

AAWP Monthly Free Clinic

On the second Wednesday of each month, the American Association for Women Podiatrists (AAWP) at Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine, volunteers at The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland. The clinic provides free health care to those in need in the areas of podiatry, dental, and general medicine with a focus on palliative care. The AAWP offers the opportunity for students to gain valuable experience in the field of podiatry while giving back to the Greater Cleveland community. The clinical directors of AAWP coordinate the students who will be participating and are responsible for providing the instruments needed. Dr. Howard Kimmel, Residency Director of Foot and Ankle Surgery at Case Western Reserve University, is the attending podiatrist and mentor for this monthly event. He is there to oversee the participation and help to guide the students through the daily practices of being a podiatrist.

Since the students do all of the patient interaction and treatment, with guidance from Dr. Kimmel, this opportunity provides students with a hands-on learning environment in the clinical setting as early as their first month of entering podiatry school. The upperclassmen work side by side with the first and second year students, teaching them how to interact with patients, techniques for nail debridement and callus treatment, as well as the protocol for reporting to an attending physician. Students in each class year are encouraged to participate to build on their clinic experience and confidence.

Students are responsible for greeting patients, performing a basic examination, getting the patient's history, as well as conservative treatment measures such as trimming toenails, debridement, strapping/taping, and injections. Laura Jamrog, the president of AAWP's KSUCPM chapter, said "volunteering for The Free Clinic is a great way for students to meet upperclassmen and get their first exposure to the clinical setting while being in a relaxed environment. Having your colleagues there to guide you step by step through a patient visit is less intimidating and builds the confidence of the first and second year students before their third year clinical rotations begin."

AAWP will continue to offer this beneficial volunteer opportunity to KSUCPM' students and are constantly looking for ways that they can give back to the Cleveland community. For more information on the AAWP's Free Clinic opportunity, please contact Chris Valkier (cvalkier@kent.edu) and Portia Yee (pyee@kent.edu), the clinical directors of AAWP.



Terryyn Murette
KSUCPM Class of 2017