

Who Wants to Be a Podiatrist?

BY BARRY H. BLOCK, DPM, JD

Podiatry faces an existential crisis—a lack of qualified applicants to our colleges. In a recent interview with New York State Podiatric Association President James Hanna, DPM, Sabrina Minhas, DPM, Immediate Past President of the Pennsylvania Podiatric Medical Association (PPMA) summarized this problem: “We have nine schools, and we have the possibility of two additional schools opening up soon. Right now, we have just over 500 STUDENTS in the applicant pool for the classes that begin in the fall of 2022. Even if 100% of those applicants matriculate, no class of any school will be full. We have just seen how the lack of student applicants affects our podiatric residency programs. {This year} many residency programs nationwide were not able to fill all their spots because there is a shortage of students available to take them. This trend is anticipated to continue for the next several years until our student applicant pool grows and we reach a better balance between residency programs and students.”



Dr. Minhas provides these action steps that an individual practitioner can take: “Please reach out to your local college advisors and schedule either an in-person or Zoom event to promote awareness of our profession. The American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine as well as PPMA have all of the resources available that an individual practitioner would need to prepare and present at the schools, including written scripts, PowerPoint presentations, etc. Individuals are also encouraged to go to their local high schools and promote awareness. We must get started as soon as possible with our “Boots on the Ground.”

Respectfully Submitted,

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