



Association of  
Immunization  
Managers

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### **Association of Immunization Managers Announces the 2023 AIM Award Winners**

**[ROCKVILLE, MD] – December 15, 2023** – The Association of Immunization Managers (AIM), representing the 64 federally funded state, territorial, and urban area immunization programs, announces the winners of its annual AIM Awards:

- The **Natalie J. Smith, MD, Award for Excellence in Program Management** recognizes visionary immunization program manager leaders who significantly advance city, state, territory, and national vaccine-preventable disease goals. Award winners also demonstrate Dr. Smith’s noble ideals, innovation, and commitment to excellence in immunization practices. This year’s winner, the longest-serving AIM Chair, delivered strong, timely leadership as AIM and program managers planned and executed the COVID-19 vaccine campaign. This person was instrumental in building a seamless universal vaccine program.

*Winner: **Michele Roberts**, Assistant Secretary, Washington State Department of Health Division of Prevention and Community Health*

- The **AIM Rising Star Award** recognizes a new program manager who demonstrates effective leadership and potential for growth within AIM. This individual engages with peers and partners nationwide, impacts the broader immunization community, and actively contributes to AIM by participating in peer-to-peer activities, AIM committees, and the AIM Member Meetup. This year’s recipient also shared programmatic insights through the AIM Knowledge Hub series and Vaccine Access Cooperative.

*Winner: **Heather Burris**, MPH, Immunization Division Chief, DC Health, AIM Executive Committee and AIM Adult Immunization Committee Member*

- The **AIM Impact Award** recognizes a program manager who dedicated significant time and expertise to advance AIM’s goals. This individual served as Chair-elect and Chair during the pandemic and as a group mentor at the September CDC-AIM new program manager orientation. This year’s winner guides and mentors AIM staff and speaks for program managers with wisdom and clarity. She is also a leader and convener for program managers in her region.

*Winner: **Amber Tirmal**, MPH, Immunization Program Manager at Public Health Management Corporation, Philadelphia*

- AIM’s **Partnership Award** recognizes a collaborator who, with AIM, implements a project that delivers a valuable resource or service to AIM members. This year’s winner has always befriended awardees and valued partnering with program managers and AIM—whether

planning the Vaccines for Children boot camp, convening awardee calls and webinars, or supporting project officer and field staff engagement with program managers.

*Winner: **Nathan Crawford**, MPH, Awardee Coordination and Support Team Lead, CDC Immunization Operations and Services Branch*

- AIM's **Hall of Fame Award** recognizes someone who contributed outstanding leadership to the field and the vision of a nation free of vaccine-preventable diseases throughout their career. This year's inductee is Dan Hopfensperger. Dan served as the Wisconsin immunization program manager for over 15 years, retiring in 2015, and was an AIM consultant until his death in October 2023. Dan's immeasurable contributions to the AIM community will live on through the success of current program managers and AIM. Dan was a longstanding AIM Executive Committee member, serving as AIM Chair-elect, Chair, and Past Chair from 2005-2007. He served as AIM Registry Committee Chair and an AIM mentor. Dan was the godfather of the Immunization Information System (IIS), developed the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR), and shared it with programs nationwide.

*Inductee: **Dan Hopfensperger**, former AIM Consultant, Wisconsin immunization program manager, and longstanding AIM Executive Committee member (note: awarded posthumously)*

- The **AIM Leading Through Adversity Award** recognizes dedicated program managers who fearlessly manage immunization programs despite difficult circumstances. AIM program managers persevered through funding changes, implementing the Bridge Access Program, and rolling out new RSV and other vaccines. Program managers uncover innovative ways to overcome challenges and solve problems. AIM confers this award to all the immunization program managers and thanks them for their extraordinary efforts.

*Winner: All AIM Members*

### **Congratulations to the recipients of the 2023 AIM Awards!**

Visit the [AIM awards webpage](#) for additional information and to learn more about the inspiring work of this year's recipients.

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### **About the Association of Immunization Managers:**

The Association of Immunization Managers (AIM) is a nonprofit membership association comprised of the directors of the 64 federally funded state, territorial, and local public health immunization programs. AIM is dedicated to working with its partners nationwide to reduce, eliminate, or eradicate vaccine-preventable diseases. AIM also works to ensure the success of its members by providing support for their programming interests. Since 1999, AIM has enabled collaboration among immunization managers to effectively control vaccine-preventable diseases and improve immunization coverage in the United States. For more information on AIM, please visit [www.immunizationmanagers.org/](http://www.immunizationmanagers.org/)