

Graduation 2023
112 is a Charm as Class of 2023 Graduates with Style



New Doctors of Podiatric Medicine.

NYCPM's 112th commencement brought together graduates' families, friends and guests as well as NYCPM faculty, staff, trustees and honored guests to witness and celebrate the conferring of DPM degrees to 71 members of the Class of 2023.

"You're the best trained DPMs in the country," declared **Deputy Board Chairman Rock G. Positano, DPM, MSc, MPH** in his welcome to the graduates. A graduate of NYCPM, and Founder & Director of Non-Surgical Foot & Ankle Service, Joe DiMaggio Sports Medicine Center at the Hospital for Special Surgery, he also predicted that "AI will never replace DPMs."

The speakers' positivity continued throughout the ceremony, which was marked by all of the pomp that the occasion requires. **Alan Kadish, MD**, President of Touro University, commended former NYCPM President Louis L. Levine and the NYCPM leadership, and then, addressing the graduates directly, urged them to approach their 'work' and 'life' as a continuum, and to maximize their social skills, noting that 'work is a privilege, an essential part of life.' **Maria A. Branca, DPM (1994)**, President, New York State Podiatric Medical Association, advocated keeping patients' needs a priority.

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VP and Academic Dean **Michael J. Trepal, DPM, FACFAS**, paid a warm tribute to former President and CEO Louis L. Levine; he noted that it was Mr. Levine's vision that not only helped elevate NYCPM to its current status, but also brought NYCPM to its coming affiliation with Touro University. He also paid tribute to Mr. Levine's wife Marilyn and children, who were in attendance.

Honoree Cristina Contreras, CEO of New York City Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan Hospital, spoke inspirationally about her own pathway to success, noting her journey from rough beginnings and poor grades and never giving up. She advised the graduates to challenge themselves, to stay focused, and to undertake continuous improvement, noting that additional education would open doors to additional opportunities. Quoting Nelson Mandela, she stated "education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world."

Keynote speaker and honoree David Paterson, JD, Former Governor, New York State and Distinguished Professor, Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine, spoke about his early trials and tribulations, and his advocacy for the visually and physically impaired. (He is legally blind.) He also spoke about how podiatrists can help defeat the impact of diabetes on their communities, but they won't be able to do it alone – they will have to participate in policymaking and partner with other healthcare organizations. He and Ms. Contreras received the degrees of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*.

Afterwards, the graduates marched across the Alice Tully Hall stage, were hooded by faculty or family members, received their diplomas and signed the Book of Physicians. They all recited the Hippocratic Oath and Dr. Trepal declared they were doctors of podiatric medicine. Two residents also received their certificates onstage.

Concluding remarks were delivered by Léthicia Kimberly Paul, DPM, President, Class of 2023 and Gregory Wyatt Rose, DPM, Class Valedictorian. Dr. Paul declared the "future of podiatry is bright and our patients are in excellent hands," and ended with a quote from a French proverb that she said means "it's better to prevent than to heal."

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Clinical Education Dean Ronald Soave, DPM (left) and Pre-Clinical Sciences Dean Eileen Chusid, PhD (right) lead students into graduation ceremony in Alice Tully Hall, followed by Student Council President Trevel Moxey (2024).



Dean Lisa K. Lee presents bouquet to Marilyn Levine after Dean Trepal's tribute to former President Louis L. Levine.



Honoree Metropolitan Hospital CEO Cristina Contreras (left center) and honoree and keynoter Gov. David Paterson (right center), between Academic Dean Michael J. Trepal and (left) and Deputy Board Chairman Rock G. Positano (right).



Senior Class President Léthicia Kimberly Paul, DPM (left) and Valedictorian Gregory Wyatt Rose, DPM, address graduates at the ceremony's conclusion.



New DPMs recite the Hippocratic Oath.