

CENTRAL MN FOOT AND ANKLE

DR. KAREN ROUW

By: Heather Hollermann

Photo courtesy of: Central MN Foot and Ankle



Making a Difference One Step at a Time

Physicians and staff at Central Minnesota Foot and Ankle value spending time with their patients in order to fully evaluate their concerns, answer questions, and determine the best treatment plan. They offer specialized care in the treatment of foot and ankle disorders including special interests in foot surgery, sports medicine, custom orthotics, diabetic care, and skin and nail disorders.

At Central Minnesota Foot and Ankle is goal-oriented, Philadelphia native, Dr. Karen Rouw. A practicing podiatric physician and surgeon since 1990, Dr. Rouw first became interested in podiatric medicine and surgery from her own experience as a patient in her teens. "I was drawn to the profession by the ability to make a difference in the life of the patient—often times immediately," she says.

With degrees from Chestnut Hill College and Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine, in addition to having completed a surgical residency at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Rouw co-owns Central Minnesota Foot and Ankle and has been with the practice since 2008. "The most rewarding part of my job is improving someone's ability to function whether it be because of surgery I performed or

pursuing a conservative treatment plan," she explains. "In some cases, due to the specialized care that I can provide, I am able to save someone's foot...My motto has been 'an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.'" Dr. Rouw jokes about how corny that motto might be but says it's often very true in medicine.

The field of podiatric medicine and surgery is gaining traction with women physicians according to Dr. Rouw. She recalls women made up half of her graduating class at Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine. "[It was] a turning point for medical schools...We have women in all phases of medicine in greater numbers than ever, more so than in many other areas of science," she says.

However despite the progress her field has made in being more female friendly, Dr. Rouw has come across a bit of discrimination towards women. "During a residency interview, I was asked point blank if I was going to get pregnant," she explains. "I couldn't believe that they were asking me that!"

Although discrimination still exists in her field, Dr. Rouw remains hopeful. With the growing numbers of women in medicine, the future looks bright. "[The] more women physicians means

less discrimination professionally," she explains. For women looking to pursue a degree in medicine, Dr. Rouw has some seemingly simple advice. "Work hard, study hard, and don't lose sight of your goal."

Along with her bright hopes for the future of her field, Dr. Rouw continues to hone in on her skills in order to become a better physician. She loves a challenge and is currently learning Somali so she may better assist the large population in Minnesota. "Never being satisfied with the status quo but always finding ways to improve oneself professionally as well as personally is important," she explains. With her progressive mindset, Dr. Rouw continues her work as a physician making a difference in peoples' lives one step at a time.



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