

Committed to Her Community

CMA (AAMA) Dedicated to Her Career and Professional Organization



By Cathy Cassata

Marsha L. Benedict, CMA-A (AAMA), BSA, was working as a dental assistant when she learned about medical assisting. “My cousin worked at a plastic surgeon’s office, and they needed someone to help answer phones and schedule appointments, so I started working there,” she says.

Soon after, her cousin learned about the American Association of Medical Assistants® (AAMA), and they attended a local chapter meeting together. Benedict began volunteering to take photos at chapter events. She was quickly inspired to pursue a career in the field and began studying for the CMA (AAMA)® Certification Exam with a group of aspiring medical assistants. “We would get together at lunch hour or at night to study. We all passed the exam,” says Benedict.

From there, her involvement in the AAMA grew. She became president of her local chapter—Oakland County—and president of the Michigan Society of Medical Assistants. While in this role, she also advised Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and

Medicare for Michigan when they developed their updated procedure manuals.

She expanded her impact by getting involved at the national level, serving on committees, and attending board meetings in Chicago. “After attending my first AAMA Annual Conference in Houston in 1982, I was hooked,” she says. Since then, she has missed only three national conferences, attending most as a delegate.

In 2001, she served on the AAMA Continuing Education Board (CEB), which she remained on for seven years, two of which she served as chair. “I loved the CEB; that was so much fun and wonderful,” says Benedict. “I’m invested in education, medical assistants keeping up with their CEUs, and offering good opportunities for them to do so.” In 2007, she served as AAMA Vice Speaker of the House.

As her volunteer work grew, so did her medical assisting career. After working for years in part-time roles at different specialties, Benedict moved into education: first teaching the administrative side of medical assisting at a technical school and then accepting an adjunct position at Baker College in Flint, Michigan.

In 2007, she became the associate dean and program director of the medical assistant program at Baker College. She also volunteered countless hours traveling to help other programs earn CAAHEP accreditation. “This was a highlight of my life to meet other faculty and program directors

and help them with accreditation,” she says. “My many years as a surveyor helped me understand the process.”

When Benedict relocated to Florida in 2004, she continued her mission, working as an adjunct educator at Indian River State College before retiring from teaching in 2016. However, she continued to make an impact on the field. She served as president of the Florida Society of Medical Assistants for almost three years and chaired the 2023 AAMA Annual Conference in Orlando. Currently, she chairs Florida’s state conference committee and sits on the AAMA’s Marketing Strategy Team and Membership Development Strategy Team.

She understands the profession is changing and that today’s medical assistants prefer to work, learn, and volunteer differently. She embraces the changes with grace. “You have to evolve with the times,” says Benedict. “The younger group might not want to go to meetings and meet people that way, so we have to think about what they want. They like to [stay home] and do a Sunday morning CEU, so that’s what we have to give them.”

What stays constant is her unwavering drive to promote the profession. “I have a great passion for medical assisting,” says Benedict. “People ask why I stay involved even though I’m retired. I tell them that I’ll keep doing my best to make sure medical assistants get the respect they deserve.” ♦