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CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs, ARCOM Partner to Expand Medical Education Opportunities

HOT SPRINGS, Arkansas (Feb. 8, 2018) -- CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs announced a new partnership with the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine (ARCOM) in Fort Smith to develop new Undergraduate Medical Education (UME) and Graduate Medical Education (GME) training opportunities for ARCOM students and graduates.

CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs anticipates launching GME Residencies in both Family Practice and Internal Medicine beginning in 2020.

The partnership will help to improve the overall quality of health care in the Natural State. According to *US News and World Report*, Arkansas currently ranks 50th in overall health care. Studies show that having a personal primary care provider is associated with a higher likelihood of appropriate care, and a usual source of care is associated with better health outcomes.

"The health of individuals and communities often greatly depends on access to quality health care," said Anthony Houston, president of CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs. "CHI St. Vincent's commitment to expand partnerships that will generate greater access to quality health care through educational and research based collaborations becomes an essential tool to fulfill our institutional mission and implement mechanisms that ultimately help alleviate existing health disparities and increase the quality of life for all that we serve."

Dr. Ray Stowers, provost and dean of ARCOM said, "Research has shown that residents tend to establish their practices near their residency training. The training of our students and residents occurring at an institution like CHI St Vincent Hot Springs exponentially increases their opportunity to recruit and retain our graduates."

In an effort to help mitigate a projected primary care physician shortage in Arkansas, ARCOM created a mission to educate and train compassionate osteopathic physicians, skilled in the science of patient-centered osteopathic medical care and focused on service to the underserved.

"This mission will ultimately be accomplished at the undergraduate and graduate medical education levels through excellence in teaching, research, service, and scholarly activity as demonstrated within the stellar reputation of the CHI St. Vincent system," said Kyle Parker, president and CEO of the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education, ARCOM's parent institution. "Our institutional mission perfectly aligns with CHI St. Vincent, and we look forward to working hand-in-hand to further advance the greater good of health care through the training of our state's future physician workforce."

Houston added, "The partnership with ARCOM fits squarely within the core mission of CHI St. Vincent to create healthier communities and compliments the existing nursing partnerships with Henderson State University and National Park College."

Crystal Bohannon, Vice President of Operations at CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs who has responsibility for leading the efforts to launch the medical education programs added, "CHI St. Vincent has poised itself to become a leader in healthcare education emphasizing care coordination and communication among training healthcare professionals to transform primary care that promotes overall health and quality of life measures."

These efforts will ultimately help to populate the southern part of Arkansas with the next generation of healthcare providers.

About CHI St. Vincent

CHI St. Vincent, founded in 1888, is the largest integrated and community-based physician organization in Arkansas -- a system with over one million patient visits per year, serving patients from all 75 counties in Arkansas. CHI St. Vincent Infirmary, an acute-care facility, licensed for 615 beds, is located in Little Rock and is ranked the "best hospital" in Arkansas by U. S. News and World Report and is the first hospital to earn Magnet® recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. CHI St. Vincent Hot Springs is an acute-care facility licensed for 282 beds. Other CHI St. Vincent hospitals include CHI St. Vincent North, licensed for 69 beds, in Sherwood; CHI St. Vincent Morrilton, a critical access hospital in Morrilton, licensed for 25 beds; and CHI St. Vincent West, an outpatient campus in west Little Rock. The system includes a network of 300 primary care and specialty physicians, a home health agency, a joint venture inpatient rehabilitation facility, and affiliations with more than 1,000 physicians.

About ARCOM

Arkansas Colleges of Health Education is a private, non-profit institution, and the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine opened its doors to its inaugural class in August 2017. ARCOM is currently interviewing students for its next class of 150 osteopathic medical students.