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**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA PA ALUMNUS RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION**

**Johns Creek, GA, June 15, 2016** – Kim Hanson, PA-C, a certified physician assistant at Cedar Park Regional Medical Center in Cedar Park, Texas was recently awarded a specialty credential called a Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Hanson is a 2001 graduate of the Physician Assistant Studies Program at the University of South Alabama.

Hanson received the CAQ in Emergency Medicine, a distinction earned by meeting licensure, education and experience requirements and then passing a national exam in the specialty. She is one of only 26 certified PAs in Texas to earn a CAQ in Emergency Medicine since the program's inception in 2011.

“All certified PAs have demonstrated their knowledge across the broad base of medicine,” says Dawn Morton-Rias, Ed.D, PA-C, president and CEO of NCCPA. “Those who have taken the extra step to earn a CAQ have demonstrated additional expertise and experience in their chosen field of practice. The rigorous education and certification processes and commitment to certification maintenance at the highest level, contribute to the high demand for PA services in every clinical setting and specialty area.”

CAQs are offered to certified PAs in cardiovascular and thoracic surgery, emergency medicine, hospital medicine, orthopaedic surgery, nephrology, pediatrics and psychiatry.

A PA is a nationally certified and state-licensed medical professional who practices medicine on health care teams with physicians and other providers. Certified PAs take histories, conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel on preventative health care, assist in surgery, perform a variety of procedures and write prescriptions.

**About the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants**

The [National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants \(NCCPA\)](http://www.nccpa.net) is the only certifying organization for physician assistants (PAs) in the United States. The PA-C credential is awarded by NCCPA to PAs who fulfill certification, certification maintenance and recertification requirements. There are more than 108,500 certified PAs in the U.S. today. NCCPA also administers the [Certificate of Added Qualifications \(CAQ\)](http://www.nccpa.net) program for experienced, certified PAs practicing in seven specialties. For more information, visit [www.PAsDoThat.net](http://www.PAsDoThat.net).