



Tracey C. Vlahovic, DPM

Meet this dermatology trailblazer.

BY WILLIAM SCHERER, DPM, MS

It is both my distinct honor and immense pleasure to announce Tracey C. Vlahovic, DPM as the recipient of the 2024 *Podiatry Management* Lifetime Achievement Award and announce her induction into the *Podiatry Management* Hall of Fame.

This honor will not come as a surprise to anyone that has ever had the opportunity to meet Dr. Vlahovic or attend one of her many lectures, as she is a true podiatric trailblazer, visionary, and luminary in the field of lower extremity dermatology. I am fortunate to have known Tracey for many years and have seen firsthand how she is able to connect with and positively impact the students at Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine (TUSPM), as well as inspire and educate thousands of podiatrists on the proper diagnosis and treatment of common and extremely rare skin and nail conditions that affect the lower extremity.

Dr. Vlahovic attended Yale University and earned a Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry; however, she spent as much time on the dance floor as she did in the lab, as she engaged in a plethora of competitive ballroom dance competitions, where she achieved national recognition. Sensing a relationship between dance and her own previous foot injuries, Tracey decided to embark on a career in podiatric medicine and surgery. She graduated from TUSPM, completed a two-year surgical residency at St Luke's Hospital in Allentown, PA and had the unique distinction of being the first podiatrist in the world to complete a one-year fellowship in podiatric dermatology.



Dr. Vlahovic

Double board certified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery and the American Board of Podiatric Medicine, Dr. Vlahovic was also named a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. Her contribution to the podiatric profession in terms of dermatology education is unparalleled as she has been an invited lecturer at every major podiatry seminar in the country, authored over 70 peer-reviewed journal articles, participated in over 20 skin/nail clinical trials, published seven book chapters, and authored three dermatology focused textbooks including a book on onychomycosis and an epic atlas of lower extremity skin disease.

As the first podiatric physician to

complete a fellowship in podiatric dermatology, Dr. Vlahovic has dedicated her career to advancing this subspecialty by educating not only students and practicing podiatrists, but other healthcare providers about lower extremity skin conditions, writing hundreds of articles, blogs, and granting interviews for various media outlets, along with lecturing at hundreds of medical conferences across the U.S. and Europe. To put things in perspective, 20 years ago the focus for most podiatrists was on obtaining trauma and reconstructive surgery experience, yet Dr. Vlahovic sought an opportunity to focus her podiatric patient care on dermatologic conditions. Her unique and niche educational background, where podiatric medicine and dermatology intersect, has allowed her to elevate the entire podiatric profession by practicing in a worldwide, multi-specialty collaboration with the allopathic and osteopathic medical communities, pharmaceutical and medical device industries, thus evolving into a renowned thought leader in podiatric dermatology.

If you had to single out just one thing about her illustrious career that Dr. Vlahovic would want to be remembered for, it would be how she positively impacted her students and patients with her knowledge of lower extremity skin conditions. She cherishes her work as a clinical professor both in the classroom and the inner-city Philly foot clinics. The list of awards and honors that she has received is long and is highlighted by being named the Clinician of the Year, Professor of the Year, and Teacher of

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Dr. Vlahovic (from page 51)

the Year, as well as receiving awards and honorary lectures from a multitude of state medical societies. Proudly representing our profession, she has consistently lectured at the American Academy of Dermatology meeting. Dr. Vlahovic was also the first female U.S. podiatric physician to become a Fel-

ing it deep inside one of her UGG boots that were being stored with her colorful luggage in the speaker ready room, as she was traveling to Utah immediately after her Florida presentation. A few hours after her FPMA lecture, she sent a group text message to several podiatrists in her contact list asking if anyone knew who put Vicks VapoRub in one of her

Tributes

Elena K. Wellens, DPM, Assistant Clinical Professor, Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine, Philadelphia, PA

Tracey's greatest gift as a physician is teaching. She has touched the lives of hundreds of students over the years. Her wit and concise teaching style is loved, and she makes dermatology understandable and practical to pursue in private practice. On the lecture circuit, I have witnessed first-hand how she can captivate an audience with a topic some may perceive as a bit dry. Tracey knows how to bring dermatology to life and leaves anyone who attends her lectures or workshops with valuable lessons to bring back to the office or O.R.

