ACFAS 2026
Meet the Fellow Questionnaire

American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons®

Fellow Name: Vanessa Scoarste

Fellowship Program: Foot and Ankle Deformity Correction Fellowship

City/State: West Palm Beach, FL

Program Director: Dr. Bradley Lamm

How many Attendings do you work with regularly?:
I primarily work exclusively with Dr. Lamm, however, I have the opportunity to work with Dr. Nguyen and renowned orthopedic surgeons within the Paley Institute as well as Dr. Paley himself as time allows. We also frequently perform combined surgery with other orthopedic surgeons where proximal deformity exists. I value the set up of this fellowship because of the mentorship I have experienced with Dr. Lamm. I've gotten to learn more about how to run a practice, surgical decision making, and handling complications. It has been valuable to me to be a part of the office visits, pre/post surgery discussions, and post-op encounters as well as the complex surgeries to experience the full patient encounter.

Describe the diversity of your cases so far in fellowship. (For example, has your experience included TAR? Is there an emphasis on: Pediatrics? Sports Medicine? Deformity correction? Complex reconstruction? What percentage of your cases are trauma? Rearfoot/ankle? Forefoot? Please be as descriptive as you'd like:
There has been a wide variety of cases so far. There have been extensive deformity correction cases where advanced techniques are required. These include complex reconstruction of the foot/ankle/leg and sometimes use PSI cut guides, planning, etc. I have also gained a ton of knowledge on external fixation including the use in brachymetatarsia, ankle distraction, and Taylor Spatial frames with computer programmed deformity correction. There have also been more bread and butter cases like MIS bunions/lapidus/hammertoes etc which has been nice to stay fresh with those techniques as well. We also see a large number of revision cases. We have also seen a mix of sports injuries including achilles tendon injuries, lateral ankle ligament repairs, repairs of talar OCDs. There has been a good number of trauma and pediatric cases as well.

How many days per week do you typically spend in the OR? In clinic? Do you have your own "fellow" clinic?
Our weekly schedule is as follows:
-Monday: OR all day
-Tuesday: Clinic all day typically 8am-5pm
-Wednesday: OR in AM, virtual clinic via zoom in PM

-Thursday: Clinic all day, typically 8am-5pm
-Friday: OR in AM, in person clinic (post-op clinic) in PM

There is no “fellow clinic”, but there have been a few days where I have seen patients on my own. Dr. Lamm has great rapport with his patients, and therefore makes it a priority to see all of them. It has been a great advantage to see patients side by side with Dr. Lamm, and has helped me better understand the small nuances of office care.

How many surgical cases do you typically scrub per month?

On average we are performing about 10-12 cases per week. This equates to around 40-50 cases per month.

What conferences have you attended/are you encouraged to attend?

I have had the opportunity to attend the “Toes in the Sand” conference, the FPMA SAM conference where I will be a speaker, and the annual ACFAS conference. I have also attended courses where Dr. Lamm was a chairman/speaker which has been a great experience.

How would you describe your director’s teaching style?

Dr. Lamm has a calm and informative teaching style. He likes to educate everyone around him and values good communication. Fellowship started off as a “see one, do one” type teaching style. He has helped teach and correct even the small things/movements in surgery which I believe will make a big difference. He is active in teaching in both the clinic and OR. He is also active in educating his fellows on the profession as a whole and is always willing to help with any future employment planning/questions. Dr. Lamm emphasizes answering the “why” in clinical and surgical cases, as well as teaching the principles that create a strong foundation for success.

How is research incorporated into your experience? What resources are provided/available?

Dr. Lamm and I have had multiple research meetings to work on current projects, and also start new ones. We submitted 4 manuscripts this year to ACFAS. He is well published and wants each fellow to have a research paper published on their own as the primary author.

Do you take any “call”? If so, how often? What type of call? (general vs. trauma, hospital vs. private practice?)

We are part of the general foot and ankle “on call” rotation at St. Mary’s Medical Center. Call is taken for 1 week about every 2-3 months. For practice call I carry a fellow phone and am responsible for communicating with patients within the practice as needed. Most questions are post-operative questions from the patients who underwent surgery.

How many hospitals/surgery centers are you credentialed at?

We perform surgery at a surgical center (PBISC), and at the Paley orthopedic and spine institute (Kimmel). PBISC is located in the same building as our clinic, on the floor above. Kimmel is within the same complex and is attached to St. Mary’s Medical Center. Dr. Lamm’s office, surgery center, and hospital are all on the same

campus.

What is your didactic schedule like? What academic opportunities are available to you during fellowship? (Cadaver labs, journal club, radiology conference, etc.)
Every Thursday there is a virtual case review session that includes all the Paley orthopedic physicians. Each physician presents their cases for the next week. Our reps are also very involved and I have gone into their labs to work on cadavers.

Is your fellowship affiliated with a residency program? If yes, what are your responsibilities? How often are you interacting with residents (What % of cases?)
No resident affiliation

Are you able to collect cases for board certification?
No

When should interested applicants visit? What does a visit look like? What is the interview process like at your program?
Applicants should submit their application and reach out to the current fellow in the fall of their second year if interested. From there an in person visit can be scheduled. The visit is typically 2 days and includes 1 day in the OR and 1 day in the clinic in order to get a full view of the fellowship. This visit served as my interview for the fellowship.

Do you have a co-fellow? What percentage of your cases are scrubbed with them? What support is available for finding post-fellowship employment? What qualities make an applicant a good fit for your program?
No co-fellow. As stated above, Dr. Lamm has been active in helping me in my post-fellowship process. He is willing to discuss contracts and make connections to ensure his fellows are getting set up for future success. A good fit for this program is someone who is motivated, eager to better themselves, and has a great foundation to build on.

Why did you apply for fellowship? And why did you choose your fellowship program? Any advice for future fellowship applicants?
I applied for fellowship because I wanted to obtain the best training I could get. My residency gave me excellent training and hands-on learning and I knew I would have been prepared for attending life, however I still wanted to get the advanced training. I have already grown more confident in my decision making, learned new techniques,

refined my skills, and learned a tremendous amount about the back side of medicine. I know I will leave this fellowship better prepared for attending life than I came in. My advice for future applicants is to stay hungry and keep an open mind. It is a year of hard work but it will pay off and make you a better physician and surgeon.