

## *History of the American Board of Podiatric Surgery*

The American Board of Podiatric Surgery (ABPS) celebrated 25 years of service to the profession at its annual meeting in August 2000. In May 1975, the Council on Podiatry Education [CPE] (name was later changed to Council on Podiatric Medical Education [CPME]) approved the National Board of Podiatric Surgery (the name was changed in 1977 to American Board of Podiatric Surgery). For over 14 years prior to 1975, the House of Delegates of the American Podiatry Association [APA] (name was later changed to American Podiatric Medical Association [APMA]) discussed and argued over the formulation of a certifying board in foot surgery.

Irvin O. Kanat, DPM, of Detroit, Michigan, was President of APA in 1974-75 and was instrumental in establishing the Board. He prepared the necessary documentation for approval by the CPE and applying for incorporation in Delaware. Dr. Kanat appointed five directors and three advisors to administer the Board from May 1975 until its first meeting in August 1975. Dr. Kanat also served as Secretary-Treasurer during the first two years of the Board's existence and was instrumental in preparing the various documents of the Board.

At that first meeting of the Board in August 1975, there were 179 podiatrists certified as the Founders Group. These consisted mostly of Fellows of the American College of Foot Surgeons (ACFS), who had gone through submission of case documentations and the passing of written and oral examinations by the ACFS and who could document three years of in-hospital surgical privileges. A few podiatrists who had completed a two-year surgical residency program and who could document three years of in-hospital surgical privileges were also included. Since 1975, all those certified by the Board have gone through the submission of case documentations and the passing of written and oral examinations. The late Howard R. Reinherz, DPM, of Kenosha, Wisconsin, was elected the first President and was instrumental in providing leadership of the Board in its first year (1975-76) during which the first examinations were prepared.

The first examinations were administered in June 1976 in Chicago with 163 candidates sitting for both oral and written examinations. There were 33 Diplomates serving as oral examiners that first year. The Board will administer its 25<sup>th</sup> examination in June 2001. All examinations except for 1977 have been held at the Marriott O'Hare Hotel in Chicago.

Although the ABPS is recognized as the specialty board to conduct a certification process in podiatric surgery by the Joint Committee on the Recognition of Specialty Boards [JCRSB] of the Council on Podiatric Medical Education of the APMA, the Board is an independent organization and is not affiliated with other organizations. The Board submits an annual report to the JCRSB and undergoes an annual review by that committee.

Faced with many trials and tribulations during its infancy, the Board weathered two major lawsuits and threats of many more. The Board has always upheld its high standards and resisted the many complaints and legal threats from segments of the profession who were not pleased with the credentialing and examination process. To lend credibility to its examination process, the Board has always contracted with outside agencies to grade the examinations and provide statistical reviews. For the first five examinations, the Board contracted with organizations in Chicago. Since 1980, the Board has contracted with the School of Medicine of the University of Southern California for consultation and for grading and statistical review. Kaaren I. Hoffman, Ph.D., a staff member of USC, has been the Board's examination consultant since 1980.

From 1975 through 2007, the ABPS has issued 6,540 diplomate certificates, including those diplomates who have retired or are currently inactive. The active membership of the ABPS has grown to the following for August 2007:

Certified in Foot and Ankle Surgery:	1,961
Certified in Foot Surgery:	3,788
Certified in Reconstructive Foot and Ankle Surgery:	<u>436</u>
Total Certified:	6,185

From 1976 through 1990, the ABPS certified in foot and ankle surgery only. In 1991, two categories were established: foot surgery and reconstructive rearfoot/ankle surgery. The first Board Eligible examination (written only) was given in 1977 and the last examination was in 1990. Those holding Board Eligible status were allowed to do so through August 1996. To move from Board Eligible to Board Certified, candidates had to sit for both the oral and written parts of the certification examination. Beginning with the 1991 examination, candidates completing a surgical residency program, as well as other categories of qualification, were allowed to sit for the written part of the certification in foot surgery examination and, if passed, were granted Board Qualified status in foot surgery. These candidates later had to sit for only the oral part of the certification in foot surgery examination. The examination for certification in reconstructive rearfoot/ankle surgery was also added in 1991. Candidates must be certified in foot surgery before becoming certified in reconstructive rearfoot/ankle surgery. Board Qualified status was also added in reconstructive rearfoot/ankle surgery.

A self-assessment examination process was begun in 1977 and is still being administered. This examination, until 2001, had two purposes: a practice examination for candidates; and maintenance of certification for diplomates certified prior to 1991 and who are required to take the examination every 10 years. Diplomates certified after 1990 are required to take the written recertification examination for recertification every 10 years. The self-assessment examination is no longer used as a practice examination for candidates.

In 1984, after a long legal battle and arbitration through the APMA House of Delegates, the American Board of Ambulatory Foot Surgery became a section of ABPS. There were 234 members accepted into this section in 1986 after they completed the credentialing process after passing the examination earlier.

In August 2007, the total involved with the ABPS (including retired and inactive is) 8,862 podiatrists. This figure is broken down as follows:

ABPS Diplomates:	6,540
ABAFS Diplomates (23 also certified by ABPS):	137
Board Qualified:	<u>2,393*</u>
Total:	8,837

From using the APMA offices in 1975-76, to establishing an office on Connecticut Avenue in Washington, DC, in 1976 and until August 1979, to a year in Martinez, California, in 1979-80, to its fourth office in San Francisco since 1980, the Board now has approximately 17,000 square feet of beautiful office space, a former dot.com building remodeled in early 2000. A staff of 14 serves the profession in the operation of the Board and its annual examinations. The late John Bennett served as Executive Director from 1975 through August 1996 when he retired and was succeeded by James Lamb.

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\* Includes 208 Board Qualified in RRA who are Board Certified in Foot Surgery.