



VIRTUAL MEETING FOR DELEGATES

Representing Oregon dental assistants were Linda Kihs, Mary Harrison, Bonnie Marshall and Lynn Murray. Two other Tenth District delegates representing Washington state were Alyse Meyers and Lakeshia Brewer. Tenth District was honored and most appreciative to have had Cathy Roberts appointed to our district as a Trustee - Pro Tem this past year. Thank you Cathy.....

Mrs. Roberts held a caucus meeting prior to the ADAA House of Delegates to explain certain topics that would be beneficial for us to know that would be discussed during the annual session. Mainly: items in the Delegates Handbook, vacant trustee positions, a policy amendment for the ADAA Infection Control Training Policy to add "respiratory protocols" to the policy, Call to Action on Infection Control, and reference committee topics.

The first House of Delegates was called to order with the introduction of officers and trustees, appointment of the time keeper, and parliamentarian. Several impressive guests were introduced and recognized who gave greetings: Heather Colicchio, AADOM, Daniel Klemmedson, DDS, MD - ADA President, Rebecca Stolberg, RDH, MSDH - ADEA, Lisa Moravec, RDH, MSDH - ADHA President, Heather Brownlee, Vice President of the Canadian Dental Assistant Association, Casey Hannan, MPH - director of the Division of Oral Health @ Center for Disease Control & Prevention, Dr. Sherin Tooks - director of the Commission on Dental Accreditation, Lois Bell, CDA, CPFDA, CRFDA, MADAA - Secretary/Treasurer of Dental Assisting National Board, Sal Rodas - Executive Director of the Foundation for Airway Health, Kevin

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ODAA Executive Officers



Linda Kihs, CDA, EFDA, OMSA, MADAA
President
Bylaws & Manual of Procedures
Membership
Newsbulletin
Oregon Board of Dentistry
Radiation Protection Services



Mary Harrison, CDA, EFDA, EFODA, FADAA
Vice President
Budget & Finance
Legislative
Oregon Board of Dentistry



Bonnie Marshall, CDA, EFDA, EFODA, MADAA, BA
Secretary/Treasurer
Education
Nominating
Student Involvement
Oregon Board of Dentistry



Ginny Jorgensen, CDA, EFDA, EFODA, AAS
Social Media (Facebook)
Oregon Board of Dentistry



Lynn Murray, M.Ed, CDA, EFDA, RFC, EPEDA, MADAA
Educators Consortium
Historian



Jill Lomax, EFDA-RF, CDA, EdM
Community Involvement

Virtual Meeting... *Continued from page 1*

Henry - co-founder of Ignite DA, Latisha Canty, RDH, MSN, Jessica Schifano, JD, MPH (OSHA), Michelle Lee, CPC (OSAP), and Timothy Ricks, DMD, MPH, FICD - US Public Health.

Other introductions included state and local presidents, first time delegates, new Fellows and Masters, students, and new life professional and emeritus members.

Reference and Bylaw committees were held on Sunday the 25th of October. Financially ADAA is in a much better situation, in part through a new telephone system, reduced travel expenses and postage since meetings and communication is now done mainly online. Hopefully the lease on the office on Wacket Drive will be up the end of September 2020 which will help substantially.

No new bylaws were brought forth, however, a change in the ADAA's recommendations on Infection Control Education, Training and Certification was put to the committee for rewording. It was proposed that "aerosol transmission of pathogens" be included in the health risks to dental assistants and that mandatory training of dental assistants in infection control be adopted.

Voting took place on Monday. Our own Mary Harrison served on the elections committee. She reported the ballot counting was done by another group that handles voting for associations. All went very well and the tally was presented to the 2nd House of Delegates.

The 2nd House of Delegates took place the following Saturday, October 31, 2020. The election of officers were reported as:

Betty Fox - President

Susan Camizzi - President Elect

Cathy Roberts - Vice President

Sarah Siroka - Secretary

District Trustees were announced.

Both the budget and the policy passed.

John Kasper, the Executive Director, presented his report and our President gave her speech as did our Immediate Past President. (Watch for their presentations in a future ADAA publication.)

Thank you for the opportunity of representing you.....

Linda, Mary, Bonnie and Lynn



CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSE FLYER

The Lead Apron Controversy The Times They Are a Changing

The Oregon Dental Assisting Association is pleased to offer a one hour zoom class.

The course will review the laws set forth by Oregon Radiation Health and Safety Protection Services. The course will look at the past and the future regarding the science of radiology and if using a lead apron on all patients while using Digital techniques and equipment is necessary.

The instructor will also discuss how patients feel about this change and what is best for offices.

When: **Wednesday, February 24th, 2021**
7:00pm-8:00pm

Cost: **Register prior to Feb. 1, 2021: \$10.00**
Register after Feb. 1, 2021: \$15.00

To Register: Please send check or money order (made out to ODAA)to:

Bonnie Marshall
13908 NE River Bend Rd.
Battle Ground, WA 98604

Name: _____ Phone#: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Office Name & City: _____

Registration is on a first come first serve basis. Cancellations must be received two weeks prior to the course for consideration of a refund.

The opinions expressed by the speaker do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the ODAA Executive Board Members.

Questions:

E-mail Bonnie Marshall at mgrammabuns@aol.com

Requirements:

Participants will be required to:

1. Register for the class by sending in the registration form and money.
2. Instructor will send the attendee a sign in code prior to the zoom meeting.

