Overwhelming response! That’s how the HUB is remembered from its debut at last year’s Annual Scientific Conference in Orlando. And because of its popularity, the HUB is making its second appearance at ACFAS 2015 in Phoenix and is featuring sessions focused on practical and timely topics, such as cyberliability, maximizing your fellowship and communicating with patients in an electronic age.

Sponsored in conjunction with PICA, this year’s HUB will accommodate 45 people to encourage informal dialogue and active participation among attendees in an intimate, interactive theater in the Exhibit Hall. Arrive early to the HUB sessions to get your seat at what is expected to be, once again, one of the busiest hotspots at the conference!

Visit acfas.org/phoenix for a full listing of programs being offered in this year’s HUB!
Scoring scales are important because they facilitate determination of efficacy; allow for comparison of results of different treatment methods in patients with the same disorder; and enable the progress of patients before and at various intervals after treatment to be compared in a meaningful manner.

An Internet search uncovers at least 145 different anatomic/disease-specific foot and/or ankle scoring scales from 1952 to 2013. Some of these systems incorporate subjective and objective variables into a numerical scale, such as a 0–100 point distribution. Others lump the subjective variables into a non-numerical scale, such as “excellent,” “good,” “fair” and “poor.” Objective parameters are usually limited to radiographic parameters and clinical factors. These make sense to the everyday clinician and surgeon because this is how we usually judge our interpretation of success. But while this may be helpful to us individually as foot and ankle surgeons, it does not allow comparison with other providers, patients or surgical techniques.

This is becoming more important to understand as we become increasingly judged in “pay for performance” by insurance and government agencies. Taking these factors into consideration, an ideal scoring scale would:

- not require sophisticated equipment for data collection;
- not be complicated by too many parameters;
- use parameters that represent the overall outcome;
- have results expressed as a numerical value for ease of comparison.

Fortunately, ACFAS had the vision in 1999 to begin the lengthy process of developing and validating anatomic/disease-specific scoring scales for foot and ankle surgery. However, some confusion occurred about the validation process employed, and the benefit for using these new scales was lost. In response, in 2008, the ACFAS Board of Directors named a task force to specifically reevaluate the scoring scales to determine if they met the criteria for validity. This process continued in 2009–2010 when the task force was charged with evaluating all previous information regarding the ACFAS Scoring Scales to reevaluate its validity. I was fortunate enough to chair this task force with truly outstanding ACFAS members who collectively spent more than 150 hours gathering, reviewing, discussing, analyzing and ultimately publishing the data (1). Those efforts resulted in a full validation of the original ACFAS Scoring Scales.

It is clear that the scales were developed with a systematic and comprehensive approach, and both the statistical methods and instrument development process were appropriately conducted. Furthermore, modules 1 and 2 were rigorously assessed and met the standards for validity, reliability and sensitivity to change. These are the necessary elements to determine if a scoring scale is valid for use.

The next step is for all foot and ankle surgeons to use these ACFAS Scoring Scales. Further, I believe that all ACFAS research grant proposals and manuscripts/posters presented at the Annual Scientific Conference should be given preferential treatment if they incorporate the ACFAS Scoring Scales into their research design. In doing so, we will be able to continually refine the scales and improve the ease and efficacy of data collection using these instruments. This will also lead to firmly established quality surgical outcomes in the medical community for all professions, insurance companies and government agencies to see. If we fail to use the ACFAS Scoring Scales, they will be replaced by other instruments or metrics developed by outside medical societies, insurance carries or governmental agencies.

This is dangerous and simply cannot happen. Will you adapt and use the ACFAS Scoring Scales or let them die?

Thomas S. Roukis, DPM, PhD, FACFAS
ACFAS President

Questions for Dr. Roukis? Write him at president@acfas.org.

