



CADAT / CDAА Joint Annual Conference April 10 – 11, 2026



Vanessa Aguilar, RDA
cameostover@gmail.com

Course: *Modern Approaches to Teaching Dental Radiography: Tips, Tools, and Techniques*

Course Description:

This course will cover the foundations of Dental Radiology for Dental Assistants, including the importance of image quality for diagnosis and treatment planning and the dental assistant's role in diagnostic success. Also discussed will be what Dentists want Dental Assistants to know about CBCT, including proper patient preparation, accurate positioning and stabilization, selecting appropriate scan settings, the importance of diagnostic image quality and a clear understanding of dentist expectations.

Course Objectives:

1. Analyze current dental office expectations for dental assistant competency with CBCT technology

Participants will review and interpret survey data collected from practicing dentists to identify how CBCT is currently used across specialties and what levels of knowledge and involvement are expected of dental assistants in clinical settings.

2. Identify essential CBCT knowledge and technical skills needed for workforce-ready dental assistants

Participants will examine the most critical CBCT-related knowledge areas and hands-on skills identified by dental offices, including imaging purposes, assistant roles, and common challenges encountered in practice.

3. Applying survey findings to strengthen curriculum and instructional practices in dental assistant programs

Participants will use real-world data to evaluate training gaps and develop actionable strategies for integrating CBCT instruction into dental assistant coursework, ensuring alignment with industry expectations and evolving digital dental technology.

Speaker Bio

Vanessa Aguilar has been a RDA for 28 years. She has worked in the front and back office of GP, Orthodontics, Periodontics, Prosthodontics and Cosmetics. Vanessa has been in the classroom for 15+ years and has a true passion for teaching.

Vanessa received her Teaching Credential in Career Technical Education from The Commission on Teaching Credentials of California, in Health Science and Medical Terminology, in addition to that she is also a CDA (DANB) and is a licensed CPR



CADAT / CDAА Joint Annual Conference April 10 – 11, 2026



Instructor through the American Heart Association as well as an Authorized OSHA trainer. Vanessa has earned her bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Westcliff University, Irvine and is a lifelong learner. She is only a few months away from obtaining a Masters degree in Arts of Curriculum and instruction from Grand Canyon University.

Vanessa is currently teaching a Public and Community Health class at Western High School and the dental assistant program for English Language Learning adults in the evenings. She is grateful that she gets to teach, motivate and inspire her students about the field that she loves so much on a daily basis. Her hopes and dreams are that her students also take pride in becoming a dental assistant and explore the possibilities of advancement in their career by continuing their education.