Opportunities abound within the Blue Ocean Shift of Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions’ 2019-2023 Comprehensive Strategic Plan (CSP). As a follow-up to high achievement within the 2014-2018 CSP, the blue waters in which we are swimming bring excitement and energy to the University.

I am proud of the outcomes from the 23-member Task Force who worked diligently examining our previous goals with a resolve to improve and expand efforts and to deepen our focus on innovation, technologies, and opportunities. The result is a plan that may look unlike other universities’ plans, but which reflects the culture of RMUoHP. It is thoughtful, inventive, aspirational, and ambitious. Our CSP is a living document that closes the gap between intentions and outcomes, harnesses our resources, and allows us individually and collectively to reach goals that we are distinctively positioned to address.

A plan, of course, is only the beginning. Each member of our RMUoHP community must continue to put our students first, to push toward achievement, to measure our progress, and to position the university as a place where high academic standards join outstanding student support to produce academic success. We invite you to join us in this exciting journey!

Richard P. Nielsen, PT, DHSc, ECS
RMUoHP President
In 1998, Rocky Mountain University of Physical Therapy was founded and registered with the Utah State Board of Regents under the Utah Postsecondary Proprietary School Act (Title 53B, Chapter 5, Utah Code Annotated 1953) as a provider of post-professional physical therapy education, including the Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree programs.

To reflect the University’s plan to broaden its spectrum of healthcare education beyond physical therapy and to support its impending pursuit of regional accreditation through the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), the University changed its name to Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions in 2000. From 2000 to May 2008, the University’s mission statement was as follows:

Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions is dedicated to educating healthcare professionals in a scholarly environment that benefits from sharing of ideas within and across University programs. Programs provide University students the opportunity to thrive as excellent and competent evidence based practitioners who are ethically aware, socially responsible healthcare providers who will be leaders in the healthcare arena. Through a diverse and culturally competent student body, faculty, staff, administration, and Board of Trustees, the University strives to provide dynamic educational experiences that contribute to the creation, development, and promulgation of new knowledge; promote critical thinking; focus practitioners on achieving skills essential to the advancement of practice, and prepare professionals to assume leadership roles in healthcare, academia, and research.

The degree designator for the DPT programs was changed to the Doctor of Science (DSc) degree in 2000, which more appropriately reflected the programs’ research emphases and supported physical therapy’s movement to a doctoring profession. Similar to the original DPT degree programs, the DSc degree programs represented a variety of specialization areas, including Orthopaedic Physical Therapy, Sports Physical Therapy, Pediatric Physical Therapy, Cardiopulmonary and Pathophysiology Physical Therapy, Clinical Electrophysiology Physical Therapy, Neurology Physical Therapy, and Hand Rehabilitation. Two additional MS degree programs were added the same year: Athletic Training and Occupational Therapy, marking the University’s first degree programs specifically for non-physical therapists.

In 2001, the University opened a clinical doctoral degree program, the transitional DPT. During this year, the University submitted to the NWCCU its Application for Consideration for Candidacy. The Application was approved in 2002, thereby beginning the self-study phase of the regional accreditation process. During this period, the University opened a second clinical doctorate: the post-professional Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree program.

Expansion into the field of nursing and multi-disciplinary degree programs began in 2004, when the University opened the DSc degree program in Nursing and the DSc degree program in Health Promotion and Wellness. The Clinical Electrophysiology and Pediatric Science DSc degree programs expanded to admit broader healthcare professionals in 2005. In Fall 2005, RMUoHP completed an additional regional accreditation milestone when its efforts resulted in Candidacy from the NWCCU.
In January 2006, the University opened its post-master’s Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program. Specialty elective tracks were also added to the University’s transitional DPT and post-professional OTD degree programs.

During 2008 and 2009, the University received approvals from the State and the NWCCU to convert requested DSc degree programs to Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree programs. The programs would later return to the DSc designator beginning in 2013.

As RMUoHP grew, so, too, did the need for a simplified mission statement. That statement was approved in June 2008 and, in December 2013, a second sentence was added to provide detail on mission fulfillment:

The mission of Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions is to educate current and future healthcare professionals for outcomes-oriented, evidence-based practice. The University demonstrates mission fulfillment through the quality of its education and success of its students in academic programs that develop leaders skilled in clinical inquiry and prepared to effect healthcare change.

Seeing additional opportunities to effect healthcare change in the United States, RMUoHP began developing its first residential degree program, the entry-level DPT, which, in 2010, opened and received Candidacy for programmatic accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). To support this program, the University expanded its campus from 15,000 to 30,000 square feet. In October 2010, RMUoHP hosted its site evaluation for Initial Accreditation through the NWCCU. The efforts towards regional accreditation proved successful and the University received Initial Accreditation in 2010. In 2011, the University completed a feasibility study for a Physician Assistant program, which would become RMUoHP’s second residential degree program.