I can honestly say I know of no other colleague more deserving of this award. Tracey has had a profound impact on the podiatric world for over 20 years through her expertise in podiatric dermatology. She has revolutionized the treatment of skin and nail disorders through her extensive knowledge and research. But this pales in comparison to the truly incredible person that she is. Her com-

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low of the Faculty of Podiatric Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Glasgow and was elected to the Board of Trustees for the Council for Nail Disorders.

I have personally attended dozens of Dr. Vlahovic's lectures at a variety of state and national seminars and always manage to learn something new. Tracey has a tremendous range of lower extremity expertise and has an infectious passion for podiatry and treating patients with dermatologic conditions. I have personally heard her mention how much she loves treating warts, how much she loves fungal infections, how much she loves managing psoriasis, how much she loves her "fun-gal" personalized PA license plate, and how much she loves investigating challenging skin conditions with her students. There is no question that Dr. Vlahovic truly loves podiatry, and it is apparent to everyone that the podiatry profession loves her.

However, there is one thing Dr. Vlahovic hates, and that is when people ask her about using Vicks VapoRub as a treatment for onychomycosis as there is no credible medical evidence supporting its use. Yet she faces this topic so frequently that at the 2023 FPMA SAM conference in Orlando, she professed that "Vicks VapoRub is the bane of my existence." Upon hearing her stern proclamation, I decided to engage in an epic prank by rapidly running to the hotel gift store, purchasing a small bottle of Vics VapoRub, and stuff-

boots as she received a special security pat-down when her carry-on bag was flagged by TSA in the Orlando airport. After a moment of intense internal laughter, I quickly replied that I had no idea who the evil diabolical genius was, and if you happen to bump into her at a podiatry conference, please don't tell her that I was the persnickety podiatric prankster that placed Vicks VapoRub in one of her winter boots.

"Tracey's greatest gift as a physician is teaching."—Wellens

Dr. Vlahovic has broken barriers, planted the podiatry flag in uncharted territory, and has excelled in every phase of podiatric medicine, including working as a clinical podiatric practitioner, professor, speaker, consultant, author, researcher, and mentor to countless individuals. She has not only been an inspiration to me, but she has single-handedly made our collective podiatric profession better and you can rest assured that if she is lecturing at a medical seminar, she will be wearing a variety of fashionable glittery accoutrements to spice things up. It is now time for others to congratulate Dr. Tracey C. Vlahovic on her well-deserved honor of being selected as the recipient of the 2024 Podiatry Management Lifetime Achievement Award and induction into the Podiatry Management Hall of Fame.

passion towards patients, her pure gift of teaching, and her true love for medicine are the beautiful qualities that make Tracey the perfect recipient of this award. I am proud to call her my colleague and my dear friend.

"If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants" is a profound quote by Isaac Newton. It alludes to the fact that the knowledge we have is due to the hard work and intellect of those before us. Tracey is that giant in the world of podiatry for revolutionizing podiatric dermatology and leaving an incredible legacy for us all.

Stephen Schleicher, MD, Associate Professor of Medicine, Geisinger Commonwealth Medical College

I am honored to co-introduce Tracey Vlahovic to the *Podiatry Man-*

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PM LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr. Vlahovic (from page 52)

agement Hall of Fame, especially since her rise to stardom began under my direction. Many moons ago, Tracey rotated through my dermatology offices as a St. Luke's podiatry resident. Her fascination with cutaneous disorders was evident from the beginning and continued to intensify throughout her rotation. One day, I was somewhat taken aback when she asked whether I would sponsor a joint dermatology/podiatry fellowship. Active in the training of medical students and family practice residents, I was aware that commencing a fellowship is a somewhat daunting task. I of course agreed but could not refrain from voicing my skepticism. Doubt turned to amazement when six weeks later, a contingent from the Podiatric Medical Council flew out to my office. Needless to say, the next year Tracey became the first dermatology/podiatry fellow in the nation.

“Tracey has achieved an international reputation through her lectures, clinical studies, and publications.”—Schleicher

Now, of course, Tracey has achieved an international reputation through her lectures, clinical studies, and publications. We have co-authored two books and meet biannually at conferences and conventions. A superb educator, Tracey is a trailblazer, and her achievements are recognized and admired by both podiatrists and dermatologists.

Warren S. Joseph, DPM, Adjunct Clinical Professor, Arizona College of Podiatric Medicine, Midwestern University

Anyone who has been involved in academia for any length of time can attest that students/residents can have varying impacts on your psyche. Then there are the truly unique students. If fortunate, a teacher may run into only a very small handful of these over an entire career. You just know, pretty much from day one that they are different. Not only will they succeed but they have the potential to change the profession. That describes Dr. Tracey Vlahovic.

