

Remarks from M4 Class Presidents at the 2026 White Coat Ceremony

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Introduction

Jenny Kim and Kousalya Velagapudi are elected M4 Class Presidents for the Columbia and Springfield campuses, respectively.

Kim and Velagapudi delivered encouraging remarks for new medical students at the 2026 White Coat Ceremony hosted by the University of Missouri School of Medicine on July 31st, 2026. Each year, the newly admitted cohort of medical students are presented with a MU-branded white coat by School of Medicine leadership, and swear to honor the Declaration of Geneva, a modern version of the Hippocratic Oath.

"Trust the Process" Advice from Senior Students

Good afternoon everyone! To the faculty, staff, family members, friends, and most importantly, the Class of 2030—welcome! My name is Jenny, and my name is Kousalya. We have the privilege of serving as Class Presidents for the Class of 2027, and we're honored to celebrate this exciting day with all of you.

First of all, congratulations! Today, you officially become medical students. Whether you've dreamed of this moment since you were five years old or found your path to medicine more recently, today is something to be incredibly proud of. You'll put on your white coat - a symbol of compassion, curiosity, and the trust your future patients will place in you. It's also probably the cleanest your white coat will ever be, so take a picture while you can.

Over the next four years, you'll learn a new language made almost entirely of acronyms. You'll develop surprisingly strong opinions about which coffee shop is best before an 8 a.m. lecture. And before long, you'll start using words like "Anki," "UWorld," and "OSCE" in everyday conversation—and your family will have absolutely no idea what you're talking about.

You'll also hear one phrase over and over again:

"Trust the process."

At first, you'll probably roll your eyes a little. Then somewhere along the way, you'll find yourself saying it to the class behind you. Because the truth is, medical school isn't about having everything figured out on day one. It's about showing up, staying curious, and growing a little bit every day. Before you know it, concepts that once seemed impossible will start to feel familiar, and you'll surprise yourself with how much you've learned. But as much as you'll learn in the classroom, some of your most meaningful lessons will come from the people around you.

Take a look at your classmates. The people sitting next to you today will become your study partners, your teammates, your biggest cheerleaders, and some of your closest friends. They'll celebrate your successes, help you through the occasional tough day, and probably have the lecture notes you forgot to download.

Medical school has a remarkable way of turning a group of strangers into a community. As fourth-years, when we look back, the memories that stand out most aren't just the milestones - they're the people. The conversations after class, the mentors who challenged us, the patients who trusted us, and the friendships that made this journey so much more meaningful.

So here's our advice: work hard, but don't forget to enjoy the experience. Go to the class events. Try new things. Celebrate the little victories. Be there for one another. Four years may sound like a long time today, but we promise they'll pass more quickly than you think.

Finally, we'd like to thank the families, friends, faculty, and staff who helped make today possible. Your encouragement and support have brought these students to this moment, and it will continue to make all the difference in the years ahead. To the Class of 2030: welcome to the

Mizzou School of Medicine family. We can't wait to see the physicians - and people - you become. Congratulations, enjoy this incredible day, and yes...trust the process.