In addition to the degree programs offered through RMUoHP, over the years the University also became a known provider of continuing education and professional development in pediatric science, electoneuromyography, and evidence-based practice. In 2012, the first Neonatology Fellowship program opened in partnership with Seattle Children’s Hospital. The Fellowship program became the first of its kind credentialed by the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency and Fellowship Education. The NWCCU reaffirmed the University’s regional accreditation the same year and, in conjunction with the first graduating cohort of entry-level DPT students, the DPT program became CAPTE-accredited in December 2012.

In 2013, the University began offering a new MS program in Health Science, which included two student concentration tracks: Sports Performance and Pediatric Exercise Science. RMUoHP also began offering a post-baccalaureate DNP program Family Nurse Practitioner track. Additionally, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accepted the University’s application for Initial Accreditation of its DNP degree programs.

During 2014, the University began its first post-Master’s Clinical Science Doctorate (ClinScD) program in speech-language pathology. In addition, the MS program in Health Science added a Rehabilitation Science track and the OTD added an Education track. The University continued development of a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree program. A post-graduate certificate in Learning Design in Higher Education also began in 2015 (now known as the Healthcare Professions Education Certificate).

After hosting a formal provisional programmatic accreditation site visit by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physical Assistant (ARC-PA) in 2015, ARC-PA awarded Provisional Accreditation to the MPAS program and the inaugural cohort started. The DSc program started a track in Human and Sport Performance and began planning for a Neurological Rehabilitation track. A Work and Health track also was added to the OTD program. A feasibility study was completed on an entry-level Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology (MS-SLP). In addition, a post-Master’s Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate program was started. The NWCCU accepted the University’s Mid-Cycle Report after the submission of a Self-Study Report and a site visit.

In 2016, the Neurologic Rehabilitation track in the DSc program began admitting students. Approval was received by the NWCCU for the MS-SLP program and the application for candidacy was submitted to American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Council on Academic Accreditation (ASHA CAA). The University expanded its campus with additional 15,000 square feet to accommodate increasing enrollment.

ASHA CAA granted Candidacy status to the MS-SLP program in 2017 and the University enrolled its inaugural cohort that fall. The University footprint again expanded for program growth by securing an additional 11,790 square feet. The DNP program added a Psychiatric Mental Health track. The DPT program added a second cohort annually after approval by CAPTE and RMUoHP’s Neonatology Fellowship program was also reaccredited.

In 2018, the DPT program was reaccredited and the post-Master’s ClinScD Speech-Language Pathology program renamed the degree designator to the Doctorate in Speech-Language Pathology (SLPD) to be consistent with national recommendations. The Healthcare Professions Education Certificate program was approved to award academic credit. The In addition, the University determined to return to PhD programming as feedback from alumni, students, and healthcare educators indicated that academic job opportunities were curtailed with the often-confusing DSc credential. As such, a substantive change request was submitted to the NWCCU to offer a PhD in Health Science.

A highlight of 2018 was RMUoHP’s 20th Anniversary, marked by 20 days of information and activities. A concluding celebration on June 8 highlighted the RMUoHP community and recognized the contributions of the thousands of individuals who invested in its success.
Mission, Vision, Core Values, & Core Themes

Mission

The mission of Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions is to educate current and future healthcare professionals for outcomes-oriented, evidence-based practice. The University demonstrates mission fulfillment through the quality of its education and success of its students in academic programs that develop leaders skilled in clinical inquiry and prepared to effect healthcare change.

Vision

The vision of Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions is to advance the quality, delivery, and efficacy of healthcare.

Core Values

- **Clinical Inquiry** - The University advocates clinical inquiry that challenges practice standards, expands evidence-based practice, increases clinical research, develops healthcare change agents, and encourages experiential learning.

- **Student-Centeredness** - The University provides a student-centered environment through relevant and participatory courses and a supportive University community.

- **Integrity** - The University demonstrates integrity in its interactions with all its constituents.

- **Diversity** - The University cultivates diversity through academic freedom, varied educational experiences, and broad recruitment of students and faculty.

- **Leadership** - The University fosters skills essential to leadership roles in healthcare, academia, research, and the community.

- **Sustainability** - The University operates with respect for the natural environment.

- **Viability** - The University generates and manages its resources in a manner that will ensure the long-term success and operation of the institution.

- **Service** - The University promotes service to community, healthcare, and education.

