

# Future Star: Duane Ehredt, Jr., DPM

His goal is to help lead the profession forward through biomechanics and surgery.

BY MARC HASPEL, DPM



**D**r. Ehredt has already accomplished a considerable amount in his young career. He was nominated as a Future Star by a former student of his, Deepali Darji, DPM, who also became one of his residents. She credited Dr. Ehredt for his willingness to spend time with students and residents and for mentoring those completing their residency

career and offered thoughts about the future of the profession.

*PM: Who in podiatric medicine influenced you the most thus far in your career? To whom else do you give thanks?*

**Ehredt:** If I had to single out one person it would be Michael Canales, DPM. I was initially influenced

**Ehredt:** My healthcare professions advisor at Juniata College was the first person to educate me on the field of podiatry. Her name was Dr. Deb Kirchoff-Glazer, and she was instrumental in mentoring me during my undergraduate years. She knew I had an interest in bone and joint surgery, and she knew that podiatric physicians were the true experts in foot and ankle health. Additionally, she knew the growing need for podiatrists. Once I saw the type of work that podiatric physicians did and what the training consisted of, I was hooked on the profession.

*PM: What are your goals, both short term and long term, for your career in podiatric medicine?*

**Ehredt:** It's sad to say, but a major short-term goal centers around my debt bondage of student loans. It weighs heavily on my mind and, quite frankly, is a concern for all young professionals. Otherwise, my short-term goals are focused on providing an unbiased, comprehensive, and inclusive learning experience as well as providing continual publication mentoring to residents and students. I don't really like to think long-term as life has so many twists and turns. If I had to choose one long-term goal, however, it would

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programs and entering the competitive podiatric job market.

Also, to his credit, Ehredt currently serves as a Lieutenant in the United States Navy Reserve Medical Service Corps. Most of all, however, Darji appreciates Ehredt for how he treats every patient as if that patient were a member of his own family. As Darji stated, “the main reason to recognize someone like Dr. Ehredt is to help remind other professionals in our field that they can be kind, successful, and make a lasting impact on others (and he is just getting started!).”

Dr. Ehredt recently took some time to reflect on his young impactful

as a student by his informative and passionate lectures. I was then lucky enough to learn from him during residency training and continue to learn as I am now part of the St. Vincent faculty. The group of people who have influenced me the most is absolutely the students and residents I have had the honor to help train. Our learners continue to show up brighter and more talented. Many come in with other advanced degrees. Having the privilege to lead them has kept me sharp and continuously influences what I do.

*PM: What first attracted you to a career in podiatric medicine?*

*Dr. Ehredt (from page 105)*

be to get into the VA system. I like serving people, and I can't think of a more deserving group of individuals.

**PM:** *What college of podiatric medicine did you attend? Where, and how would you describe your post-graduate training?*

**Ehredt:** I graduated from Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine and attended residency training at St. Vincent Charity Medical Center/CWRU (SVC MC) in Cleveland, OH. Residency at SVC MC was very demanding and prepared me well for the rigors of early practice. Our style has an emphasis on the fundamentals of the art of surgery and attention to details of patient care. By the time we graduate we know what we want to do, why we want to do it, and how to actually do it. I certainly haven't made every single patient happy, but I haven't had a single surgical case where I couldn't come up with a realistic plan.

**PM:** *What are your thoughts about APMA, the certifying boards, and other organizations that function within the profession?*

**Ehredt:** To be fair, I think it's important to note that I don't really know the entire history of our organizations and certifying boards. I probably wasn't even born prior to the founding of some of them. So, my perspective is limited. I think the certifying boards do a very good and thorough job of making sure their certifications go to those who have earned it. As compared to other specialties, we certainly have a more demanding certification process. I think that is why we are the best at what we do. Of course, there is room for improvements in certification, but the top two certification boards are doing their due diligence for our profession. With recent developments, it seems that our organizations are working more together as well. I think this is key to our ultimate push to parity and a universal definition of our profession.

