

FPMA FOOTPRINTS

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FPMA Student Recruitment Initiative *Heats Up*

PAGE 24



FPMA Student Recruitment Initiative HEATS UP

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STEP INTO PODIATRY

Spring has sprung, and FPMA members are gearing up to return to campuses throughout Florida. But they are not returning as students.

Two dozen FPMA members have volunteered to be part of the FPMA Mentor to University Program. Each participant has been assigned to one of 20-plus state universities, colleges and private institutions to get the word out about career opportunities in the field of podiatry. Armed with FPMA displays, PowerPoint presentations and handouts, these mentors will be working in conjunction with APMA, Barry University admissions and the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine (AACPM) this spring semester to lecture, provide suture workshops and impart their knowledge of podiatry as a profession for the purpose of student recruitment.



FPMA Public Affairs Committee Co-Chair Liana Seldin, DPM, provided a presentation for FIU students last fall.

There is a serious need to get the word out to young people about the podiatric profession. The issue of low podiatric student enrollment needs to be addressed and who would be a better group to get the word out about becoming a podiatrist than actual podiatrists?

The Origin of the Current Student Recruitment Effort

The inspiration for the current student recruitment effort began during the March 2018 APMA House of Delegates, where they approved Resolution 9-18, directing the national association to devote significant funding and staff resources to student recruitment. APMA continues to spearhead a profession-wide recruitment effort designed to attract more and better-qualified students to podiatric schools. APMA's research confirmed what many in the profession had long suspected: Firsthand exposure to podiatry plays a significant role in generating interest in careers in podiatric medicine.

In 2020, APMA created a website devoted to student recruitment: Step Into Podiatry (accessible at www.stepintopodiatry.com). This website provides information for students interested in the field of podiatry and provides a means to find a mentor and schedule a shadowing appointment. The website explains what podiatry is, why students should consider podiatry as a career and provides testimonials from those who decided to seek a career in the field. Information on podiatric education and training is also available via the website.

FPMA Joins the Recruitment Effort

FPMA's student recruitment efforts began at FPMA conferences. During SAM 2019, FPMA hosted a "Be Our Guest at SAM" event, which had 29 undergraduate student attendees. Five podiatric colleges had representatives on hand to provide the students with podiatric college information. In partnership with FPMA, the AACPM hosted a student recruitment event with DPM speakers, a current student Q&A panel and an observation opportunity in the Wright Medical Bus (located in the SAM exhibit hall), as well as an ultrasound workshop. FPMA members and DPM mentors hosted students in the SAM exhibit hall and at lunch. According to the AACPM, the event resulted in nine applicants for Entry Year 2019.

FPMA followed up the "Be Our Guest at SAM" event by planning a Summer Summit. Both high school and college students were invited to attend an information session on podiatry as a profession at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort in Bonita Springs, Florida, where the FPMA 2019 Summer Conference was taking place. Refreshments and lunch were included, and attendees were given a tour of the Summer Conference exhibit hall.

During SAM 2025, an entire lecture track was provided for students and included lectures about externships, success as "Today's Podiatrist," and a minimally invasive surgery lecture and workshop.

FPMA has continued, and will continue, to provide student recruitment events during conferences.

FPMA Recruitment Efforts in the Fall of 2024

Some FPMA members were gearing up for student recruitment efforts last fall. FPMA Public Affairs Committee Co-Chair Liana Seldin, DPM, who has been participating in recruitment efforts at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami for years, provided a suturing workshop there last fall. This led to Dr. Seldin receiving an email from one of the students requesting an opportunity to shadow her:

Hello Dr. Seldin,

I hope you are doing well. I had introduced myself to you briefly at the Suturing Workshop you instructed at FIU. I felt extremely comfortable in the way you teach, and ultimately I felt a lot of potential to learn from you. I wanted to reach out because I am a pre-medical student, and I wanted to inquire of any opportunities to shadow you and learn about podiatry. I have not shadowed a physician before, but I am a very involved student on campus and I intern in a cancer research lab as well. I am very interested to learn from you, and, if you'd have me, I'd be very grateful. I attached my résumé below. If you need any supplementary documentation or anything else, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you!

Dr. Seldin also provided a presentation for FIU students last fall and plans on doing more student recruitment activities this year.

A New Year of Student Recruitment Activities Has Begun

On February 17, 2025, FPMA mentors kicked off the new year with an outstanding student recruitment event hosted at the Arthrex facility in Tallahassee, Florida. In attendance were over a dozen Florida State University exercise science majors. FPMA Treasurer Diana Rogers, DPM, with



FPMA Treasurer Diana Rogers, DPM, poses with FSU students at the Arthrex facility in Tallahassee, Florida.



Marc Colaluca, DPM, provided a presentation on podiatry for the Future Health Professional Club at Saint Petersburg Collegiate High School last November. High school students as well as college/university students can benefit from presentations provided by FPMA mentors.

support from FPMA President David Schweibish, DPM, and FPMA Secretary Tim Miller, DPM, discussed podiatry as a profession. The assembled students were then invited to participate in a cadaver workshop activity.

FPMA is dedicated to seeing all of our mentors return to campus this spring semester to speak with undetermined majors and sing the praises of podiatry.

What FPMA Members Can Do

1. FPMA members who would like to assist with student recruitment efforts can sign up for the APMA Mentor Network. You can opt in by logging in to the APMA website at



FPMA Past President Alissa Zdancewicz, DPM spoke to students not once, but twice at the University of South Florida (USF) in Tampa in November 2024.

www.apma.org and accessing your APMA account profile.

2. If you have campus contacts (academic advisors, student clubs), share that information with FPMA. Or, better yet, make plans to provide a presentation yourself (FPMA has materials available to assist you).
3. Consider offering a shadowing opportunity in your practice. Students who shadow a podiatrist are 90 percent more likely to apply to podiatric medical school.

With your help, FPMA can expand student recruitment efforts and make an impact on students considering Podiatry as a career.