I first met Tracey while I was faculty at TUSPM, and she was a student. As I noted above, certain students just stand out as she did. She was interested in learning and never backed away from a challenge in clinic. Although that was over 20 years ago, I figured she would be an incredible podiatrist, but it would have been difficult to imagine how much she has been able to advance the profession with her fellowship training in dermatology, her clinical research, and the generation of students she has influenced as an exceptional teacher and clinician.

Over the past decade, we have become close professional and personal friends, bonding over such life-altering questions as: What is the best treatment for onychomycosis and does terbinafine resistance really make a difference?

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PM LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr. Vlahovic (from page 54)

Mark Smith, Executive Director Marketing, Ortho Dermatologics

I've had the pleasure of knowing Dr Vlahovic for over 10 years in my role as a Marketing Director at Ortho Dermatologics and during that time, she has been kind enough to partner with us on numerous studies and publications. But I think Dr. Vlahovic's true calling is sharing her knowledge of all things podiatry with others. Her passion for education is contagious to anyone lucky enough to learn from her, which is countless students, colleagues, patients, and our entire organization. I have heard her lectures countless times and learn something new and meaningful each time. When our sales force hears the word "FUNGAL", they think of the one and only FUN GAL and the wealth of knowledge she so charismatically articulates. She truly cares about the podiatry community and her patients. Being inducted into the *Podiatry Management* Hall of Fame is an incredible honor for Dr Vlahovic and I can't think of anyone more deserving.

Daniel F. Vickers, CAE, Executive Director, The Podiatry Institute

I can't think of anyone more deserving of this award! I have had the tremendous pleasure knowing and working with Tracey for over a decade. When Tracey began lecturing for the Podiatry Institute, she became an instant hit. Her infectious personality, engaging teaching style, knowledge, expertise, and keen fashion sense have made her a favorite among the attendees and faculty alike. Her impact as an educator is evident as she has received many faculty, clinician, and teacher of the year awards. Her former students often congregate around in the hallway or exhibit area at the conferences to speak with her. Tracey is an authoritative expert in podiatric dermatology, who always has been and will continue to be an asset and leader to the podiatric profession for many years to come.

I first met Dr. Tracey Vlahovic at the Council for Nail Disorders annual meeting close to a decade ago. It was my first time attending and I was quite nervous. Tracey was the first person to greet me and made me feel immediately comfortable. In addition to being one of the world's greatest nail experts, she is also a kind giving person both to her colleagues and her patients. I am very grateful that I have had the opportunity to get to know Tracey very well since our first meeting, and I enjoy her company and look forward to each and every time that I see her.

Shari Lipner MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Clinical Dermatology, Weill Cornell Medicine

Tracey is an astute podiatrist and very well published researcher. I have had the opportunity to collaborate with her on a number of projects, and having her as a co-author always results in an article that is much better than the original version. Even though I have heard her speak about the same topic numerous times, her lectures are always fresh, leaving me with new pearls to use in my clinical practice. Induction into the *Podiatry Management*

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Hall of Fame is well deserved, and I would like to congratulate Tracey on this enormous achievement.

Jeffrey D. Lehrman, DPM, Lehrman Consulting, LLC

Dr. Vlahovic has redefined what it means to “break glass ceilings” as a podiatrist. She must hold the world record for podiatric accomplishments that start with “First to ever...” If Dr. Vlahovic’s only accomplishment was to be the first podiatrist to do so many different things, we could just celebrate that. If Dr. Vlahovic’s only accomplishment was to be one of the world’s most recognized providers caring for lower extremity skin issues, that alone would be enough to celebrate here. The singular accomplishment of publishing countless peer-reviewed articles,

book chapters, and textbooks would be enough to celebrate. Establishing herself as an engaging, entertaining, thought-provoking, and constantly evolving educator in the realm of continuing education is an accomplishment that alone warrants recognition. Having a 20+ year career of caring for and helping thousands of

hundreds and hundreds of podiatric students in her role as a Clinical Professor. Dr. Vlahovic has helped the thousands of patients she has treated herself, but by educating and empowering so many others, her impact on the world grows exponentially. Her students affectionately refer to her as “Dr. V.” Watching Dr. Vlahovic

“Dr. Vlahovic has redefined what it means to “break glass ceilings” as a podiatrist.”—Lehrman

patients with pathology that very few in the country could address as skillfully as Dr. Vlahovic does is worthy of celebration.

