

PAST
PRESIDENT
PROFILE

Seymour Z. Beiser, DPM, FACFAS

Past ACFAS President Seymour Z. Beiser, DPM, FACFAS, was a junior high school student when he decided to become a podiatrist and eventually a foot and ankle surgeon. His mother had suffered from foot problems for most of her life, and he wanted to help others avoid the same fate.

After graduating from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine in 1958, he was selected for Dr. Earl G. Kaplan's residency program at Civic Hospital in Detroit, the first and only podiatric teaching hospital in the United States at that time. This invaluable experience and Dr. Kaplan's passion for the College and the profession inspired Dr. Beiser to join ACFAS and to get involved.

"I saw how much Dr. Kaplan cared for the College and how dedicated he was to his patients. In fact, it was Dr. Kaplan who, while I was a resident at Civic Hospital, operated on

my mom's bunions, and I assisted," shares Dr. Beiser. "I was so fortunate to have him as a mentor, confidant and influence throughout my life, and I will always be grateful and thankful for Dr. Kaplan."

Once Dr. Beiser became an ACFAS member, he jumped feet first into the College's activities and committees and eventually assumed the position of ACFAS president in 1972 while also serving as president of the Florida Podiatric Medical Association. During his term as ACFAS president, Dr. Beiser focused on helping DPMs obtain hospital privileges. He also supported the improvement of the oral exam requirement for board exams and helped modify case history protocol.

After his term ended in 1973, Dr. Beiser continued to support the profession by mentoring students and residents at his practice in Miami. "My office was always open to anyone

who wanted to learn, and I offered a two-week externship so they could shadow me in the office and hospital. Several of the colleges sent students to participate in my program," says Dr. Beiser. "When I attended ACFAS 75 in Las Vegas, a colleague stopped me and said he came to my office 35 years ago for my two-week program and how much that meant to him," he adds. "It means so much to me whenever I hear this from colleagues today."

Today, as he celebrates and enters his 59th year of practice, Dr. Beiser still maintains an open-door policy and goes into the office twice a week. He only just recently stopped performing surgery but closely follows trends and changes in the profession and appreciates how foot and ankle surgery has evolved over the past 45 years. "I was part of the first residency in podiatric foot and ankle surgery, so it makes me proud to see how many young

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residents come out of their programs so well trained and well prepared for the next stage of their career,” he says.

He believes foot and ankle surgeons’ role has expanded in the sense that they more frequently collaborate with other specialties and are an integral part of the patient care team. He would like the profession and ACFAS to continue to strive for professional parity and to assist DPMs who work in VA hospitals.

For those who are new to the profession, Dr. Beiser recommends getting involved and giving back as much as you can when you can. “Donate your time and expertise as much as possible, and be sure to join ACFAS as well as local, state and national organizations to stay informed of new

developments in podiatric foot and ankle surgery,” he advises.

His advice for those approaching retirement is simple. “Keep working and don’t fully retire,” he says. “Just cut back on your hours.” Dr. Beiser now practices with a colleague, Barry Tuvel, DPM, FACFAS, who he says reminds him of himself 30 or 35 years ago. Dr. Tuvel welcomes residents to the office and teaches them almost daily. “This too,” notes Dr. Beiser, “has been a wonderful experience.”

As he reflects on his own career, Dr. Beiser credits his past colleagues, namely Drs. Earl G. Kaplan, Charles Turchin, Irvin Kanat, Bill Cope and Samuel Moskow, among others, for their mentorship, friendship and inspiration and for helping him achieve nearly 60 years of podiatric medical practice. He also

considers foot and ankle surgery a good fit for anyone interested in and motivated by helping patients in need.

“If you become a podiatric foot and ankle surgeon, you’ll never be bored, and you’ll always enjoy the results of your work,” Dr. Beiser attests. In line with the adage that if you love what you do, it is not work, he takes great pleasure in seeing patients improve and is grateful to still be practicing. “It has been an honor to serve the profession, and I look forward to seeing it grow even more in the years to come.”

Dr. Beiser and his wife Lois reside in Miami and recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. They have four children and seven grandchildren.

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