

her singing praises :

Meet the Medical Assistant
Ms. Rachel of Pediatrics



By Cathy Cassata

Cindy Dawson, CMA (AAMA), worked at a nursing home as a dietary aide and activities assistant when she felt a calling to advance her career. “I loved working with the residents, and the experience encouraged me to become a CNA [certified nursing assistant] and medication aide in 2020,” she says. “I have a big heart, and after years of seeing the residents pass away, I wanted to leave geriatrics because they were like family to me, and so much death became really hard.”

After nine years at the nursing home, she went into a medical assisting program while pregnant with her fourth child. “I went back to school three weeks after my C-section just so I could complete my courses and go to clinics,” she says.

After graduating and obtaining her CMA (AAMA)[®] certification in 2025, Dawson landed a job with the pediatrics

clinic where she had her practicum. She assists providers, rooms patients, and runs the clinic’s laboratory.

“I really wanted to work in pediatrics, so this is my dream job. As a mom myself, it feels like my calling to help other children and their parents,” says Dawson. She treats patients with extra compassion and care. “I treat them how I want my children treated at the pediatrician and engage with them so they are comfortable and at ease,” she says.

One of the physicians at the clinic nicknamed Dawson “The Ms. Rachel of Peds” after Rachel Accurso from the educational children’s series *Ms. Rachel*, which is on Netflix and YouTube. “I bring in toys and stickers, and I decorate a board with songs on it and different themes,” explains Dawson.

Working in health care was not always part of her life plan. As a child, Dawson was drawn to criminal justice. “As I grew up, I knew health care is where more people are needed. In my little, small community, it’s either you become a CNA or work in the food industry unless you move away,” she says.

When she learned about the medical assisting profession, she knew it was the perfect fit. “After I started taking my kids to the doctor, I asked the medical assistant who roomed them what her title was, and when she told me, I knew I wanted to do

exactly what she did,” says Dawson.

She plans to continue working in pediatrics indefinitely. “I think it’s where I need to be. Every day [that] I give kids shots, I know that I give them with love. I tell parents, ‘I stab with love,’ and I even do little dances with the kids. I really feel that I’m making an impact in pediatrics,” she says.

She enjoys gaining skills on the job and learning from providers. “I’m always expanding my knowledge, and I learn something every day from different scenarios because we don’t have the same child every single day, and so for me, it’s a challenge to get better and better at my job,” says Dawson.

She embraces caring for children with a variety of backgrounds. “We see children with disabilities, and I always look forward to figuring out what makes them most comfortable when it comes to giving them shots,” she says. “I also like problem-solving with the provider to make sure a child gets the best care possible.”

While she envisions herself as a medical assistant always, someday she may consider furthering her education. “I’ve been encouraged by my husband to someday consider becoming a registered nurse, and I’ve thought about it, but for now, being a CMA (AAMA) is where it’s at,” says Dawson. ♦