

2024 Immunization Excellence Awards



Awards Presentation

August 15, 2024
Atlanta, GA



National Adult
and Influenza
Immunization
Summit

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Awards Presentations

NATIONAL WINNERS

Laura Scott 2023-24 Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award

- Parkland Health Cancer Program

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

- USAging - Aging and Disability Vaccination Collaborative (ADVC)
- Southern Nevada Health District

HONORABLE MENTION WINNERS

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

- Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement (EXCITE)
- Indiana Immunization Coalition

About the Awards Program: The awards program recognizes the value and extraordinary contributions of individuals and organizations towards improved access to vaccinations across the lifespan within their communities. The [National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit](https://izsummitpartners.org) (NAIIS) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2024 Immunization Excellence Awards. In 2024, there are two categories of recognition: overall influenza season activities, and “immunization neighborhood” champion awards. Nominees were evaluated based on the areas of impact, collaboration, originality, overcoming challenges, and opportunities. The Summit applauds all stakeholders who are working towards improving the health of their communities. Information about the awards program and recipients can be found at izsummitpartners.org

NATIONAL ADULT & INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION SUMMIT

2024 Immunization
Excellence Awards

Honoring the Memory of Laura Scott



“She made the world a better place for our children and all of us.”

In 2015, the National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit (NAIIS) Steering Committee renamed its NAIIS Immunization Excellence Award for **Influenza Season Campaign** to the **Laura Scott NAIIS Immunization Excellence Award for Outstanding Influenza Season Activities**. The award recognizes innovative early and later influenza season activities across the lifespan (pediatric, adolescent and/or adult activities) embracing the spirit and dedication to the prevention of influenza and protecting individuals from vaccine-preventable diseases embodied by Laura Scott in her work as Executive Director of Families Fighting Flu. Her early death took her from us but the trail she left will live on forever.

On March 3, 2015, Families Fighting Flu (FFF) lost its long-time Executive Director and co-founder, Laura Scott. Laura was also an active participant in NAIIS and within the immunization neighborhood. As described by the FFF board, “Laura was truly the heart and soul of the organization for the ten years of our existence.” Laura helped launch Families Fighting Flu and it was her tireless hard work, dedication and brilliance that enabled its tremendous success. She spent countless hours educating the public and saving thousands of lives. Even though she did not personally lose a child to influenza, her love and support helped impacted families through their darkest days by helping them channel their grief into a meaningful legacy that honored children and families, and made a difference. Laura truly was a hero who made the world a better place. She was an incredible wife and mother, and friend to us all.



National Winners

Laura Scott

2023–24 Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award

Parkland Health Cancer Program

(Dallas, TX)



Parkland

Parkland Health (“**Parkland**”) is a safety-net hospital system in Dallas County, Texas, which includes 16 health centers, 1 school-based clinic, and multiple specialty clinics. The Parkland Cancer Program sees 2000 new cancer cases every year with over 50,000 visits annually. As the safety-net system, Parkland sees a large percentage of underrepresented minorities (URMs) who historically have lower vaccination rates. As part of the CDC/CMSS Specialty Societies Advancing Adult Immunization (SSAAI) Project, Parkland’s Cancer Program core quality improvement team implemented several projects to increase the vaccine assessment and administration rate of patients with cancer. Their work is an example of how specialty pro-

viders can ensure their patient populations are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.



Parkland’s quality improvement initiatives focused on adult vaccination status assessments, COVID-19 and influenza vaccine recommendations, and vaccine administration processes.

Within the Oncology clinics, Parkland offers on-site flu and COVID-19 vaccinations, and this season had a nurse-driven initiative that appointed RN “Flu Champions” with specialized training and designated RN residents to increase vaccination administration. Parkland’s initiatives resulted in vaccine assessment rates increasing from 6% to 87%, and an increase of medical oncology clinic patients being up-to-date on their influenza vaccine from 37.8% in the 2022-2023 flu season to 49.5% in the 2023-2024 season.