Core Themes

In conjunction with the University’s Mission, Vision, Core Values, and CSP, the University developed Core Themes. The Core Themes are measurable manifestations of the University’s mission. Each Theme, below, includes a series of objectives, outcomes, indicators, and target levels for which the University measures mission fulfillment across the institution.

1. **Developing Evidence-Based Practitioners** – RMUoHP develops evidence-based practitioners by educating current and future healthcare professionals to synthesize evidence-based principles into practice.

2. **Elevating Clinical Inquiry Proficiency** – RMUoHP elevates clinical inquiry proficiency through learning experiences that challenge practice standards, expand evidence-based practice, increase clinical research, develop healthcare change agents, and encourage experiential learning.

3. **Ensuring Educational Quality** – RMUoHP ensures educational quality through student-centered academic programs, services, and continuous improvement.

4. **Nurturing Student Success** – RMUoHP nurtures student success by engaging students in professional and personal growth opportunities.
Comprehensive strategic planning in higher education describes the method through which an institution aligns its direction, priorities, and activities with its mission, vision, goals, and values. The systematic process and resulting strategies represent the institution’s response toward environmental circumstances, institutional capacity, and future opportunities. Working towards consistent goals, the collective, disciplined efforts produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape the institution. The process requires ongoing assessment and communication to ensure the effectiveness thereof. Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions approaches comprehensive strategic planning through these perspectives; focused on its mission, healthcare advancement, enhanced collaboration, and institutional growth.

Process

The success of the 2014-2018 CSP informed the development of the 2019-2023 CSP in practicing inclusive strategies that maximized the talent and expertise found in the greater RMUoHP community. Students, alumni, employees, faculty, and Trustees were included in initial data collection via online surveying. Focus groups organized by functional area expanded the analysis of the survey findings and the aggregated content was next brought to an inclusive Strategic Plan Task Force. Additionally the RMUoHP Board of Trustees provided ongoing advice regarding relevant issues, such as Mission alignment, growth, operations, and staffing.

The 23-member Strategic Plan Task Force consisted of faculty, staff, administration, and members of the RMUoHP Board of Trustees and Wasatch Educational Board of Directors. Employee participants represented diverse employee levels and roles, including Enrollment Management, Admissions, Student Services, Technology and Innovation, Finance, Human Resources, Academic Affairs, Research, Academic Programming (Continuing Education, Doctor of Science, Nursing Practice, Speech-Language Pathology, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant Studies), Administrative and Academic Operations, Institutional Effectiveness, and Executive Leadership. Dr. Jessica Egbert and Dr. Sandy Pennington co-chaired the Task Force.

The Task Force began by reviewing data from constituent groups and gathering in a day-long innovation session that included structured individual and team activities following a Blue Ocean Shift model. Strategies discovered within this session were analyzed and themed. The participants ranked their interest areas and were assigned to one of seven teams through which each team would conduct an analysis and deliver the findings via a presentation to the University audience and via a written report. The seven teams were Customized Credentials, Engaged External Audiences, Faculty and Curricula Considerations, Creatively Clinical, Rigorous Research, Forging Academic Frontiers, and Student-Centered Strategies.
The team presentations and reports were delivered in June 2018. Reports aligned with a rubric that included the following categories:

- **Description of Proposed Initiative** (Service, Program, Product, Process);
- **Description of Institutional Alignment** (Summary of how the proposed initiative aligns with Mission, Vision, specific Core Values, and/or specific Core Themes);
- **Brief Needs/Gap Analysis** (Data-driven overview on initiative internal to RMUoHP and/or in the external landscape);
- **Constituent Description** (Identify all who are included in or affected by this initiative);
- **Opportunities and Impact** (Description of the potential positive affects of initiative);
- **Challenges, Weaknesses, and Threats** (Describe any internal or external barriers to implementation of this initiative);
- **Innovation** (Description of what makes this initiative innovative to RMUoHP and/or the external landscape);
- **Life Cycle** (Estimate the viable lifecycle of this initiative);
- **Resources** (Describe the resources (human, financial, equipment, etc.) required to develop and deliver a successful initiative);
- **Goals & Expected Outcomes** (Identify the goals and expected outcomes of this initiative);
- **Milestones and Timelines** (Identify key milestones and the completion timeline towards the implementation of this initiative); and,
- **Persuasive Analysis** (Data-driven analysis to justify or inspire initiative).

Following the team presentations and reports, data and priorities were organized into themes through which a focused group of 10 individuals (including the eight members of the Administrative Board) participated in an exercise using Q-methodology. By participating in this mixed-methods analysis that allowed for the rating and ranking of themed initiatives, findings revealed preferences of the team on whether and when to implement an initiative.