Dr. Vlahovic did not do just one of these things; she has done all of them. But we have not yet listed her most important accomplishment, and the one she is proudest of: educating

walk through a room with any volume of podiatrists and counting the number of former students that run over to hug her and say hello (while her phone is buzzing from former students asking “can you take a look at this”) is the greatest evidence that we are lucky to call Dr. V a colleague

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Honorable Mention

Congratulations to the following podiatrists, alphabetically listed, who received the next highest number of votes in the 39th Annual *Podiatry Management* Lifetime Achievement Award.

Stephen Barrett, DPM, Marietta, GA
 H. “Bunny” Brown, DPM, Heber Springs, AR
 James Christina, DPM, Bethesda, MD
 Chet Evans, DPM, Miami Shores, FL
 John Guiliana, DPM, Hackettstown, NJ
 Paul Kesselman, DPM, Oceanside, NY
 Michael King, DPM, Franklin, TN
 Steven Kravitz, DPM, Winston-Salem, NC
 Lawrence Lavery, DPM, Dallas, TX
 Marc Lenet, DPM, Baltimore, MD
 Leonard Levy, DPM, Fort Lauderdale, FL
 John Mattiacchi, DPM, Philadelphia, PA

Nancy Parsley, DPM, Chicago, IL
 Douglas Richie, DPM, Long Beach, CA
 Jeffrey Robbins, DPM, Cleveland, OH
 Lee Rogers, DPM, Las Vegas, NV
 Harold Schoenhaus, DPM, Philadelphia, PA
 Alan Sherman, DPM, Boca Raton, FL
 Robert Snyder, DPM, Tamarac, FL
 Frank Spinosa, DPM, Albuquerque, NM
 Kathleen Stone, DPM, Glendale, AZ
 Ross Taubman, DPM, Brentwood, TN
 Dyane E. Tower, DPM, MPH, MS, Bethesda, MD
 Harold Vogler, DPM, Tampa, FL

Congratulations to following individuals, alphabetically listed, who received the next highest votes in the non-podiatrist category.

Dorothy Cahill-McDonald
 Tina Del Buono
 SuEllen Dercher
 Keith Greer
 Herman Hammerschmidt
 Jean Kirk

Daniel Kline
 Kevin Kruse
 Moraith North
 Phil Park
 Mary Pulliam
 Krista Richter

Jimelle Rumberg, PhD
 Shawna Shapero
 Leonard Thaler
 Alan Tinkleman
 Norman Wallis, PhD



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and that she is most deserving of this honor.

Michelle Butterworth, DPM,
MUSC Health

When I hear the name Tracey

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Vlahovic, the first things that come to mind are pink, sparkles, and awesome shoes. I met Tracey several years ago on the lecture circuit. At that time, there were not many female speakers on the podiatric lecture circuit, and when I saw a bright Lilly Pulitzer dress on the podium I

smiled and knew I must meet this woman immediately! It was a love of all things bright, sparkly, and Lilly that brought us together, but it is our passion to teach and educate and the mutual love of our profession that has bound us and keeps us as the best of friends!

As bright and sparkly as Tracey's attire is, it truly pales in comparison to her personality and intelligence. Tracey has worked hard to become one of the leading authorities in podiatric dermatology. She is an amazing encyclopedia of knowledge and openly shares her expertise through teaching both her students and colleagues. She is a well-known speaker both within our profession and in the dermatology world as a whole. She is sought after for not only her vast knowledge of podiatric dermatology but for her infectious enthusiasm and energy she conveys in her lectures. She has managed to make dermatology interesting and fun and teaches it in an engaging and entertaining manner. Not only is she able to effectively communicate her insights and knowledge in a clear, cohesive manner, but she is funny and quick-witted and is able to connect with her audience and capture the crowd.

Given her many accomplishments, Tracey remains energetic, driven, and above all grateful. I am so proud of Tracey and so impressed with her contributions to our great profession. I am truly honored and privileged to call her both my colleague and friend. I congratulate her on this very deserving milestone of receiving the Podiatry Management Lifetime Achievement Award and being inducted into the *Podiatry Management Hall of Fame*. I know she will continue to make a meaningful impact on our profession. **PM**

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Dr. Scherer is board certified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery and by the American Board of Podiatric Medicine. He has maintained a private practice in South Florida since 1991, served 17 years as an Adjunct Professor at Barry University School of Podiatric Medicine, and is the Senior Podiatric Medical Advisor to Bako Diagnostics.