A Certificate of Completion will be provided upon completion of the zoom class.



About the Instructor:

Bonnie Marshall
RDA, CDA, EFDA, EFODA, MADAA,
BA

*Bonnie Marshall taught at PCC and OHSU before retiring.

*Bonnie is very involved in the Oregon Dental Assistants Association as Secretary/Treasurer, Education Chairmen and Student Involvement Chairmen.

*Bonnie loves to teach and is looking forward to you being a part of this one hour zoom class.



CONTINUING EDUCATION



ADAA/ODAA members remember that there are over seventy on-line courses available. You don't need to worry about your CE credits, ADAA /ODAA has you covered. There are also several ADAA Webinars throughout the coming year. ODAA is planning on presenting a Zoom class each month starting in February. Your continued support of your association is proud to support your educational needs.

(Bonnie Marshall: mgrammabuns@aol.com)

STUDENT MEMBERS

Students please be on the look out for information regarding the "Student Involvement Award" from ODAA.

ODAA is honored to award one student from each CODA school in 2021.

(Bonnie Marshall: mgrammabuns@aol.com)



WHICH MASK SHOULD I USE?

Cloth face masks protect others from the wearer's respiratory droplets but do not protect the wearer against respiratory droplets from others.

Thus, cloth masks are not considered as personal protective equipment.

Chris H. Miller, PhD



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Thanks to the kind generosity of Presidential Aid, Katie Gander, Community Involvement Chair, Jill Lomax, was presented with numerous boxes of needed supplies intended for our military overseas. Our hope is that they reach them by Christmas.

DENTAL OFFICE AIR QUALITY DURING COVID-19



The Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP) through an educational grant by the Dental Quest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement (DQP) has developed *Best Practices for Infection Control in Dental Clinics during the COVID-19 Pandemic*.



This document is the work of many scientific infection control experts to help guide dental practices during the pandemic. The dental profession has been categorized by OSHA as overall a “Very High-Risk Category”. These

recommendations focus primarily on current interim regulations and guidelines. Several dental practice tips are suggested to help prevent disease transmission and to keep providers, staff and patients safe during dental visits.

The following are air quality recommendations to consider for heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) in a dental office:

- Make sure filtration efficiency is adjusted to the highest level for the current HVAC system
- Check on safely increasing level of outdoor air possible through the current HVAC system
- Leave exhaust fans running throughout the day and up to two hours at the end of a workday
- Use portable HEPA air filtration units during and immediately following aerosol-generating procedures
- Additional consideration would be to use upper-room ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI)

It requires research and understanding of indoor air quality to make decisions about what is best for a dental office, especially during the pandemic. The following is a summary of *Air Management and Infection Control in the Dental Office Post COVID-19* that can be found on the Henry Schein Library website. <https://henryscheinequipmentcatalog.com/content-library/air-management-infection-control/>

Dental professionals are vulnerable to fine and ultra-fine disease contaminants in the form of aerosol particles that can be absorbed in the blood stream through the lungs. Therefore, it is important to obtain an air quality expert to evaluate and recommend changes, updates or additions to the current system during the time of COVID-19 and in the future to reduce potential exposures to providers, staff and patients.

It is well-known that dental professionals are exposed to air-borne diseases through contact with saliva and aerosols generated during dental procedures but also the many chemicals (especially surface disinfectants) that are used throughout the work day. Poor indoor air quality is often the cause of fatigue, headaches, dryness and irritation of the eyes, nose and throat. Air quality is what many consider the “Next Level of Dental Protection”. The dental profession has rules and regulations regarding infection control but the focus on air quality is lacking and has not fully been addressed.

The following are “Best Practices for Aerosol Management Process” recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

1. *Source Control* is considered the most effective. Minimize (when possible) the use of aerosol generating equipment such as highspeed hand pieces and ultrasonic scalers.



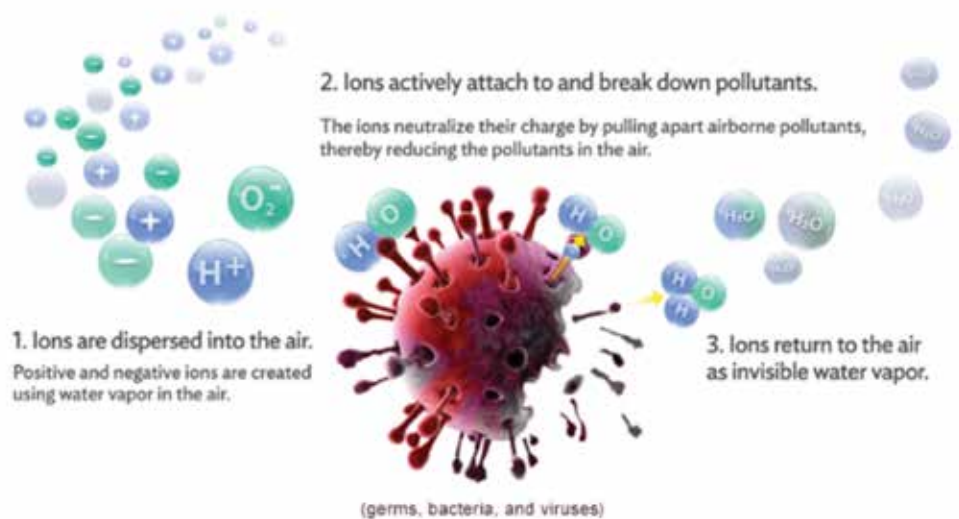
2. *Ventilation* is considered the second step which involves adjusting and upgrading the HVAC systems to confirm the air-exchanges are circulated at an acceptable level as well as using extraoral evacuation systems close to the source of the patient's mouth. It is important to hire a professional HVAC technician to make adjustments or improvements to the current dental office system.