Patient education on CDs: information you can trust

Supplement your patient consultations or website with the most complete and up-to-date foot and ankle health information library—the ACFAS Patient Education Series. The five CDs included in this series may be purchased as a set or individually. Each CD contains 10 print-ready, peer-developed educational brochures that highlight the conditions most often treated in your office. All five volumes are available in both English and Spanish.

Order the ACFAS Patient Education Series along with the Perioperative Patient Education CD, which includes step-by-step handouts for 11 surgical procedures, and pay just one shipping fee. Don’t miss out on this special offer—visit acfas.org/patientCD to order now.

2015 EDUCATION PROGRAMS

**February 18, 2015 (Wednesday)**
Perfecting Your Practice: Practice Management/Coding Workshop
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

**February 18, 2015 (Wednesday)**
Diabetic Deformity: Master Techniques in Reconstruction
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

**February 18, 2015 (Wednesday)**
Master Surgical Techniques: Fine-Tuning with the Experts
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

**February 19-22, 2015 (Thursday–Sunday)**
2015 Annual Scientific Conference
Phoenix Convention Center
Phoenix, AZ

**April 17-18, 2015 (Friday/Saturday)**
Advanced Forefoot Reconstruction and Complications Workshop and Seminar
Buffalo Marriott Niagara
Buffalo, NY

**April 18-19, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)**
Total Ankle Arthroplasty
Science Care Lab
Denver, CO

**May 1-2, 2015 (Friday/Saturday)**
Advanced Forefoot Reconstruction and Complications Workshop and Seminar
Sheraton Harborside Portsmouth Hotel
Portsmouth, NH

**May 2-3, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)**
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

**June 19-20, 2015 (Friday/Saturday)**
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

**August 1-2, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)**
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

**October 17-18, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)**
Comprehensive Flatfoot (Reconstruction & Arthrodesis)
Mobile Lab
Location TBD

**November 7-8, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)**
Advanced Arthroscopy for Foot and Ankle
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

**December 12-13, 2015 (Saturday/Sunday)**
Foot and Ankle Arthroscopy
Orthopaedic Learning Center
Chicago, IL

*To be waitlisted, contact Maggie Hjelm at hjelm@acfas.org.

For a full listing of upcoming educational opportunities, visit acfas.org/education.
research

2015 Clinical & Scientific Research Grants awarded

The ACFAS Research Committee is pleased to announce the three winners of the 2015 ACFAS Clinical and Scientific Research Grant.

Congratulations to the following investigators, whose proposals stood out among a strong field of applicants:

- **Cost-Effectiveness Analysis of Pharmacologic DVT Prophylaxis Following Select Foot and Ankle Surgeries**
  Richmond Robinson, DPM, ACFAS; Craig Wirt, PhD; Adam Fleischer, DPM, MPH, FACPAS; Arezou Amidi, DPM; Robert Joseph, DPM, PhD, FACFAS

- **Functional and Mechanical Changes Following Arthroscopic Lateral Ankle Stabilization and Assessment of the ACFAS Module 4 Scoring Scale**
  Naohiro Shibuya, DPM, MS, FACFAS; Jakob Thorud, DPM, MS, AACFAS; Daniel C. Jupiter, PhD

- **Quantification of Altered Gait Mechanics and Energetics Following Partial Foot Amputation**
  Jarrett D. Cain, DPM, MS, FACPAS; Stephen J. Piazza, PhD; Rebecca K. Rogers, CPO, MS

“Research drives innovation in foot and ankle care and ACFAS strives to fund investigator-initiated, peer-reviewed proposals that will impact our members’ practice. The grant program is about the future of our profession. It seeks to channel our members’ expertise and intellectual curiosity to build a foundation for research and evidence-based medicine,” says Jeffrey R. Baker, DPM, FACFAS, chair of the ACFAS Research Committee.

