Oregon</i>
Ted Bimbli <i>Weymouth, Massachusetts</i>	Nathalie Garcia <i>Miami, Florida</i>	Ryen Lahey <i>Olathe, Kansas</i>
Cheyenne Blackwood <i>Wichita, Kansas</i>	Erin Garvert <i>Vienna, Virginia</i>	Jasmine Le <i>Richardson, Texas</i>
Roeh Burton <i>Orange, Texas</i>	Krystoffer Green <i>Williamstown, New Jersey</i>	Lisa Le <i>Olathe, Kansas</i>
Chad Cassidy <i>Carmel, California</i>	Haidar Hachem <i>Garden City, Michigan</i>	Tyler Le <i>Lincoln, Nebraska</i>
Jordan Cibellis <i>Midlothian, Virginia</i>	Laiba Hanif <i>Canton, Michigan</i>	Jack Leeson <i>Rockford, Illinois</i>
Sarah Cross <i>Lee's Summit, Missouri</i>	Jalia Hubbard <i>Brunswick, Georgia</i>	Michael Lucero <i>Bowling Green, Missouri</i>
Reagan Dalton <i>Bucyrus, Kansas</i>	Mikayla Huggins <i>League City, Texas</i>	Malena Ma <i>Irvine, California</i>
Vivian Dao <i>Pinehurst, Texas</i>	Askari Jaffery <i>Bloomfield Hills, Michigan</i>	Dylan Mader <i>Garden City, Kansas</i>
Jinous Darvish <i>San Jose, California</i>	Nicholas Jaworski <i>Leawood, Kansas</i>	Katie Mason <i>Kansas City, Missouri</i>
Carter Daugherty <i>Kansas City, Missouri</i>	Hyeon Jeong <i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i>	Riley McNemar <i>Galena, Kansas</i>

COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE CLASS OF 2030

Margo Memmott <i>Orem, Utah</i>	Layton Rothwell <i>Basehor, Kansas</i>	Karen Vo <i>Frisco, Texas</i>
Dillon Merz <i>Commerce City, Colorado</i>	Luna Sharak <i>Lake Orion, Michigan</i>	Kirby Wilcox <i>Jay, Oklahoma</i>
Katherine Miller <i>Winston Salem, North Carolina</i>	Kenneth Sheffer <i>Riverton, Kansas</i>	
Luke Mueller <i>Madison Lake, Minnesota</i>	Jenessa Smith <i>Lowell, Oregon</i>	
Hyeonjin Nam <i>Buford, Georgia</i>	Trinity Smith <i>Tarpon Springs, Florida</i>	
An Nguyen <i>Houston, Texas</i>	Ryan Sosa <i>Nederland, Texas</i>	
Joseph Nichols <i>Overland Park, Kansas</i>	Mia Spurlock <i>Liberty, Missouri</i>	
Emelie Nickel <i>Wichita, Kansas</i>	Alyssa Stalzer <i>Omaha, Nebraska</i>	
Cade Parkinson <i>Salem, Utah</i>	Tucker Stepan <i>Mosinee, Wisconsin</i>	
Sahil Patel <i>Lakeland, Georgia</i>	Zurena Tang <i>Alpharetta, Georgia</i>	
Hannah Pitre <i>Gonzales, Louisiana</i>	Leah Tchir <i>Johnson City, New York</i>	
Tanner Poss <i>Manchester, New Jersey</i>	Tatiana Velazquez <i>El Paso, Texas</i>	
Caden Propst <i>Saint Charles, Missouri</i>	Jairo Verduzco <i>Indio, California</i>	
Alexis Prusow <i>Hartland, Wisconsin</i>	Olivia Viele <i>Springfield, Illinois</i>	
Nicolas Rodriguez <i>Arlington, Texas</i>	Reece Villines <i>Weatherford, Oklahoma</i>	



THE DENTAL MEDICINE OATH

I accept this coat as a symbol of my profession
and as a representation of my commitment
to patients, to society and to other health professionals.

I will exhibit personal and professional integrity
and affirm my loyalty to the profession I am about to enter.

I will be mindful always of my great responsibility
to preserve the health of my patients,
to retain their confidence and respect
and to perform faithfully my professional duties.

I will be ever vigilant
in aiding in the general welfare of the community,
sustaining its laws and institutions,
not engaging in those practices that will in any way
bring shame or discredit upon myself or my profession.

THE DENTAL MEDICINE OATH

I will endeavor to work in accord with my colleagues
in a spirit of progressive cooperation.

And I will look with respect and esteem
upon all those who have taught me my art.

To my college I will be loyal
and strive for its best interests
and for the interest of the students
who will come after me.

I will ever be alert
to further the application of basic biological truths
and technical advances in my chosen profession,
Dental Medicine.

ABOUT KANSAS CITY UNIVERSITY

Kansas City University was founded in 1916 as one of the nation's five original osteopathic medical schools. Today, KCU is a fully-accredited, private, not-for-profit health sciences university with a mission of *improving the well-being of the communities we serve*. KCU is located on two Missouri campuses – Kansas City & Joplin – to address the health needs of both urban and rural populations.

The KCU Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, Dental Medicine, Biosciences and Health Professions offer graduate degrees in osteopathic medicine (DO), dental medicine (DMD), clinical psychology (PsyD), and biomedical sciences (MS) – as well as concurrent-degree programs, honors tracks, fellowships and research opportunities. In 2026, KCU launched a new Master of Health Science in Anesthesiologist Assistant (MHS-AA) program, further expanding the University's commitment to addressing provider shortages throughout the four-state region and beyond.

In 2027, the inaugural class of the CDM will graduate and join their fellow KCU alumni as leaders in the health sciences.

ABOUT THE KCU COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE

More than a decade after a devastating tornado reshaped Joplin, Missouri, the local community continues its journey of recovery and revitalization – and the Kansas City University College of Dental Medicine (KCU-CDM) has become an integral part of that story. By educating future dentists for the four-state region and beyond, the CDM supports the local economy and provides affordable, accessible oral health care for individuals in the regional area while preparing the next generation of dentists to best serve their future patients.

Communities throughout the four-state region surrounding Joplin continue to face challenges in accessing dental care, with many areas designated by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration as Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas. The consequences of this shortage are significant – untreated oral disease contributes to chronic health conditions, missed school days for children, lost productivity for working adults and higher long-term health care costs for patients in communities already facing substantial health disparities.

Recognizing both the urgency and the opportunity, the University took decisive action in 2023, establishing the CDM on the KCU Farber-McIntire Campus in Joplin. By emphasizing rural and community-based care, interprofessional collaboration and service-driven practice, the dental curriculum equips graduates to strengthen community health, lead positive change and, most importantly, relieve the pain of patients suffering from untreated dental diseases.

KCU dental student doctors learn how to care for patients with oral health needs through both classroom and clinical experiences – learning from world-class faculty, training with advanced dental technology and providing comprehensive oral health care using a team-based model in the KCU Oral Health Center. During their fourth year of study, KCU dental student doctors provide patient care in community-based dental facilities such as Federally Qualified Health Centers, community health centers, Tribal facilities and other outpatient-based programs throughout the region.

KCU is proud to celebrate our newest dental student doctors as they receive their white coats and take the next steps in their own journeys of changing health care *for good*.