3. *Air Cleaning or Air Purification Systems* (APS) are considered an additional layer to reduce air contaminants. Air filters, electronic air cleaners and ionizers used to remove airborne particles are some of the options. This layer of protection can be used independently or combined with other methods such as *High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) and Ultraviolet (UV) Light systems*.



Ionization is capable of causing particles to attach to surfaces or become neutralized rather than remaining suspended in the air. This reduces the chances of bacteria, viruses and/or chemicals from being inhaled into the respiratory tract.



It may be that we are unable to completely eliminate the risks of airborne particles in the dental office. However, the proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), gloves, face masks, eye protection, protective clothing alone, can drastically reduce exposure to infectious air particles. In addition, proper surface disinfection can prevent providers, staff and patients from indirect transmission of disease.

COVID has been a “game-changer” for all of us and especially in the “high-risk” profession of dentistry. We are learning “as-we-go” which will ultimately educate and prepare us as we move forward into the future.

Ginny Jorgensen

OREGON BOARD OF DENTISTRY

INFECTION CONTROL RULES



Although there are no defined educational requirements regarding infection control training for dental assistants employed in a dental practice there are some set rules that address infection control in the dental office.

These rules are listed in the State of Oregon Board of Dentistry Dental Practice Act that can be found online at https://www.oregon.gov/dentistry/Documents/Dental_Practice_Act_2019_Legislative_Session.pdf

There are two rules that address infection control that you should be aware of and adhere to in your dental practice:

Division 12, Standards of Practice, Infection Control Guidelines, 818-012-0040

In determining what constitutes unacceptable patient care with respect to infection control, the Board may consider current infection control guidelines such as those of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Dental Association. (1) Additionally, licensees must comply with the following requirements: (a) Disposable gloves shall be worn whenever placing fingers into the mouth of a patient or when handling blood or saliva contaminated instruments or equipment. Appropriate hand hygiene shall be performed prior to gloving. (b) Masks and protective eyewear or chin-length shields shall be worn by licensees and other dental care workers when spattering of blood or other body fluids is likely. (c) Between each patient use, instruments or other equipment that come in contact with body fluids shall be sterilized. (d) Environmental surfaces that are contaminated by blood or saliva shall be disinfected with a chemical germicide which is mycobactericidal at use. (e) Impervious backed paper, aluminum foil, or plastic wrap may be used to cover surfaces that may be contaminated by blood or saliva and are difficult or impossible to disinfect. The cover shall be replaced between patients. (f) All contaminated wastes and sharps shall be disposed of according to any governmental requirements. (2) Licensees must comply with the requirement that heat sterilizing devices shall be tested for proper function by means of a biological monitoring system that indicates micro-organisms kill each calendar week in which scheduled patients are treated. Testing results shall be retained by the licensee for the current calendar year and the two preceding calendar years.

Division 42, Dental Assisting, Infection Control 818-042-0030

The supervising dentist shall be responsible for assuring that dental assistants are trained in infection control, bloodborne pathogens and universal precautions, exposure control, personal protective equipment, infectious waste disposal, Hepatitis B and C and post exposure follow-up.

Ginny Jorgensen

THE SUPPORT OF YOUR PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

As we learn to live, work and navigate during the COVID-19 pandemic it's important for us as individuals, dental assistants and family members to stay "in touch" with others who are experiencing similar situations.

Belonging to community groups can provide encouragement and support. For those who go to work in a dental office every day the Oregon Dental Assistants Association (ODAA) is your connection to other professionals who may be facing the same challenges. Whether you are new to the career of dental assisting or have been in the field for several years, there is most likely someone who may be facing the same daily decisions and can help. It might just be someone who will listen or it can be someone who can provide guidance that you have not been aware even exists. Whatever your needs are or how you may be able to provide support to someone else, ODAA would like to hear your story.

Are you working in the dental office? What are the challenges? What have you found that helps you navigate during the pandemic? Did you get laid-off? Have you made a decision to leave the profession? We would like to hear the story of our followers and how we as your professional organization may



be able to help by connecting you to others.

For those who are currently new to Oregon or are being trained on-the-job, the following information may be helpful in obtaining an Oregon Expanded Function Dental Assistant (OR-EFDA) Certificate.

The Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) is a testing agency the Oregon Board of Dentistry (OBD) is contracted with to provide the Radiation Health & Safety (RHS) and the OR-EFDA application, testing and certificate process. There are requirements that must be completed to obtain an EFDA certificate in the state of Oregon. Several different pathways are available to

complete the process. The first step is to choose the pathway that matches your education and experience.

Prior to starting the process answer these following questions:

1. Do you currently hold a DANB RHS Certificate from another state?
2. Did you graduate from a Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) Dental Assisting Program?

If you are interested or know someone who is, please go to the ODAA website for more information and guidance on how to navigate this process. <http://www.oregondentalassistants.com/>

Ginny Jorgensen



The Oregon Dental Association’s Annual Meeting Council has made the very difficult decision to transition the 2021 Oregon Dental Conference to a virtual platform.