The ACFAS Clinical and Scientific Research Grant program is in its ninth year of providing financial support for research in foot and ankle surgery conducted by members of the College. The program seeks to educate ACFAS members in the implementation of evidence-based medicine that advances clinical practice of foot and ankle surgery and improves the patient experience. The research must be clinical or laboratory-based, with clearly defined research goals meeting all criteria for grant submissions.

For more information on the Grant or for a full listing of past award recipients, visit acfas.org/grant.
Today’s podiatric medical practice is all about efficiency. When doctors and their assistants come together as a team, patient care flourishes. However, searching for, interviewing and hiring the best podiatric medical assistants can be time-consuming. Changing dynamics in medical practices have caused many doctors to distance themselves from this process, while in larger institutions and medical groups, administrators and human resources personnel typically handle hirings and terminations.

One practice looking to change the way podiatric medical assistants are hired is Allentown Family Foot Care (AFFC) in Allentown, PA. “Certificates and CVs don’t always reflect talent,” says Ray Fritz, DPM, FACFAS, a doctor with AFFC. “Potential is another story. It’s what a person will be able to accomplish if given the right opportunities, direction and coaching.”

That is why AFFC has formed relationships with local schools and universities and has developed a shadow program that allows students to spend time at AFFC to truly understand the profession. AFFC’s shadow program has expanded to include part-time college employment for undergraduate pre-medical students with an interest in podiatric medicine. “Students work in our office for up to three years,” explains Dr. Fritz. “Usually, the program is made available to second-year pre-med students, but over the past year and a half, our program has grown to include full-time, gap-year students,” he adds.

More than 90 percent of AFFC’s students come from Muhlenberg College in Allentown. “Muhlenberg has a strong pre-medical program, and the college and Cailin Pachter, pre-medical advisor, have been instrumental in developing this model,” says Dr. Fritz.

He notes that many graduates have chosen to spend more time in a clinical environment because of an uncertain economy. “Over the years, retention rates for medical assistants have varied. Some stay on for longer than five years, but most remain from two to four years. Absenteeism is also an ongoing concern,” Dr. Fritz indicates.

Despite these statistics, AFFC’s students stay on for two to four years and have missed virtually no workdays compared to other employees. “There is a tremendous level of excitement and enthusiasm because everyone is working in their field of choice toward a future career,” says Dr. Fritz. In fact, the students became certified as podiatric medical assistants so they could fully assimilate into the practice.

This year, AFFC has four pre-medical students (three in the gap year) with two students applying to podiatric medical school and two applying to allopathic medical school. Dr. Fritz says this has strengthened the practice’s entire team. “The staff and doctors have appreciated the excitement and motivation within the office, and our patients are overwhelmingly interested in the students’ aspirations,” he notes.

AFFC considers this talent pool a great asset for the office because the students have demonstrated the excitement, enthusiasm and dedication not always seen in today’s medical practices. “Their positive attitudes were contagious, and it’s so rewarding to know we have also contributed to these young podiatric physicians’ future by helping them make informed career choices,” shares Dr. Fritz. “This is one of the best ways to help our profession find the right candidates.”

“There is a tremendous level of excitement and enthusiasm because everyone is working in their field of choice toward a future career.”

— Ray Fritz, DPM, FACFAS, Allentown Family Foot Care
Visit ACFAS Benefit Partners at ACFAS 2015

While at ACFAS 2015, take time to visit each of your official ACFAS Benefit Partners to learn more about the valuable services they provide to help you in your practice.

**ACFAS Credit Union: HealthCare Associates Credit Union**

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**PodiatryCareers.org and the ACFAS Job Fair**

PodiatryCareers.org, official sponsor of the second annual ACFAS Job Fair at ACFAS 2015, is the leading online employment resource for podiatrists and foot and ankle practices. Candidates can apply to jobs online, post resumes confidentially and access career-related articles to assist them in their job search—all for free. Employers can post jobs and also subscribe to a resume database to contact candidates directly.

