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For Immediate Release

PES Contact: Kenneth J. Doucet
Director of Business Development & Marketing
212.367.4235 • kdoucet@proexam.org

I. Leon Smith Receives NOCA's Prestigious Leadership Award

New York, NY, January 2006—Professional Examination Service (PES) is pleased to announce that PES President and Chief Executive Officer, I. Leon Smith, Ph.D., has received the 2005 Leadership Award, the highest annual honor given by the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA). The award recognizes an individual who has excelled in developing, designing, and implementing programs or practices that have contributed to the fields of certification and licensure.

Speaking about the award, 2005 NOCA President, Bill Kersten, said, “Dr. Smith has spent the majority of his career advancing professional certification by contributing his skills and expertise to a growing industry. He volunteers his time to educate colleagues and the public, promote research and share his knowledge, and always provides an exceptional level of public service.”

Smith has been an active member of NOCA for over two decades. He was a Commissioner for the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), NOCA's accrediting arm, from 1996 to 1998, serving in the psychometrician role. From 1997 to 2001, he co-chaired the standards review task force charged with conducting a major review of NCCA's Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. The task force sought extensive input from a broad range of stakeholders, including NOCA members and the public, to reconceptualize NCCA's standards to reflect fundamental changes in the nature and scope of certification since the standards were first introduced in the late 1970s. The revised standards were adopted in 2003. In addition, Smith has served as coordinator, moderator, and presenter for numerous NOCA educational events on such varied topics as validation strategies, program administration models, credentialing policy, building brand loyalty, and diversifying revenue streams.

Smith has also made extensive scholarly contributions to the credentialing community. Since 1994, he has been a reviewer for *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*. In 1996, he co-published the *PES Guidelines for the Development, Use, and Evaluation of Licensure and Certification Programs*, and co-authored a chapter on standard setting for the NOCA publication *Certification: A NOCA Handbook*; in 2000, he co-edited *The Licensure and Certification Mission: Legal, Social, and Political Foundations (PES)*; and in 2006 he co-authored a chapter entitled “Feasibility Studies to Transition Assessment Programs from Paper-and-Pencil to CBT Delivery Mode,” in *Online Assessment and Measurement: Case Studies from Higher Education, K-12, and Corporate Settings (Information Science Publishing)*. These publications are widely used by sponsors of credentialing programs.

Asked to comment on the award, Smith said, “The PES publication *The Licensure and Certification Mission* argues that a clearly articulated mission drives what an organization does: for any business or individual it provides a sense of purpose and direction as well as a context for policy planning and decision making. Since joining PES in 1979, I have dedicated my career to fulfilling the PES mission, by working together with the staff of PES to provide quality credentialing services and to make public service contributions that articulate and demonstrate the value of credentialing. It is a great honor to have this work recognized by this prestigious award from NOCA.”

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About NOCA—Established in 1977, NOCA serves as a clearinghouse for information on the latest trends and issues of concern to practitioners and organizations focused on certification, licensure, and human resources development. NOCA’s accrediting body, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), is the international leader in setting quality standards for credentialing organizations and grants accreditation to those organizations that meet its standards. NOCA and NCCA are based in Washington, DC, and can be found on the web at www.noca.org.

About PES—For more than 60 years, PES has been a leader in creating, implementing, and enhancing quality credentialing programs for clients across a broad range of occupations. Founded in 1941 as a nonprofit corporation, PES’s mission is to promote the public welfare by communicating and demonstrating the value of credentialing. PES achieves its mission by providing customized services and by making public service contributions in support of credentialing activities, including licensure and certification, competency assurance, accreditation, and training-related certification.