There are many reasons for this decision, but it is mainly due to the challenges and restrictions that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to large in-person conferences and the goal of keeping all ODC participants safe. We know that there is hope of a vaccine being released soon, but with much uncertainty and the significant planning required to offer a virtual ODC experience, the Annual Meeting Council determined that this transition should be made now and will remain a permanent decision for our 2021 conference.

With this decision, came the extremely challenging task of reducing the normal 100 courses to the 45 that will be presented on the virtual platform. Regrettably, some of our ODAA courses are among those that will not be offered as part of the virtual ODC.

The 2021 Virtual ODC/ODAA courses and speakers will be as follows:

Speaker	Topic	Course(s)	Course Length
Sam Bae, DDS, MD	SDB/Sleep Apnea	Screening and Treating Patients with Sleep Disordered Breathing: From Infancy to Adulthood	1.5 Hours
Daniel Petrisor, DMD, MD, FACS	Implantology	Simultaneous Bone Augmentation and Implant Placement: My Experience with the AlloGraft Bone Ring	1 Hour

The Oregon Dental Association thanks us for our time, our flexibility, and for being able to work with them through the sudden cancellation of our 2020 conference and now this transition for our 2021 conference. We genuinely hope to have our 2022 conference back up and running as an in-person conference and we can all gather again to connect, learn, and grow.

Thank you so much.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As a professional dental assistant, we work every day to connect with people in a positive way. Whether you are a chairside assistant, office manager, educator, or another type of dental assistant, you dedicate yourself to providing compassion and care in every encounter you have.

As a state component for the nation's largest, oldest professional organization for dental assistants, the Oregon Dental Assistants Association (ODAA) has committed themselves to advancing the dental assistant and the dental assisting profession in all manners. Widely recognized as the voice of dental assisting in Oregon, the ODAA has been a leader in industry since 1940. By providing comradery, leadership, and professional activities in our state, these volunteers have been elevating

the profession for over 80 years.

We are working for you. You will find a complete listing of ODAA's volunteers on our website or within this publication. Many, many hours are given by them. My thanks to each one of them for their tireless efforts in all that they do and have accomplished.

What can the Oregon Dental Assistants do for you? By being a member of this esteemed organization, you have access to over 250 continuing education hours for free. Three publications, easily accessible online. \$50,000. of liability insurance plus many other benefit all listed for you on our website.

Dental Assistant Recognition Week will be here before we know it. I hope your office



plans something special because you all deserve to be recognized. March 7-13, 2021. Please let us know what your office does to make the week special. With your permission, we would like to put it in a Keeping-in-Touch article so other members can see what fun activities your office had. Send an article and pictures to ODAA, PO Box 18305, Salem, 97305

As we move forward into the new year, I wish you all well with many blessings.

Linda Kihs.

2020 ADAA MERIT SCHOLAR AWARD RECIPIENT

The ADAA Merit Scholar Award is to honor those dental assisting students who exhibit proficiency in four-handed dentistry and exemplify the critical contribution an educated dental assistant makes to the success of clinical outcomes, patient satisfaction and improved office efficiency. Recipients of this award also embody the qualities presented by Juliette A. Southard that include loyalty, courtesy and professionalism.

Oregon's 2020 ADAA Merit Scholar Award was presented to La Kao Vang from Portland Community College.

2020 JULIETE A. SOUTHARD SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

The Juliette A. Southard Scholarship Program is named for the founder of the American Dental Assistants Association. Established in 1929, the program awards scholarships to dental assisting students and dental assistants interested in furthering their education in the field of dental assisting.

Oregon's 2020 Juliette Southard Scholarship recipient was Yelizaveta Shubina from Chemeketa Community College.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2019-2020 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER... ASHLEY KINGSFORD!

Hello, my name is Ashley Kingsford. I knew soon after graduating high school that I wanted to get in to the health care field. I just wasn't sure which part that would be. After spending many days with my aunt, who is an orthodontic assistant I thought that dental assisting might be the career for me.



After high school though, things changed and life happened. I took a job as a daycare provider and preschool teaching assistant. I loved it and ended up staying there for a little over ten years! I always pushed the idea of going to school and doing what I truly wanted to out of my head. I always made excuses and told myself that I couldn't do that type of work, that I wasn't smart enough, or even good enough to hold such a career. Fast forward to when I met my amazing husband, Cody. He was always there supporting my dreams and pushing me to pursue them. One night I applied for the Dental Assisting program at Central Oregon Community College and got accepted.

I was terrified at first and thought that I was in over my head, but soon realized that this is something that I could and would do. Here I am, a COCC graduate of the Dental Assisting program, as well as the student achievement winner this year! As a newly certified dental assistant with my expanded functions certification, I split my time between the dental office I work at and working in the very program that I have recently graduated from.

When I am not working, you can usually find me at home with my two lovely dogs, Nix and Scully, and my husband. Being born and raised Oregonians, we both enjoy hiking the beautiful landscapes that central Oregon has to offer. When we aren't out and about in nature, I am usually curled up with a good book and a nice cup of coffee! I am also a huge horror buff and Star Wars fan. So if I am not reading I am either getting caught up in the tragic saga of the Skywalker's or getting my spook on.

Ashley was voted by her peers, and confirmed by faculty to have earned this outstanding award.

