



Hello,

My name is Deanna Saba, I am one the dental assisting instructors at Medina County Career Center. I wanted to introduce myself to you whether you have already enrolled into this program or you are still thinking if this where you want to be.

I wanted to share with you how I started as a dental assistant and why I am an instructor.

My story begins at the age of 19. I attempted college and found I was not equipped at that time to complete the school work. I had to get a job so I signed up with a temporary placement agency. At that time there were not specific agencies for dental. I was placed in a dental office; it had one dentist, one hygienist, one front office and me. They trained me in the office which they will do now if you have the personality to learn. The state regulated less for dental assistants back then. I learned a lot. I worked at a couple more offices and realized I wanted to be able to do more in a person's mouth and help the dentist more. I worked for 10 years before I sat for any certification test. I loved (love now too) the regimen of dentistry. "Everything has its place". Procedures were the same so I felt I could learn them and be ready for the dentist when he/she was ready. Working in the dental field helped me to be more organized in my personal life also. I found that I loved teeth, each curve, each groove and each mouth that was similar but different.

I wanted to be an EFDA (Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary). I wanted to help the dentist serve his patients timelier. I wanted the one on one time with the patient. You know it's the relationships that bring people back to the same dental office.

I needed to be certified as a dental assistant before I could enroll into the EFDA program. I was married, had two children by then and I was working fulltime. A lot of doubt filled my mind. Could I pass this first test? Could I discipline myself to the work the EFDA program demanded? My support system said "DO IT!" "Just make it happen." I took the state board (CODA) and the DANB National Board but I didn't pass either one. So I went back to the books and the other resources I had and took the DANB again because it was offered again before the CODA. I finally passed and enrolled into the EFDA program. It was all up to me to perform in the classroom. I used to blame my parents for my inabilities to do things. Now I held responsibilities that they had no control over; keeping my house, feeding my family, being to work on time, taking care of my children, paying my bills. I had to make it happen for me.

Every day I went to the dental office I wanted it more and more. I sat for the state dental board test for the EFDA program and kept telling myself – "Just try and try with the intent to succeed and pass." I did! The first time!

I do know that I am not done learning because every filling I place there is challenge I face. Even though Ohio doesn't require me to keep my dental assisting certification current, I do it because I'm required to

do Continuing Education and I learn something new every time. I love being efficient. I love helping the dentist or the hygienist. I hold these positions in high regard. They are part of my team.

I became an educator after 29 years of working the field. I had friends that encouraged me to share my knowledge and passion for dental assisting. Even as an educator I continue to learn about dentistry, people and myself. Being an educator is like having a garden you start by seed. You nurture and watch the seeds sprout. You feed the seedlings and watch them grow. You maintain care and nurturing which includes pruning (in people talk that is correction) until they bloom. Even in the blooming stage it's important to keep a watchful eye. Then the fruit appears and it's sooooo exciting. I love the fruit after all the hard work.

In the past four years I have had the privilege to stand beside 39 people and help them bloom and bear fruit in their lives. I enjoy having the connection with any of them that are willing. This program is set up with two educators, for a reason. Each dental office is similar but different just like teeth, just like fillings, just like mouths. I see value in students experiencing different views that care the value. I am privileged to have an outstanding teaching partner. Together we make an awesome dental team.

If you are enrolled or thinking of enrolling I can assure you that together we will walk with you side by side (no hand holding please) on the beginning of your journey into dental field.

I am excited for the new school year!

See you soon.

*Deanna Saba CDA, EFDA*