Constituent data, team presentations and reports, strategy sessions, results of the ongoing CSP, and themed analyses were considered with the RMUoHP Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Core Themes to yield goals and initiatives. Goals and initiatives were established to guide the University for the next five years while empowering initiative leaders to develop measurements through which these goals and initiatives are achieved.

The draft 2019-2023 CSP was distributed to University employees, members of the student council, Board of Trustees, and Wasatch Educational Board of Directors for feedback regarding content and mission alignment. All respondents expressed support for the Plan and 96.49% of the respondents agreed the Plan reflects the University’s potential to achieve its vision. Additionally, the Board of Trustees and Administrative Board held a strategy session to review the draft Plan with consideration for the University’s Mission.

The participatory development and review process of the CSP reflects the values and culture of the institution towards transcending boundaries of individual programs and administrative units. Through a collaborative, dedicated workforce, the University has the capacity to achieve the goals identified by the 2019-2023 CSP.

The Administrative Board approved the Plan in August 2018 and the Board of Trustees approved the Plan in September 2018.
Definitions

**Goal**
The outcome or end result to which efforts are focused. Goals have characteristics, the distinctive quality of which are associated with or describing the goal.

**Initiative**
A leading action taking toward achieving a goal.

**Measurement**
A performance assessment used to determine extent to which an initiative has been achieved. Measurements may include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which identify measurements fundamentally important to the University’s success. A KPI is a critical, quantifiable, and repeated measurement to visibly evaluate progress or success towards goal achievement.
Six goals emerged from RMUoHP’s strategic planning process, each of which align with and support the University’s mission. Within each of these goals are initiatives to be address during 2019-2023. The measures through which the goals will be achieved are developed within the functional area or department that is responsible for the completion thereof. Goals, initiatives, and measurements will be documented and tracked within RMUoHP’s Accountability Management System to demonstrate progress and achievement.

The University considers its Strategic Plan a living document, subject to and informed by changing landscapes, including healthcare, higher education, and technology. While the overarching goals likely will remain unchanged, new initiatives may evolve from innovations not yet imagined as new information, enhanced data, and technologies emerge. For example, the development of a new degree program may appear viable and necessary at the outset of the Strategic Plan, however, changes in nationwide healthcare needs may warrant a CSP update to respond to those needs. As such, the University may act responsively and implement data-driven changes upon approval of the Administrative Board and, when appropriate, the Board of Trustees.

Goals

1. Expand Academic Excellence
2. Advance Institutional Effectiveness
3. Enhance Technological Sophistication
4. Cultivate University Recognition & Relationships
5. Launch Personalized Learning Pathways
6. Nurture Student Success
## Initiatives

### Goal 1. Expand Academic Excellence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Implementation Start Year (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Develop new post-professional degree programs.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Invest in strategies to increase and innovate research.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Develop new entry-level degree programs.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Create content, programs, and systems that may be used for third-party collaboration.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Goal 2. Advance Institutional Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Implementation Start Year (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Enhance website as dynamic, relevant, and comprehensive gateway to the University.</td>
<td>Technology &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Develop advanced method for standardizing program analysis and forecasting program viability.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Innovate student tuition and fees policies and processes.</td>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Cultivate key educational, research, and strategic partnerships.</td>
<td>Strategy &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Goal 3. Enhance Technological Sophistication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Implementation Start Year (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1 Increase web-based strategies to enhance connectivity, satisfaction, and the sustainability of academic models.</strong></td>
<td>Technology &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2 Expand technological sophistication to enhance teaching and learning.</strong></td>
<td>Technology &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.3 Develop web-based core programming to support interdisciplinary education.</strong></td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
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### Goal 4. Cultivate University Recognition & Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Implementation Start Year (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.1 Build the University identity by increasing internal and external recognition.</strong></td>
<td>Strategy &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2 Develop centralized office of institutional communication.</strong></td>
<td>Strategy &amp; Engagement</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Goal 5. Launch Personalized Learning Pathways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Implementation Start Year (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Develop web-based learning communities.</td>
<td>Technology &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Integrate competency-based models into diverse levels of academic programming.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Expand opportunities for personalized pathways to academic program completion.</td>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Implement global programming strategies.</td>
<td>Technology &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
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## Goal 6. Nurture Student Success

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<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Implementation Start Year (Estimated)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Build comprehensive physical and virtual Student Success Center.</td>
<td>Student &amp; Alumni Affairs</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Grow collaborative University events that engage diverse constituents and enhance a sense of community.</td>
<td>Student &amp; Alumni Affairs</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
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