California Society of Medical Assistants

AAMA National Conference

2nd Delegate Report

Orlando, Florida

September 21-25, 2023

This Delegate was nominated at the 2023 CSMA Annual Meeting as 3rd delegate. This Delegate moved up to 2nd Delegate as CSMA did not have a Vice President. The National Conference was located at Lake Buena Vista, Florida at the Hilton. This Delegate flew into Orlando on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, and was graciously picked up at the airport by Delegate Nancy Lizon, CMA (AAMA), and her spouse Mark, and hosted at their timeshare for the night. There was much discussion prior to this conference will it proceed or will it not due to increased severe hurricane warnings? Flying into Florida during hurricane season is unpredictable, the plane almost had to detour to Jacksonville due to weather and upon arrival, and the baggage claim area was delayed due to lightning.

Thursday, September 23, 2023, this Delegate woke up to blue skies, and an adventurous lunch at a local restaurant “High Tide Harry’s Reel Seafood” with an assortment of the South popular fried frog legs, gator bites, okra, and dill pickles!

The AAMA used the Cvent App for CEU session tracking and printing of badges this year. This was the first year using this type of Conference App. Each CEU session allowed a certain number of participants to each of the session. Florida had a maximum capacity allowed in the conference rooms- no standing allowed. This year they scanned entering into sessions not exiting. The CEUs were posted to attendee’s AAMA accounts after the conference in a timely manner. CSMA Delegates, Lizon and this Delegate were the first to register and print their badges using this new system. After registering at the hotel, a short walk to Disney Springs to do a little sightseeing. President Nakano and Delegate James would be arriving late in the evening.

Friday, September 22, 2023, was the first day of the Conference. This Delegate attended the AAMA Board of Trustee Meeting (BOT). President Deborah Novak, CMA (AAMA) called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. called roll and went around the room for names and states of the gallery. Oral updates from the Executive Committee of their annual reports submitted in the conference packets.

The AAMA will continue to support the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (NCCRT). The CMA Today will have a name change and facelift. “Medical Assisting Today, the Magazine for Medical Assistants”. Digital download will be available. More updates to come as this will require a research audit. It takes about 330 + employees dedicated hours per issue. Members may be receiving email surveys about the wants and needs of our AAMA members regarding the website, **Michael Knight**, AAMA IT consultant states there has been a ton of progress this year and provided more details. They have been interviewing many members and are in the final stages of the updates. Don Balasa, CEO reviewed several points of his Keynote Address that he will be presenting on Saturday at the House of Delegates.

New AAMA logo items for sale of high-quality items: shawl with AAMA logo and jacket/ cardigan. You can purchase AAMA Logo Product: **Kuhl&#39s Hot Sportspot Inc**. or https://cincysportsshop.com/aama-apparel.php Go to the Corporate Apparel tab

Report of the Career Professional Development Committee - Development of an Assessment-Based Recognition in Medical Office Basics (ABR –MOB). This is to help uncredentialed individuals obtain skills for work in a medical office and will include medical terminology, basic coding, health care compliance, and more. You may take one segment or complete all sections for the ABR-OE. The ABR-MOB is not yet completed and is still in progress.

In the evening was the Welcome and Awards Celebrations, where we were welcomed to appetizers, ice cream novelties, old-fashioned root beer, and cream soda. The event was 1980’s themed. Our own CEO, and legal counsel Don Balasa, was the hit of the night. He was rad and totally awesome dressed in a “Miami Vice” ala James “Sonny” Crocket”

There were 3 winners: Don Balasa, IL, -Character, Paul Steele- FL (Rocker), and Dawn Bell-OH (including Roller-skates and ready for a party).

Please view the full list of the Twelve categories of the EXCEL AWARDS and the award winners on the AAMA Website [www.AAMA-NTL.ORG](http://www.AAMA-NTL.ORG) or follow the link: **https://rb.gy/5evq6**

An audio recording or video of the winners of the AAMA Rising Star Awards (Presented to Outstanding AAMA members in the early years of their medical assisting career and AAMA leadership journey by their state chapter and the Student Essay Award gave a heartfelt message of receiving the honor.

Saturday, September 23, 2023, the first session of the House of Delegates began at 8:00 am.

There were 39 states represented and 188 Delegates with 9 proxy votes per the Delegate's packet at the time of receipt.

The House of Delegates opened with VFW Post 4287 Honor Guard of Orlando, FL., presented the colors, and the Orlando Gay Choir sang an impressive rendition of the National Anthem and the room recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Don Balasa, JD, MBA, CEO-AAMA, Legal Counsel for the AAMA was the Keynote Speaker on:

*“The relationship of the AAMA Board of Trustees in relation to the Certifying Board (CB) of the AAMA and the Medical Assisting Education Review Board, the accreditation of the CB and the CMA (AAMA) Certification Program under the NCCA Standards and ISO 17024 and the roles of the AAMA Continuing Education Board as both a provider and approver of AAMA CEUs”.*

Remembrance- Mary Dyer, CMA (AAMA) gave the memorial in honor of her friend of 40 years, Past AAMA President Ann Naegele of Texas who passed away in July 2023. The Southwest Regional members wore a yellow silk ribbon rose on their lapel in honor of our dear friend.

