

Schuster Seminar Praised for Focus on Biomechanics



Several of the experts who presented at NYCPM's Schuster Biomechanics Seminar: Back row, left to right: Steven J. Levitz, DPM; Richard Blake, DPM; Darryl Phillips, DPM; Howard Dannenberg, DPM; Justin Greisberg, MD; Paul Coffin, DPM. Front row, left to right: Michael J. Trepal, DPM; Robert A. Eckles, DPM; Joseph C. D'Amico, DPM; Stanley Beekman, DPM; Jinsup Song, DPM, PhD. Not pictured: Mark Caselli, DPM; Von Homer MS, PhD; James Losito, DPM; John McNerney, DPM; Russell Volpe, DPM.

NYCPM hosted the 7th annual Richard O. Schuster, DPM, Memorial Biomechanics seminar on November 9th and 10th. The seminar was coordinated and chaired by Joseph C. D'Amico, DPM, a professor and past chair of the department of orthopedics and biomechanics at NYCPM, and was made possible by a significant contribution from a grateful patient of Dr. D'Amico who was cured of his persistent heel pain.

The sell-out gathering of biomechanics leaders from across the U.S. and abroad heard presentations that focused on current concepts in biomechanics, including limb-length discrepancy; the relationship of foot dysfunction to pain in the superstructure, especially lower back pain; the effect of foot dysfunction on posture and alignment; the hyper-pronated foot; overuse injuries, and the retention of pediatric rotational disorders affecting adult gait.

The seminar launched a lively exchange of opinions in PM News/Podiatry Management Online. A consensus seemed to emerge that, while the podiatric medical schools are teaching biomechanics, residency programs are not; Chuck Ross, DPM, wrote that "with few exceptions . . . the emphasis is solely upon surgery." He continued, "You cannot expect good surgical outcomes unless you first understand the biomechanics as to why the problems began in the first place." Kevin A. Kirby, DPM bemoaned podiatric surgical residents'

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relative lack of proficiency with “nearly all forms of conservative care modalities” than their counterparts of 10-15 years ago. Kirby praises the Schuster seminar as “the one exception where biomechanics education is the main goal of the seminar,” and thinks that the increased emphasis on surgery is creating a “situation where younger US podiatrists are becoming increasingly more surgically oriented, at the expense of their conservative care knowledge and clinical skills,” as opposed to their international counterparts. Suggested solutions? More seminars devoted to biomechanics and more teaching of the biomechanics of surgery, the biomechanics of foot orthosis therapy and the biomechanics of wound care in residency programs (Kirby).