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**In Memory**

William H. Bowdler, DPM, FACFAS

Burleson, TX
Thank You to Our 40-Year Members

ACFAS recognizes our loyal and dedicated members who have been a part of the College for 40 years or more. To thank these members for their commitment, ACFAS has awarded them Life Membership status. The ACFAS Board of Directors honors this year’s members:

- Steven K. Chase, DPM, FACFAS
  Bartlett, TN
- Jared P. Frankel, DPM, FACFAS
  Elmhurst, IL
- Ronald M. Freeling, DPM, FACFAS
  Rochester, NY
- Renato J. Giorgini, DPM, FACFAS
  Lindenhurst, NY
- Marc A. Kravette, DPM, FACFAS
  Seattle, WA
- Anthony H. Mascioli, DPM, FACFAS
  Newark, NY
- Michael J. Miller, DPM, FACFAS
  Mesquite, TX
- Stanley G. Newell, DPM, FACFAS
  Shoreline, WA
- Michael E. Pearlman, DPM, FACFAS
  Waldorf, MD
- Toshifumi J. Saigo, DPM, AACFAS
  Bellevue, WA
- Steven I. Subotnick, DPM, FACFAS
  San Leandro, CA
- Vincent N. Tisa, DPM, FACFAS
  Philadelphia, PA
- Leo M. Veleas, DPM, FACFAS
  Southington, CT

For Marc A. Kravette, DPM, FACFAS, his 40-year membership with ACFAS has not only allowed him to benefit in ways reflected through his practice and through his knowledge as a skilled surgeon, it has also benefited the many patients he has cared for over the past four decades. “It is a true honor to be recognized by the College and to learn from the greatest minds in our profession these past 40 years,” says Dr. Kravette.

Since he was first introduced to ACFAS 43 years ago, when it was known as the American College of Foot Surgeons, Dr. Kravette has seen the College grow in size and stature. “The College has grown from a handful of forward-thinking leaders in their field to become the premier organization in education, training and research for today’s foot and ankle surgeons. Years ago, I recognized the depth, wealth of talent and knowledge that comprised the membership, and it’s thrilling to see how ACFAS now represents the gold standard for education and training for foot and ankle surgeons the world over,” he says.

Throughout his career as a physician, Dr. Kravette has made use of ACFAS and its many resources, especially the surgical skills courses, podcasts and Annual Scientific Conference. “The College is always there to guide new practitioners in establishing their practices and obtaining hospital privileges, and it has taken the lead in helping members with discriminatory laws and practices within their state or region,” explains Dr. Kravette.

Over the years, the two ACFAS member benefits Dr. Kravette has valued most are the educational meetings, such as the Annual Scientific Conference, and the Journal of Foot & Ankle Surgery. One highlight of his ACFAS membership was the role he played in helping to form the House of Councilors (HOC), which represented the rank-and-file membership to the board. “When I was a division president, I watched the HOC evolve into what is now the Division Presidents Council (DPC). I later served as DPC Chair, and it was an honor to sit on the College’s Board and to work side by side with the leaders of our profession in such a collegial manner,” recounts Dr. Kravette.

He advises new ACFAS members to be active and to explore all of the College’s educational offerings. “If you have never attended the conference before, go this year. You’ll wonder why you put it off so long!” he says. His recommendations for 40-year members are threefold: 1) stay involved with ACFAS, 2) share your wisdom and experience and 3) volunteer to mentor young members.

From this point forward, Dr. Kravette vows to never stop learning. “I want to keep abreast of our profession’s progress and to continue to experience everything the College offers in support of our future,” he affirms.

ACFAS thanks Dr. Kravette and his fellow 40-year honorees for their commitment and contributions to the College and is pleased to award them Life Membership status.
Looking to breathe new life into your advanced forefoot reconstruction skills? Then spring into action this April and May and attend ACFAS’ Advanced Forefoot Reconstruction and Complications workshops and seminars, set for April 17–18 in Buffalo, NY, and May 1–2 in Portsmouth, NH. Part of the popular Coming to You series, the Advanced Forefoot programs give you access to other experienced surgeons who want to share the latest and greatest surgical approaches and techniques with you.