For this Delegate, it seemed that there was an improved amount of time to ask our candidates questions since their last time as a Delegate for CSMA. The CSMA Delegates were one of the last to leave the session. The candidates were escorted by a member of the Executive Committee and walked down each row of Delegates. This was a good format as the other rows could also listen in to the other states' questions.

CSMA Delegates listened and asked additional questions. This Delegate felt each of the 9 candidates were very careful on how they responded and several were on the fence about their decision about Bylaw 4. Most were respectful that we all had our own opinions, which was ok. One candidate's body language while speaking near Connecticut and Georgia seemed very aggressive about her stand on this Bylaw 4. In an organization like AAMA, we should be able to agree and disagree. Sometimes decisions are not made on fact but by emotion. Two Bylaw sessions were available for Delegates pre-conference via Teams. This was an opportunity to discuss the meaning of the Bylaws and hear other Delegate and AAMA member’s opinions. This Delegate participated in, the Southwest Region Bylaws review, CSMA review and the AAMA Bylaws via Teams session by the AAMA Bylaws Chair- there were about 65 participants. All sessions had different views and opinions regarding the 2023 Bylaws.

*To date there are 368 CAAHEP schools- there are 7 in California and less in several other states*. Many of the AAMA Delegate States feel that our membership has declined because CMA (AAMA) does not have the support of CAAHEP schools, so our membership is dwindling. Below are several goals of the members running for AAMA office.

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| Promote- CAAHEP SCHOOLS  Diversifying our member base  Do no harm is our objective | Recruitment  Make AAMA Strong again  Contemporary MA | Amplify out members voices  Advanced education adjustment |

**LEADERSHIP SESSION**

On Sunday, September 24 this Delegate attended the Leadership meeting. The AAMA website is in the process of being revamped to make accessing information easier to find. The attending chapter leaders were asked:

**#1. What skills do effective leaders exhibit? #2. What tools do you use and want available?**

Each table worked together and created a list to present as a group, a scribed list of all answers will be distributed to the attending state leaders. Some “ideas” such as Facebook, Social Media, and State leader's information were already available on the website. The topics would be updated. Laminated resources were handed out on: Organizational structure of AAMA, How to Locate Reference materials on the AAMA Website, and how to find information on My Account was distributed to all attendees.

In the evening the President's Banquet where we salute our State Presidents and honor the hard work of President Deborah Novak and her Executive Committee and welcome our new President 2023-2024 Monica Case and our new Executive Committee. This delegate was honored to walk for CSMA President Joyce Nakano, CMA (AAMA). President Deborah Novak requested Don Balasa, CEO and Legal Counsel to review and clarify the outcome of Bylaws 23-4 and 23-5 (NOT ADOPTED- Active membership eligibility has changed after 23-4 was passed).

**Bylaw 23-4 ADOPTED- Clarification.**

**ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP**

#1- A CMA (AAMA) holding current status. ***May serve as a national officer, trustee, delegate/ alternate, and committee chair.***

#2- A Medical Assistant holding current status through a National Commission for Health Certifying Agency (NCCA). ***May serve as delegate or Committee Chair ONLY***

*Explanation of the 4 Categories- See the above subcategory. CCMA (NHA), CMA (AAMA), RMA (AMT), NCMA (NCCT).*

Rebecca Walker, CMA (AAMA) announced that the Maxine Williams Fund presented four scholarships two for $2,500.00 and two for $3,500.00. Funds collected at the 2023 Conference was $2611.01. After Rebecca left the microphone she was immediately brought back up. The AAMA Life Member Award was presented to Rebecca Walker, CMA (AAMA) from North Carolina. Rebecca makes each conference special with her quick wit and hilarious poetry that are part of every House of Delegates. She MC’d the Knowledge Bowl and had us in stitches. The acknowledgment of her contributions to AAMA and the honor of Life Member had her for the first time speechless!

The CSMA delegates departed on Monday, September 25. Last goodbyes and discussions with other attendees about the results of the new Bylaw decisions. Personal congratulations to our AAMA life member Rebecca Walker. Next year the AAMA conference will be in Grand Rapids Michigan.

This Delegate attended the following CEU sessions; Workplace Empathy, De-escalating Patient Agitation, The Other End of the Stethoscope, The Knowledge Bowl and What is Long Covid? All sessions were excellent.

This Delegate is honored to have this opportunity to participate in the 67th AAMA Annual Conference and to represent CSMA. It has been many years since serving in this position. There were so many new faces and it is evident that the AAMA has been preparing for years to make several structural changes to the organization. The term moving forward and making changes was heard a lot. Change is inevitable, but the past is our teacher.

Virginia Marquette, CMA (AAMA)

2nd Delegate CSMA