This is what her faculty said of her.

Ashley has proven herself to be a dedicated student who always did her very best! She never stopped at doing only what is expected, but consistently went above and beyond striving for perfection. Ashley is a strong team player who has time and time again been supportive of her peer's learning as well. She exhibits the best attributes of a dental assistant...caring for patients and team members, she is driven to do what needs to be done and to anticipate her dentist's needs.

Ashley has proved to be a very positive role model to everyone in the program. Ashley's persistence to always give 110% in her course work as well as in her labs was an inspiration to both her peers and her instructors. Her determination to excel in all of her courses and labs also inspired her peers to excel as well. Ashley's strong work ethic as well as her kind demeanor will enable her to succeed in the dental world and beyond.

Ashley is a model student. She is hard working, she is always present, and she is a joy to have in class. Ashley showed during the year but especially during Spring term, that she is adaptable and can overcome anything thrown at her. She has such a positive attitude, is a team player, and has a passion for learning which will take her far in the dental field and in life.

CONGRATULATIONS ASHLEY!

Ashley is currently working at Dr. Branson Turley's office in Redmond, Oregon. She has also become a Dental Assisting Teaching Assistant at her alma mater, Central Oregon Community College. Ashley is now demonstrating her positive work ethic in the dental lab where she is offering her knowledge and skills to help teach and the next cohort of dental assisting students. Welcome Ashley! The college and students are blessed to have her aboard!

Lynn Murray

Dental Assisting Program Director
Central Oregon Community College

A HISTORY OF DENTAL ASSISTING CERTIFICATION

A look at more than 65 years of dental assisting certification and what's to come

By Hanna Aronovich

Last year marked the 65th anniversary of national dental assisting certification, which was established by the American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA) in 1948. Since then, much has changed, as the importance of dental assistants in the delivery of quality oral healthcare has become more evident and the scope of dental assisting duties has increased greatly. Dental assisting provides many opportunities for growth and development.

The ADAA established the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. (DANB) as a separate nonprofit corporation in 1980. The American Dental Association has officially recognized DANB as the national certification board for dental assistants since 1989, when the recognition criteria for a national certification board for dental assistants were established.

- Today, DANB offers four national certifications:
- Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)
- Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA)
- Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistant (CPFDA)
- Certified Restorative Functions Dental Assistant (CRFDA)

Earning and maintaining DANB certification has numerous benefits, including greater earning power,

personal pride, employer recognition, and professional advantages.

“DANB offers certifications for dental assistants at many stages of their careers,” explains DANB Executive Director Cindy Durley, MEd, MBA. “DANB is committed to offering valid dental assisting certifications and exams to elevate the profession, to benefit employers and others in the oral healthcare profession, and to protect the public.”

A Historic Relationship

The story behind what we know as DANB certification began nearly a century ago with the inception of the first dental assisting membership association. Many dental assistants don't realize the historic relationship between DANB and the ADAA. Today, the two organizations are independent of each other, although they often collaborate.

In 1924, Juliette A. Southard founded the ADAA. According to the ADAA, Southard worked for a New York dentist, Dr. Henry Fowler, in the early 1900s. In 1921, Southard formed a local dental assistants' society in New York. However, she envisioned forming an organization that would bring dental assistants together from across the country. Southard and Jessie Ellsworth, president of the Chicago and Cook County Dental Assistants Association, were allowed to attend the 1923 American Dental Association convention. The following year, the ADAA was officially incorporated in Chicago, IL.

Certification: A Milestone for Assistants

For the next 24 years, the ADAA was hard at work, establishing state constituents, growing its membership numbers, and developing a national certification that would recognize the knowledge and professionalism of dental assistants nationwide. The July/August 1947 issue of *The Dental Assistant* had an article titled “Certification for Dental Assistants,” which declared the association's intent to establish a certification.

The dream was realized in 1948 when the association founded an affiliate certification board, called the American Dental Assistants Certification Board, Inc. The first CDA certifications were awarded later that year. These efforts were the building blocks for DANB's CDA certification.

An Independent Board

In 1980, the American Dental Assistants Certification Board became a separately incorporated organization and changed its name to the Dental Assisting National Board. In the subsequent years, many changes occurred in dental assisting certification—all with the goals of elevating the profession and protecting the public.

DANB's mission is to promote the public good by providing credentialing services to the dental community. Over the years, DANB has evolved to serve an increasing number of stakeholders in the dental assisting community, including

educators, regulators, dentists, federal agencies, and oral healthcare organizations. In all its work, DANB strives to follow the guiding principles of trust, communication, respect, initiative, and teamwork.

DANB-Certified Dental Assistant

DANB's CDA exam, as we know it today, has evolved over many years. Following passage of the federal Consumer-Patient Radiation Health and Safety Act of 1981, DANB began developing the Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) component exam in 1982. The RHS exam was first administered in 1983 and was incorporated as a separate component of the CDA exam in 1985.

Following the 1987 discovery of the human immunodeficiency virus as the cause of AIDS, DANB identified leaders in infection control in the oral healthcare environment to develop a separate Infection Control (ICE) exam for dental assistants. In the early 1990s, DANB's ICE exam committee members included well-known experts such as Dr. James Cottone, Dr. John Molinari, and Dr. Chris Miller, and the DANB certificants who chaired the committee, including Connie Garland and Jackie Krueger.

