

Jay Rapley, M.D.

Rockhill Orthopaedic Specialists



Passion and Perseverance

The late actor Christopher Reeve once noted, “A hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.” He very well could have been speaking about Dr. Jay Rapley, a board-certified orthopaedic surgeon with Rockhill Orthopaedic Specialists on the St. Luke’s East campus in Lee’s Summit, Missouri. However, Dr. Rapley is far from ordinary. Humble? Yes. Courageous? Definitely. Determined? Without a doubt. Above all, he is passionate about what he does, and that passion stems not just from a lifelong desire to become a surgeon, but from the challenges in his life have led him to this point. Dr. Rapley has triumphed through the valley of adversity, showing that difficult times do not just build character, but more often reveal it.

In early 2017, Dr. Rapley was given what will probably stand as the greatest test to his faith in his entire life to date. While on an early morning walk with his dog and a good friend, Dr. Rapley and his companions were accidentally struck from behind by a truck.

The subsequent moments of brief clarity as to what had happened — after all, he is an orthopaedic surgeon and was taking initial stock of his injuries — were followed by periods of unconsciousness. Dr. Rapley spent the next several weeks and ensuing months enduring numerous surgeries and countless hours in rehabilitation.

Advised by his doctors he might not return to his practice, let alone perform surgery, for an appreciable amount of time, Dr. Rapley was determined to rise above that cautionary tale.

“When I was in rehabilitation, I was told it may take a year or so for me to see patients again, but my view was that I wanted to return as fast as I could to get back to what I love, so I learned to modify my requirements to do my job,” indicated Dr. Rapley.

Despite countless injuries and a severe fracture to his lower spine, rendering him fully paralyzed from slightly above the waist down, Dr. Rapley was back to the medical office within five months of the accident and back in the operating room just a few months later. Thanks to modern technology and an unwavering

passion for what he does, Dr. Rapley has slowly regained his life.

“I was back to seeing patients again, although not in full force, by June of last year and returned to the operating room by October using special equipment to allow me to get into position to perform surgery,” noted Dr. Rapley, who consults with patients while in a wheelchair and conducts his surgeries using a stand-up wheelchair. Through it all, his commitment to his craft has never wavered. He has trained many years to get to this point in his career, and he never considered letting it all slip through his hands.

With a specialty emphasis on knees, shoulders and sports medicine, Dr. Rapley is experienced in numerous procedures, including arthroscopic rotator cuff repair; arthroscopic labral repair, arthroscopic suprascapular nerve releases, arthroscopic ACL, arthroscopic meniscal and cartilage surgery, knee ligament reconstruction, patellar instability injuries, fracture care and various sports medicine-related injuries. Patients turn to Dr. Rapley for his steadfast commitment to excellent orthopaedic care, and he stands among the most respected and highly-trained orthopaedic surgeons in the Midwest.

Dr. Rapley was a high school athlete when his desire to become a surgeon was intensified. A high school athlete who excelled in football, baseball, track and wrestling, he was no stranger to sports-related injuries, some of which landed him on the receiving end of a scalpel. A surgeon who operated on him at that time later invited him to observe an operation, and his desire to become a surgeon was firmly sealed that day.

“I knew I always wanted to be a surgeon, and when I watched that knee replacement, I was hooked,” reflected Dr. Rapley.

Dr. Rapley subsequently earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Life Science from Kansas State University, followed by his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Kansas, School of Medicine.



From there, he completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and then completed two distinguished Fellowships, one in arthroscopy and sports medicine at Plano Orthopedics and Sports Medicine at Baylor Regional Medical Center and the other in foot and ankle surgery at the University of Missouri, University Hospital and Clinics. In his residency, he was chosen as the Outstanding Resident of the Year and received multiple honors for excellence in patient care.

“I enjoy and love what I do,” expressed Dr. Rapley. “I have trained 15 years for this and appreciate the responsibility I have as a surgeon. Patients trust me. I have an understanding of their problems and assure them there is a way to get through this.”

Highly involved with his community, Dr. Rapley provides team physician coverage for athletes at local high schools during the football season.

A man of faith, Dr. Rapley realizes God got him through his recent challenges. Although it has not always been easy, it has been possible.

“I take it day by day,” reflected Dr. Rapley. “I feel good and maintain a good attitude. I keep myself on an agenda. Plus, I have my wife and four young daughters who are all the greatest things to live for.” ●



120 NE St Luke’s Blvd, Suite 200
Lee’s Summit, MO 64086

816.246.4302

RockhillOrtho.com