It is with great pleasure that I nominate Commander Brian Burt, PA-C for the 2020 Senior Physician Assistant of the Year Award in recognition of his outstanding leadership and professional accomplishments related to supporting the US Surgeon General’s Priority of eliminating commercial tobacco use.

Commander Burt has served many roles related to the fight to quit tobacco. In 2013, the US Public Health Service Uniforms and Appearance policy was signed which prohibited the utilization of all tobacco products while in uniform. This unprecedented Uniformed Service policy required careful and thoughtful implementation. CDR Burt was appointed by the US Surgeon General to serve on Smoking/Tobacco Use Cessation Committee. He led the Survey/Analytics group which assisted in the seamless transition to the USPHS becoming the first service to be tobacco free in uniform.

In 2017 he was appointed to the Nicotine Cessation Services Access Workgroup. This is a multiagency, multidisciplinary group of Commissioned Corps Officers. He was quickly selected as part of the Executive Leadership Team and chairs the Prevention Subgroup. Commander Burt has been instrumental in bringing attention to the vaping epidemic that is plaguing our youth and young adults. Commander Burt was appointed to be the senior officer liaison to the Prevention through Active Community Engagement (PACE) team where he led the development of the PACE Youth Vaping Module. This was developed in order to ensure accurate and consistent messaging is being delivered by the officer to the target audiences. This presentation is currently available for Commissioned Officers to bring into the community.

Commander Burt realized that not only do children, parents and teachers need to be educated on the vaping epidemic, healthcare providers also need to be knowledgeable. He spent many months researching and authoring a comprehensive review manuscript for clinicians. The manuscript was selected for publication by the Journal of American Academy of Physician Assistants (JAAPA) and will appear as the lead CME article in the March 2020 edition. This has a circulation of 65,000 plus digital access which will bring positive attention to the USPHS Commissioned Corps.

Commander Burt serves as an advisor to Arizonian’s Concerned About Smoking. This is a non-profit, pro-health organization whose goal is to save lives through public awareness regarding the hazards of tobacco use, especially when approaching and in enclosed public places. He serves as the organization’s vaping subject matter expert.

Commander Burt currently serves the American Indian/Alaska Native community as a clincal physician assistant. This population has the highest smoking rates out of all racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. When providing cessation guidance is important to distinguish between ceremonial and commercial use. He has become a certified instructor in Basic Tobacco Intervention Skills for Native Communities, a course that trains healthcare providers treating American Indians and Alaska Natives effective strategies to specifically eliminate commercial tobacco use. He has taught this course to healthcare providers in Minnesota and Arizona.

In summary, Commander Burt has exemplified the core values of Leadership, Service, and Excellence as he fervently works to support the US Surgeon General’s Tobacco priority. He represents the PA profession and the USPHS with pride and honor. For this I proudly nominate Commander Burt as the 2020 Senior Physician Assistant of the Year.