**PM:** *What sub-specialties interest you in podiatric medicine, and why?*

**Ehredt:** I am currently an associate professor in the division of Podiatric Surgery and Biomechanics at KSUCPM. I was lucky to have Scott Spencer, DPM as a biomechanics mentor, and learned early on the importance of the biomechanical ramifications of surgical intervention as well as how the patient's biomechanical profile is affecting their pathol-

**Ehredt:** I suppose that my answer depends on where life takes me. I enjoy academia, so I hope I am still in that environment to some capacity. Within 10 years, I would expect to elevate to a division head or residency director level. It's tough for me to look 20 years ahead. I am very present day-minded. As I've gotten older, I have realized that God has put me in the positions I was intended to serve best—not necessarily what I want, but what I need. Maybe that's

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ogy. With every surgery I perform, I consider the entire kinetic chain, and I think it has helped me appreciate the long-term outcomes. Within surgery, I am particularly interested in sports medicine and arthroscopy. I played football for over twenty years, and now compete in triathlon, so I have a personal appreciation for what athletes put themselves through. Additionally, I think patients deserve to have cutting edge treatments that are backed by evidence. Arthroscopic techniques are fun to do, and now have a plethora of evidence supporting them. I've scoped just about anything you can in the foot and ankle. I enjoy teaching our residents and students those techniques.

**PM:** *What type of practice arrangement, i.e. solo, small, or large group, suits you the best?*

**Ehredt:** Academic medical centers or government settings suit me the best. I like to be part of larger organizations for the comradery and comfort that the team brings. I like the idea of being my own boss, but, honestly, private practice and small groups have always scared me. I don't have much of a business background, so I tip my cap to my colleagues who have navigated those waters.

**PM:** *Where do you see your career being in 10 years, 20 years?*

higher-level administration, or some sort of leadership, within our organizations. Perhaps I'll end up traveling down the private practice route. Ideally, I would be serving in a VA hospital or leadership within a community medical center—I can envision a lot of possible scenarios. As long as I continue to serve the greater good, I feel that that's all that matters.

**PM:** *What are your thoughts on the overall role of podiatric medicine in the current healthcare system?*

**Ehredt:** The research has been very clear. We save lives, limbs, and healthcare dollars. Our population continues to get older and sicker. Add on top of that the injuries sustained by everyone else who is trying to stay away from those problems, and the need for podiatric physicians becomes obvious. Podiatric physicians are the foot and ankle experts, and are here to stay.

**PM:** *What should this profession do to continue to attract sound quality individuals like yourself?*

**Ehredt:** Work ethic beats talent every time. Admissions teams should focus on non-cognitive traits. Certainly, GPA and MCAT scores are part of the process, but the best candidates are those who demonstrate a commitment

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*Dr. Ehredt (from page 106)*

to overcoming obstacles. Collegiate athletes, military members, parents who pushed through school, etc. make the best students, in my opinion.

**PM:** *Would you be in favor of a degree change as well as name change from the term "podiatric" to "foot and ankle" medicine?*

**Ehredt:** I honestly don't know if the degree needs to change, or the name needs to change, or what, but something needs to change. The reality is the healthcare system needs to change. This profession continues to pump out the most qualified and trained experts within its specialty. The problem is that podiatric physicians are also the most under-licensed. I know the top brass of this profession has been working on this. I trust that their efforts are being directed towards what is best for the

profession, and podiatrists all need to be ready to act when the time comes.

**PM:** *If you are raising a young family, how are you managing a busy work-life balance?*

**Ehredt:** My son, Deakon, is going to be 10 years old soon, and has been the reason I get up and do the things I do. I've had an interesting career so far, and he has been through it all with me. I like being busy and living a life that is fulfilling. It is kind of crazy when I step back and look at the various working parts of my life (KSUCPM, SVMG, U.S. Navy, fatherhood, triathlon). There is no other way to manage all that other than taking it head on and making a schedule that is structured but flexible. I am very lucky to have a career in academia as it usually provides that type of structured flexibility. Also, I don't waste any part of my day. I wake up early and am doing

something as part of my daily plan until I go to bed. I do try to get 6-8 hours of sleep, eat well, don't smoke, don't drink much, and overall take care of my mind and body.

Most important is surrounding myself with the right people. The residents I work with are the best in town. The academic support team at KSUCPM does an amazing job at making its faculty members' lives easier. In addition, my medical assistant, Hope, does all the uncredited work to make me a better clinician. I certainly wouldn't be able to do anything without them. **PM**



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