Each program begins on Friday evening with a presentation on how to handle common forefoot surgical complications followed by a review of participants’ case studies. Saturday is reserved for hands-on workshops, labs, lectures and panels to examine problematic cases (bring your work cases for review).

In addition to earning 12 continuing education contact hours, you’ll learn to:

- apply technical skills in different fixation options for treatment of forefoot surgery.
- identify indications and contraindications for forefoot deformities and combination plating techniques for fractures.
- demonstrate treatment options.
- evaluate patients with forefoot deformities or injuries.
- formulate treatment plans.

To view the full brochure and to register, visit acfas.org/comingtoyou.

New PowerPoint Added to ACFAS Marketing Toolbox

If attracting new patients to your practice is on your list of resolutions for 2015, then you’re in luck—a brand-new PowerPoint presentation, Common Athletic Injuries of the Ankle, is now available for download in the ACFAS Marketing Toolbox at acfas.org/marketing.

Use this second installment in ACFAS’ free patient education series during community health talks or patient presentations at the hospital to outline the basics of ankle sprains, chronic lateral ankle instability, peroneal tendon injuries and achilles tendon tears.

The presentation also includes a script and a customizable slide for your practice’s contact information in case people have questions or would like to make an appointment with your office.

The ACFAS Marketing Toolbox contains plenty of resources to help you promote your practice, from press release templates to the FootNotes patient newsletter to patient education CDs and more. Visit the toolbox often—PowerPoint presentations on heel pain and common foot and ankle conditions are coming soon!
Changes Coming to Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Global Surgery Packages

In November, ACFAS staff attended the 2015 AMA CPT® and RBVS Annual Symposium, a program dedicated to breaking down significant changes to the Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) and evaluating emerging coding procedure and policy issues that can impact physician practices. The event included a presentation from Kathy Bryant, JD, Director of the Division of Practitioner Services at the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), in which Bryant discussed a coming change that could impact foot and ankle surgical practices.

In the final 2015 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule rule, CMS announced its intention to eliminate all 10- and 90-day global payment periods for surgical services. The change will be implemented beginning January 1, 2017, when 10-day global payments will be eliminated. The 90-day payments will then be phased out on January 1, 2018.

This change unbundles global fees for thousands of procedures and institutes “zero-day” global payments, under which day-of-surgery physician and staff services are billed separately from surgical follow-up visits. Day-of and follow-up services are currently bundled together, a structure that opponents to the change argue encourages care coordination.

According to Bryant, the change was driven by CMS concerns that the underlying methodology of the payments is flawed and the global packages lead to double payments when patients visit other providers for services included in the bundle. The surgical community has largely reacted negatively to the change, noting that it will be a massive administrative burden and could result in lower payments for some surgeons. It could also affect patients negatively because they may forego necessary procedures due to the increased number of visit copays they will be required to cover.

CMS announced its intention to eliminate all 10- and 90-day global payment periods for surgical services.
news from the college

Cast Your Vote: 2015 Board of Directors Election

Online voting for the 2015 ACFAS Board of Directors is open until January 6, 2015. ACFAS voting members (Fellow, Associate, Life and Emeritus members) should refer to the email they received from the College’s independent election firm with their unique link to the 2015 Board of Directors Election website.

The following Fellows have been nominated for three positions on the board:
- Christopher F. Hyer, DPM, FACPFA (Incumbent)
- Jeffrey R. Baker, DPM, FACPFA
- John T. Marcoux, DPM, FACPFA
- Scott C. Nelson, DPM, FACPFA
- Randal Wraalstad, DPM, FACPFA

View candidate profiles and position statements at acfas.org/nominations. Your voice is vital to advancing the profession, so vote now and have a say in the College’s future!

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