DANB's ICE exam was first administered in 1991, and became the third component of DANB's CDA certification exam, joining RHS and General Chairside Assisting (GC) in 1993. This established the "laddering" approach to certification, with each of the CDA component exams (GC, RHS, and ICE) offered and scored separately, and the CDA certification awarded to dental assistants who passed all three component exams within a 5-year period.

Today, more than 35,000 dental assistants hold CDA certification. Since 1997, more than 130,550 assistants have passed DANB's RHS exam and more than 71,175 have passed DANB's ICE exam.

"DANB's CDA exam is a national certification that verifies the knowledge required to perform the critical duties that dental assistants do each day," Durley explains. "We are proud of the growth our flagship certification and component exams have had over the years."

Certifications for a Growing Field

The CDA certification is just one of the certifications DANB offers. For more than 25 years, DANB has also offered the COA certification for dental assistants who work in orthodontic settings.

Janice Tunis, CDA, COA, CDPMA, has worked in dentistry for 33 years and believes in the rewards DANB certification brings. "I have been employed in orthodontics and practice management for most of my career," she says. "My credentials prove that I am who I say I am, and that I know what I say I know."

More recently, DANB launched two additional certification programs: CPFDA and CRFDA. "DANB's CPFDA certification was introduced in 2011 and includes component exams on Coronal Polish, Sealants, Topical Anesthetic, and Topical Fluoride," explains Durley. "We saw there was a need for a preventive functions certification because so many states have expanded the duties that assistants are allowed to perform." Currently, dental assistants holding DANB's CPFDA certification work in 42 different states.

Following a year of development and a year of pretesting, DANB introduced the CRFDA certification program in May 2013. Dental assistants in 32 different states have earned CRFDA certification. Those who hold CRFDA certification have passed exams in Anatomy, Morphology, and Physiology (AMP); Impressions (IM); Isolation (IS); Sealants (SE); Temporaries (TMP); and Restorative Functions (RF) and have met eligibility requirements by education or experience.

"DANB is committed to promoting public protection and enhancing dental-assistant job satisfaction by providing a defined career ladder for the dental assisting profession," Durley says. "The CRFDA certification program is one way DANB is meeting the always-advancing and ever-changing needs of the field."

Dental assistants have many reasons to earn CRFDA certification, such as demonstrating commitment and professionalism to the field, setting an example to others, and maintaining a professional edge.

Julie Davis, CDA, CPFDA, CRFDA, said her certifications are an asset to the office and a point of pride when working with patients. "I felt it was really important to demonstrate to my patients that I go the extra mile," she explains. "It's a way for me to improve myself and benefit the office. I learned so much in the studying process."

Many dental assisting educators and program directors said CRFDA certification was something they believed they had the responsibility to earn—for themselves, their programs, and their students. "I decided to earn CRFDA certification to

further my professional career and show my students what is out there and how much they can achieve,” said Kim Plate, CDA, CPFDA, CRFDA.

In addition to DANB’s CDA, COA, CPFDA, and CRFDA certifications, DANB also previously offered two other certifications: Certified Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Assistant (COMSA) and Certified Dental Practice Management Administrator (CDPMA). “Both the COMSA and CDPMA certifications were introduced in 1983,” recalls Durley. “These certifications have since been discontinued, but we continue to honor the nearly 190 COMSAs and more than 300 CDPMAs who maintain their certification statuses by meeting DANB’s recertification requirements annually.”

After DANB’s Board of Directors reviews feedback from various national dental organizations and other communities of interest this year, DANB plans to introduce the Certified Entry Level Dental Assistant (CELDA) certification program. CELDA certification is intended for entry-level or trained-on-the-job dental assistants who do not yet qualify for DANB’s CDA certification. CELDA certification will help state regulatory agencies identify dental assistants who have completed dental assisting programs in high school or community college settings, or within the U.S. Department of Labor’s Job Corps program, which are not accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation. CELDA certification can also provide feedback to regulators and employers on these dental assistants’ knowledge-based competencies in concepts important to functions

commonly delegated to entry-level dental assistants.

“Dental assistants enter the profession through many different pathways,” Durley explains. “Many are trained-on-the-job and must therefore wait at least 2 years before being eligible for DANB’s CDA certification exam. CELDA certification will help to retain quality, motivated dental assistants who are recognized as members of the oral healthcare team. Many dental assistants, as well as the dental community and the public, will benefit from the availability of an entry-level certification.”

Benefits of Certification

The benefits of DANB certification are far reaching, positively impacting not only the dental assistants who maintain certification, but also employers, patients, and the dental community.

DANB certification elevates the profession, increases patient safety, and provides dental assistants who hold certification with a source of personal pride. DANB’s exams and certifications are currently recognized or required by 39 dental boards to perform dental assisting functions. In these states, DANB certification is one way or, in some cases, the only way to qualify to perform expanded functions or meet state radiography requirements. In addition, because it’s a national credential, DANB certification makes state-to-state job relocation easier.

At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs requires DANB certification for dental assistant promotions. The U.S. Air Force requires its airmen enrolled in the Air Force Dental Services’ dental assisting

education program to complete DANB’s RHS and ICE exams. Major General Gerard Caron, DMD, the Assistant Surgeon General for Dental Services, Office of the U.S. Surgeon General for the Air Force, encourages airmen working as dental assistants to earn DANB certification.

