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Brooke Braun
703-836-2272 ext. 3502
bbraun@aapa.org

Melia Dayeh
703-836-2272 ext. 3501
mdayeh@aapa.org

Texas Physician Assistant to Receive Physician-PA Partnership Award

American Academy of Physician Assistants Announces 2009 PAragon Award Winners

(Dallas, Texas) – The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) will award the 2009 Physician-PA Partnership Award to Laurie Ellen Benton, PA-C, of Temple, Texas, who has worked with Charles Foulks, M.D. developing programs to educate medical practitioners and patients on the causes and preventions of chronic kidney disease (CKD).

The Physician-PA Partnership Award, which will be presented Friday, May 22 in San Diego at AAPA's 37th Annual Physician Assistant Conference, honors a physician-PA team that exemplifies the unique relationship of trust, collegiality, and mutual respect that is essential to the PA profession and allows for greater medical service to patients.

"It is truly an honor to win this award with my true friend and colleague, Dr. Foulks," said Benton.

"We have a unique partnership filled with trust and respect, yet we also understand that it's perfectly fine to have different opinions and, as a result, we both learn from one another."

Benton and Foulks have worked as a team for the past seven years to promote the prevention and care of CKD. Because of the educational programs they have developed, Benton and Foulks have been able to improve thousands of patients' lives through improved kidney perfusion, corrected anemia, appropriate nutrition and stop smoking campaigns. Together, they have:

- Created a nephrology survival guide for advanced practitioners, which is distributed at Renal Physician Association and National Kidney Foundation meetings
- Written a patient education manual on CKD, transplant and dialysis
- Lectured at various community functions, meetings, and clubs on the importance of early detection and prevention of CKD
- Volunteered at low-income clinics on the Texas-Mexico border
- Hosted free information sessions and cooking demonstrations for nephrology patients and their families

Benton and Foulks are now working with the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) to create an online nephrology program, which will be used to help educate and train medical providers and volunteers in developing countries who work with nephrology patients.

In her spare time, Benton serves as a volunteer with the Texas Medical Rangers and Texas State Guard, in which she treats underserved patients in the community, including newly employed Mexican immigrants who are unable to afford health care services.

In recognition of her achievements, Benton will be presented a crystal Physician-PA Partnership Award, a check for \$2500, and a matching donation to the Children's Miracle Network – all of which is made possible with support of Pfizer Inc. The award is one of five PARagon Awards presented annually by AAPA to recognize members who have demonstrated distinguished service to patients, the community, and the profession. Other awards include: Humanitarian PA of the Year, Outstanding PA of the Year, Federal Service PA of the Year, and the PA Service to the Underserved Award.

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The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) is the only national professional association that represents PAs across all medical and surgical specialties in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the armed forces and federal services. Founded in 1968, AAPA works to increase the professional and personal growth of the entire PA workforce by providing

comprehensive support and advocacy for physician assistants so that they may, in turn, provide patients with increased access to quality, cost-effective health care. Learn more at www.aapa.org.