

Dean of Kansas City University College of Osteopathic Medicine Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award

JOPLIN, MO, UNITED STATES, April 22, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Kenneth A. Heiles, DO, campus dean of [Kansas City University's](#) (KCU) College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) in Joplin, Missouri, has been awarded the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award by the [American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians](#) (ACOFP). This honor recognizes individuals whose career-long service has significantly impacted osteopathic family medicine, their patients and the profession.

Heiles earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in 1984 and completed his residency at Millcreek Community Hospital in Erie, Pennsylvania. He began his medical career in Star City, Arkansas, serving a rural community of fewer than 2,000 residents. His commitment to treating underserved populations led him to Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where he directed medical education and the osteopathic family medicine residency program affiliated with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences for 19 years, while continuing to serve the Star City community. He later served as associate dean of Graduate Medical Education at Lincoln Memorial University's DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine and was the founding dean of Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine, guiding the institution through its provisional accreditation.

His involvement with ACOFP began in 1988 when he attended the organization's annual convention to help charter the Arkansas chapter of what was then the American College of General Practitioners. Over the years, he has held numerous volunteer leadership roles within ACOFP, including serving on the Board of Governors and as national president from 2010 to 2011. Since 2008, he has contributed to the ACOFP Foundation, including service on its executive committee, and currently serves as vice chair of the Assembly of Osteopathic Graduate Medical



Educators and vice chair of the American Osteopathic Board of Family Physicians.

"My career in osteopathic medicine and rural primary care has been a calling—one that has brought immense personal and professional fulfillment," said Heiles. "Over the years, I've seen my work with ACOFP as a way to give back and help prepare the next generation of osteopathic family physicians for the meaningful path ahead. I'm truly honored to receive this award."

Heiles joined KCU in 2019 as associate dean of Graduate Medical Education and professor of Family Medicine and was appointed campus dean in 2022. In his current role, he oversees daily operations of the Joplin medical school campus, ensuring student well-being and academic success.

His dedication to osteopathic medicine and medical education has been recognized with multiple accolades, including the ACOFP Distinguished Service Award and being named Physician of the Year in Arkansas. Beyond his professional commitments, Heiles volunteers with the Special Olympics of Southwest Missouri.

"Dr. Heiles' unwavering commitment to osteopathic family medicine and his leadership in medical education have profoundly impacted both our institution and the broader medical community," said W. Joshua Cox, DO, executive dean of KCU-COM. "We are proud to celebrate his achievements and this well-deserved recognition."

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