

# PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT ORGANIZATIONS

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## **Pi Alpha – The National Honor Society for Physician Assistants**

Pi Alpha is the national physician assistant honor society organized for the promotion and recognition of both PA students and graduates. Membership signifies the inductees' significant academic achievement and honors them for their leadership, research, community/professional service and other related activities. The Society also encourages a high standard of character and conduct among students and graduates.

## **American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)**

The AAPA is the national professional organization of physician assistants. Its membership includes graduate and student physician assistants as well as affiliate membership for physicians and physician assistant educators. The Academy provides a wide range of services for its members from representation before federal and state governments and health related organizations, public education, pamphlets and brochures, insurance and financial programs, and employment assistance.

Student Physician Assistant societies are an integral part of the AAPA and make up a body referred to as the Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (The Student Academy). The Student Academy meets yearly at the national spring conference to elect officers and representatives. The Pace University-Lenox Hill Hospital Physician Assistant Program encourages each of you to take an active interest in this process. Release time to attend the national conference held in May of each year can be requested in writing to the academic coordinator (didactic year) or the clinical coordinator (clinical year).

The national organization represents you and as such deserves your support during your student years and as a graduate Physician Assistant. Membership to professional organizations is another benefit also routinely covered by employers.

## **New York State Society of Physician Assistants (NYSSPA)**

NYSSPA is the state constituent chapter of the APAA. Currently all fifty states have similar chartered constituent chapters. The NYSSPA mission is "to improve the quality of health care services in NY State and to promote, address and represent the interests and development of the Physician Assistant profession."

NYSSPA provides continual representation of PA interests in both Washington, DC and Albany with both federal and state health profession's organizations as well as the State Department of Health (DOH) and the State Education Department (SED). The Student Affairs Committee of NYSSPA promotes student issues and interests within the Society. Any student enrolled in a New York PA Program approved by the Board of Directors is eligible for student membership. Student members may hold a place on the Board of Directors and are also eligible for scholarship monies.

## **National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)**

All graduates of physician assistant programs accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) are eligible to sit for the national certifying exam (PANCE) offered by the NCCPA.

Registration applications are completed during the senior year of the physician assistant program. Most states require graduates to take and successfully pass the national boards to continue employment.

Once certified through the NCCPA, each graduate must obtain and report 100 hours of CME every two years. Recertification exams are also required every ten years in addition to the CME requirement.

## **Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA)**

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) is the recognized accrediting agency that protects the interests of the public and PA profession by defining the standards for PA education and evaluating PA educational programs within the territorial United States to ensure their compliance with those standards.

The ARC-PA encourages excellence in PA education through its accreditation process, by establishing and maintaining minimum standards of quality for educational programs. It awards accreditation to programs through a peer review process that includes documentation and periodic site visit evaluation to substantiate compliance with the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education. The accreditation process is designed to encourage sound educational experimentation and innovation and to stimulate continuous self-study and improvement.