



NATALIE J. SMITH, MD AWARD 2026 NOMINATION PROCESS

NATALIE J. SMITH, MD AWARD

The Natalie J. Smith, MD Award for Excellence in Program Management was established in recognition of Natalie J. Smith's outstanding management and leadership skills in the area of state and national vaccine-preventable disease programs. This award is the highest form of recognition for immunization program managers in CDC-funded awardee jurisdictions (AIM members). It recognizes the contributions of an immunization program manager who has demonstrated the high ideals, innovation, and commitment to excellence in immunization practices that characterized Dr. Smith's career. The award recognizes accomplishments and visionary leadership that have had a significant impact on achieving city, state, territory, and/or national vaccine-preventable disease goals.

ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES FOR NATALIE J. SMITH, MD AWARD

The recipient will be a current or recently retired (retired January 2024 or later) immunization program manager who is designated as the person primarily responsible for actively directing **one of the 66 city, state, or territorial immunization programs funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.** [The 50 states, American Samoa, Chicago, the District of Columbia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Houston, Los Angeles, Maricopa County, New York City, the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Philadelphia, Puerto Rico, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, San Antonio, and the Virgin Islands.]

Previous Natalie J. Smith, MD Award Recipients: *(not eligible for 2026 nomination)*

2004 - Lorraine Duncan (OR)
2005 - Alice Gray (PA)
2006 - Beth Rowe-West (NC)
2007 - Laurel Wood (AK)
2008 - Mike Chaney (GA)
2009 - Greg Reed (MD)
2010 - Janna Bardi (WA)
2011 - Susan Lett (MA)
2012 - Kelly Moore (TN)
2013 - Vincent Sacco (CT)

2015 - Jane Zucker (NYC)
2016 - Bob Swanson (MI)
2017 - Pejman Talebian (MA)
2018 - Annette Aguon (GU)
2019 - Christine Finley (VT)
2022 - Molly Howell (ND)
2023 - Michele Roberts (WA)
2024 - Ron Balajadia (HI)
2025 - Andrea Romero (NM)

- Any individual or organization wishing to recognize the outstanding work of an immunization program manager may submit a nomination using the [2026 Natalie J. Smith, MD Award Submission Form](#).
- All nominations must be submitted using the nomination submission form.
- A maximum of 2 single-spaced pages can be submitted (3 pages total, including the submission form's front page). If a submission exceeds 2 pages, only the content within the page limit will be considered.

- Multiple nominations for the same individual will not be considered by the selection committee. If multiple nominations are received, submitters will be notified and allowed 5 business days to resubmit one combined nomination. If a revised nomination is not submitted, the first nomination received will be designated as the official nomination for consideration by the selection committee.
- Nominations from the previous 3 years, if still eligible, will be added to the current year nomination list. Those who submitted these nominations will be contacted and encouraged to update their nominations as needed.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Nominations will be reviewed and a final selection made by members of the AIM Natalie J. Smith, MD Award Selection Committee, comprised of current and former immunization program managers, one representative from the CDC/National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, and one representative from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO).

REVIEW PROCESS FOR NATALIE J. SMITH, MD AWARD

Natalie J. Smith, MD award candidates will be judged based on the nominee's:

- **Background and experience** in public health and immunizations. [10 points]
- **Accomplishments** (i.e., jobs or projects that have been completed). [30 points]
- **Impact** on the field of immunization, on the community or population, and/or in the immunization program (i.e., raising coverage rates). [30 points]
- **Leadership** within the program, as well as within AIM. [30 points]

DUE DATES

Submissions must be received by **11:59 p.m. EST on August 21, 2026**.

Please email submissions to info@immunizationmanagers.org and include "Natalie J. Smith Award Submission" in the subject line.

NOTIFICATION

The recipient of the *2026 Natalie J. Smith, MD Award for Excellence in Program Management* will be named at the 2026 AIM Leadership in Action Conference in Tampa, FL, in December 2026. The recipient will receive a plaque and will have his/her name listed on a plaque displayed at the AIM national office.

QUESTIONS

Please direct any questions about the Natalie J. Smith, MD Award submission process to info@immunizationmanagers.org.