



**For Immediate Release**

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**Six Physician Assistants to be Nationally Recognized  
for Outstanding Service**

Honorees Go Above and Beyond the Call of Duty to Serve Patients Locally and Globally

(Alexandria, VA) – The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) has announced the recipients of its 2005 PARagon Awards for outstanding service to patients and their communities.

**Humanitarian PA of the Year**

Michael Wawrzewski III, PA-C, is the founder and president of Hospitals of Hope in Wichita, Kansas, and Bolivia, South America. Wawrzewski's organization provides basic health care services and supplies to the underserved on three continents.

**Federal Service PA of the Year**

Lt. Colonel Joseph Streff, PA-C, works with the Zablocki Veteran's Affairs Medical Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Streff was the first PA Advisor to the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs. When called to active duty as a Reservist, he resigned the position to focus his efforts on providing medical care to soldiers returning from war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

**Physician Assistant Service to the Underserved Award**

Marsha Delavan, PA-C, of Ravenel, South Carolina runs and supports a rural clinic. She used her own savings to open and operate the clinic to provide health care to the underinsured and low-income residents in the town of 25,000 residents.

(more)

**Physician-PA Partnership Award**

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Mark Shelton, M.D., and Tony Acosta, PA-C, of Winnfield, Louisiana manage the largest rural AED (automated external defibrillators) placement program in the nation. The two are affectionately known as Dr. Defib and Mr. AED, respectively, for their work to place AEDs in the community and educate residents about their use and the proper administration of CPR.

### **Outstanding Physician Assistant of the Year**

Justine Strand, M.P.H., PA-C, of Durham, North Carolina, is chief of the Physician Assistants Division of the Department of Community and Family Medicine at Duke University at Durham. Strand has used her expertise in obstetrics and gynecology to work with underserved Latino communities in Texas, North Carolina, and Brazil. She also has been an active member and leader of the Academy and the Association of PA Programs.

The honorees will be presented with their PAragon awards on May 27 in Orlando, Florida, at AAPA's 33rd Annual Physician Assistant (PA) Conference. Each PAragon winner has committed years of dedicated service to providing quality health care to communities in the United States and abroad.

"These nominees are a credit to the health care community and are remarkable individuals in their own right," said AAPA President Julie Theriault, PA-C. "They have stood up for the needs of patients – in some cases when it meant standing alone. I am proud of the works accomplished by such remarkable individuals. They have gone above and beyond the call of duty in extraordinary ways."

*Physician assistants are licensed health professionals who practice medicine as members of a team with their supervising physicians. PAs deliver a broad range of medical and surgical services to diverse populations in rural and urban settings. As part of their comprehensive responsibilities, PAs conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel on preventive health care, assist in surgery, and prescribe medications.*

*AAPA is the only national organization to represent physician assistants in all medical and surgical specialties. Founded in 1968, the Academy works to promote quality, cost-effective health care, and the professional and personal growth of PAs. For more information about the Academy and the PA profession, visit the AAPA's Web site, [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org).*

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