Greater earning power is another key benefit to certification. According to DANB’s 2012 Salary Survey, DANB certificants can earn as much as \$1.54 more per hour compared with non-certified assistants. Also, DANB certificants maintain a professional advantage in the job market. Dentists and other employers often look for or require DANB certification because DANB certificants can help improve office efficiency, productivity, and profitability—as well as improve the patients’ experience.

“From my experience, DANB CDAs are more flexible and able to adapt to the different ways that doctors like to work,” notes Dr. Lisa Gushin, a dentist with her own practice. “DANB CDAs also tend to require less training and are easy to integrate into the practice, which can save valuable time for a busy dentist.”

Some employers also prefer DANB certificants because CDAs tend to show high employer loyalty, averaging 8 years in their current positions. “One of our CDAs has only missed 2 days of work in 3 years — and that’s only because one day she was so sick, we forced her to go home,” Gushin recalls.

In the dental office, DANB certificants stand out as professionals in the industry, which translates to improved marketability in the job

market. DANB certification demonstrates to colleagues and employers that the dental assistant has passed rigorous exams and stays current with continuing education. As a result, many DANB certificants benefit from greater job satisfaction and are often role models for their colleagues.

Networking and employment opportunities are also available to DANB certificants. Many employers and recruiting firms turn to DANB for mailing lists of certificants to aid in staffing and recruitment efforts. DANB certificants can also post their resumes on dentalworkers.com.

DANB provides its certificants with:

- A professional, personalized certificate, suitable for framing
- A wallet-sized certification card
- A certification lapel pin
- Direct delivery of the Certified Press quarterly newsletter
- Anniversary milestone gifts

Dental Assisting Requirements and Resources

One of the most common questions DANB hears is: “How can I perform expanded functions?”

Unfortunately, because every state is different, there is no simple answer. In fact, not all states use the title Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA). The United States has more than 40 job titles for dental assistants. (Editor’s Note: To read more about which expanded functions that states allow and don’t allow, be sure to read the feature article from a previous issue of *Inside Dental Assisting*.)

Because duties, job titles, and requirements vary from state to state, dental assistants need to be informed about the duties that they are allowed to perform or are prohibited from performing, and any education, exam, certification, or other requirements in their states and any state in which they plan to work.

Another popular question from dental assistants is: “What do I need to do to meet state requirements?”

Fortunately, the answer is simple: DANB has in-depth resources to help dental assistants navigate their careers.

DANB has compiled the dental assisting requirements for each state. To read about each state’s job titles, requirements, and allowable duties, visit the “Meet State Requirements” section of DANB’s website at www.danb.org and click on the “search by state” map.

“DANB’s state resources are a useful tool for dental professionals who are looking for the latest information on dental assisting regulations and requirements—all in one place,” Durley says. “All of this is on DANB’s website, so the information can be accessed at the click of a button.”

And although there are not uniform requirements for dental assistants, many states recognize or require DANB certification and exams to perform expanded duties. Passing DANB’s RHS exam or earning CDA certification could be the foundation for performing more dental assisting functions and pursuing career growth.

DANB and the Dental Community

To fulfill its mission of public protection, DANB is committed to developing psychometrically sound exams and certifications. That’s why DANB is a member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence and DANB’s CDA and COA certification programs are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). DANB will be applying for NCCA accreditation of its CPFDA and CRFDA certification programs this year.

DANB’s Board of Directors consists of seven directors elected by DANB after nomination by organizations, including the American Dental Association, the American Dental Assistants Association, the American Association of Dental Boards, and the American Dental Education Association. In addition, a certificant-at-large and a public member are elected to serve on DANB’s board for a total of nine board directors. Therefore, when changes to DANB policies and programs are first considered, communities of interest are involved directly at the board level.

To assess the needs and opinions in the dental community and to stay current with the scope and practice of dental assisting, DANB conducts periodic surveys of its certificants and other dental assistants. This understanding informs many important decisions, including the development of current and future exams and certifications.

All of DANB’s exams are developed by committees that are comprised of dental

professionals from organizations with members on DANB's Board of Directors, and from other professional oral healthcare organizations, such as the Academy of General Dentistry; the Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention; the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology; and the American Association of Orthodontists. DANB exam committees make recommendations to DANB's board about national certifications, exams, and other credentialing topics. DANB certificants play a vital role in exam development, often serving on various exam committees.

Dental assistants, certificants, employers, state regulators, and others in the dental community can be assured that DANB always has and always will continue to meet the industry standards and best practices to uphold the value of its certifications for many years to come.

About the Author

Hanna Aronovich
Communications and
Public Relations Manager
Dental Assisting National
Board, Inc.

DENTAL ASSISTANT RECOGNITION WEEK

Dental assistant Recognition Week (also known as DARW) is held the first full week in March every year since 1977. Dental assistants are a key part of the dental practice year-round, but they get a special week dedicated to them. Dental assistants are committed to professional development and quality dental care.

There are more than 200,000 dental assistants in the United States. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) says more than 58,000 new openings for dental assistants are expected through 2024.

March 7-13, 2021 has been designated by the American Dental Assistants Association as the perfect time to acknowledge and recognize the versatile, multi-talented member of your dental team. Dentists in the United States and Canada will celebrate by honoring their dental assistants for the variety of duties they perform.

"Dental Assistants - Our Heart Goes Into Every Smile" is the theme for 2021 and acknowledges the growing importance of dentistry's role in health care and the responsibilities of dental assistants.



SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION!

March 7-13, 2021

Dental Assistants Recognition Week™

Today's dental assistants strengthen the entire practice and enhance patient satisfaction around the world. Dental assistants are committed to professional development and quality dental care.

March 7-13, 2021, has been designated by the **American Dental Assistants Association** as the perfect time to acknowledge and recognize this versatile, multi-talented member of your dental team.



**American
Dental
Assistants
Association**

COVID-19

and Dental Assisting Education

In March of 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic closed all “In Person” teaching in Dental and Allied Dental educational programs. This put students in jeopardy of not graduating in 2020. Dental Assisting Program faculty throughout the state met this challenge by becoming creative and innovative educators. They devised new methods to teach essential skills which enabled the cohort of students to complete their programs, graduate on time, enter their chosen field, and provide greatly needed dental assistants to dental practices across Oregon. Kudos to these inventive educators!

Many of these Dental Assisting Programs are accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). Programs must follow CODA requirements to maintain accreditation. During this time

CODA provided temporary flexibility and Dental Assisting Programs submitted reports as to how they would meet CODA standards during the pandemic.

Unfortunately the new academic year still finds the pandemic upon us. The Commission on Dental Accreditation conducted a special, closed meeting on October 13, 2020 to discuss options for the class of 2020-2021. Here is an excerpt from an e-mail sent to accredited Dental Assisting Programs.

“During this special meeting, the Commission considered the temporary flexibility guidance that may exist related to ongoing interruption of education for the Class of 2021. The Commission also considered accreditation matters related to interruption of education reports for educational programs.

For information on COVID-19 Updates, go to The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) <https://www.ada.org/en/coda/accreditation/accreditation-news/covid-19-updates>

*Please keep in mind that all Commission-accredited education programs must submit, **by March 2021**, a report on interruption of education for the Class of 2021. This report is due whether or not the program has implemented temporary flexibility for the Class of 2021.”*

We know these dedicated Dental Assisting Program faculty will again face these challenges to provide students with quality education during the continued pandemic.

Lynn Murray



4TH AND MONTGOMERY BUILDING;

A Partnership Of Portland's Most Significant Institutions



It is with pride and excitement Portland announces that 4th and Montgomery is home to beautiful new building that will not only enhance the city's landscape but is doing so by bringing together 4 institutions under one green roof following sustainable and responsible guidelines.

Portland State University (PSU), Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), Portland Community College (PCC) and City of Portland have joined forces to complete a project that will benefit the entire community. It will house a variety of occupants including the PSU Graduate School of Education, the OHSU/PSU School of Public Health, the PCC Dental Programs and the City of Portland Bureau of Planning Sustainability.

The building is a seven-story, 175,000 Gross Square Feet (GSF) structure in a dense area of the city. This \$104 million education and health facility is slated to open in winter 2021. Public transit is available on all four sides of the building while landscaped outdoor spaces for walking and seating are planned. The historic apartment structure to the south was taken into consideration by setting the building back from the apartments and creating a natural and open courtyard between the two buildings.

The ground floor will be host to an open lobby and retail spaces including a central stairway leading to the second floor where shared classrooms and resources will be found for all three educational institutions. PCC's dental programs; dental hygiene and dental assisting will occupy the 3rd floor. By relocating these programs to the new facility PCC is capable of educating more than 100 students annually. The college's dental clinic serves as a teaching facility for students and offers low-cost oral healthcare services to about 2,000 patients a year. The OHSU/PSU School of Public Health will be located on the 5th and 6th floors while the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability will be on the top floor. All of the programs are focused on serving the public in a collaborative effort by providing outreach opportunities.

The 4th and Montgomery Building has been designed using the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) which is a green building certification program used worldwide. There are many sustainable features in this building that include a green roof that buffers rainwater, solar panels to offset energy costs; daylighting using solar tubes and a dedicated outside air system (DOAS) to name just a few.

by Ginny Jorgensen



News & Upcoming Events

January 13, 2021

ODAA Executive Board Meeting

February 24, 2021

Continuing Education Class

March 7-13, 2021

Dental Assistants Recognition Week

March 16, 2021

ODAA Executive Board Meeting

March 25, 2021

Continuing Education Class

April 8-10, 2021

Oregon Dental Conference

May 12, 2021

ODAA Executive Board Meeting

September 14, 2021

ODAA Executive Board Meeting

The Oregon Board of Dentistry Should Become Your new Best Friend

In this new world of working in a dental office, the information that the Oregon Board of Dentistry has and shares is the latest and most important for any dental office working with patients. Along with OBD, OSHA, ADA, OSAP, and CDC are all vital sources to be found.

Be safe: wear a mask, wash your hands, and do a good check-in for every patient. Do what you are doing and do it right!

Mary Harrison



MISSION STATEMENT

“To advance the careers of dental assistants and to advocate for the dental assisting profession in matters of education, professional activities, credentialing and legislation. To promote the ideals and growth of the Association which aid in the accessibility and delivery of quality oral health care to the public.”

DENTAL ASSISTANTS OATH

“In my practice as a dental assistant, I affirm my commitment to improve the oral health of the public, and to promote high standards of quality dental care. I shall faithfully respect the Principles of Professional Ethics by the profession.

I pledge to continually improve my professional knowledge and skills, and to uphold the highest standards of professional competence and personal conduct in the interests of the dental assisting profession and the public I serve.”