Andrea R. Semlow, MS, MPH
Global Cancer Program Manager



National Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

Southern Nevada Health District

(Las Vegas, NV)



Southern Nevada Health District and its vaccinating angel, Ms. Hall, creatively serve all citizens, embracing them with dignity, kindness, respect, and empathy. The district initiated a mobile unit, administering vaccinations throughout Clark County to increase access. The mobile unit drove throughout Southern Nevada to offer dental care and vaccinations in areas that did not have access to primary care. They piloted vaccine clinics brought into the underground tunnels and encampments for those experiencing homelessness during the Hepatitis A outbreak. And during the initial mass COVID-19 testing phase, they co-developed an infection control model that has become the standard throughout Clark County. Ms. Hall's motto is, "The answer isn't 'we can't do that', the answer is 'let's figure out how to do that!'"

During the initial stages of the pandemic, Ms. Hall and her team saw the impact that a transmissible disease could have on a high-risk community. She led a health department team that started with 10 staff members and eventually saw that number increase to hundreds. Staff were sent to specific outbreak locations with the highest COVID-19 case rates for mass testing.

Health equity and accessibility have always driven the district's vaccination efforts, following both evidence-based practices and CDC's best practice guidelines. Frequent analysis of current data through the state's IIS, SNHD's electronic medical system, and other sources is used to establish high-risk population groups and to identify social vulnerability and areas of low vaccine uptake.



Sarah Hall-Lugo, MSN, APRN, FNP-BC, FNP-C

Community Health Nurse Supervisor



National Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

USAg - Aging and Disability Vaccination Collaborative

(Washington, DC)



USAg’s Aging and Disability Vaccination Collaborative (ADVC) partners with community-based organizations across the nation’s aging and disability networks to increase the number of people who receive the updated COVID-19 and flu vaccines. The ADVC supports vaccine clinics and in-home vaccinations, education and outreach, and supportive services such as transportation to vaccination sites. The ADVC’s success is based on five key approaches: meaningful partnerships, targeted messaging, understanding the audience, robust technical assistance, and a user-friendly database to track education, outreach and vaccines administered.

The ADVC partners with Area Agencies on Aging, Centers for Independent Living and other local organizations that are trusted messengers in

their communities. These partner organizations in turn collaborate with local health departments and pharmacies to hold vaccine clinics and provide in-home COVID-19 and flu vaccines, as well as shingles, RSV and other adult vaccines. The ADVC also partners with national organizations with expertise in areas such as autism and Asian American Pacific Islander culture to better serve individuals from varied backgrounds.

ADVC local partners use creative, culturally and linguistically competent approaches to tailor outreach and events for the communities they serve. USAging supports local messaging with the “You’ve Got This” national marketing campaign to raise awareness of vaccinations available through ADVC partners. The campaign includes a Resource Hub with wide array of educational and promotional materials in English and Spanish for use by community partners to promote local events and ensure consistent, clear and up to date information on adult vaccines and importance of vaccines for overall health. To assist consumers in finding vaccines, USAging created a searchable website—youtogotthis.usaging.org.



In 2023-2024, USAging’s ADVC partners administered over 355,000 COVID-19 and flu vaccines. Approximately 10% of COVID-19 vaccines given (18,480) were to people receiving their first dose. The ADVC with its partners reached over 332,000,000 people with vaccine outreach and education; and provided 394,500 supportive services, including transportation to vaccine clinics and assistance with appointments.



Deborah Stone-Walls, MC, LMHC, CSAC
Chief, Programs and Services

National Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award



National Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement (EXCITE)

<https://excite.extension.org/>

(Fargo, ND)



EXCITE is a nationwide response on the local level to increase vaccine confidence and access to adult immunizations during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. This project has an overarching goal of addressing adult immunization education and increasing vaccine confidence in rural and underserved communities across the United States through the work of the Cooperative Extension System (CES). This project was made possible through an interagency agreement between the United States Department of Agriculture – National Institute of Food and Agriculture (USDA-NIFA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and a cooperative agreement with the Extension Foundation..



Ruth Hursman, MSN, RN

EXCITE Project Coach

While each project has a local focus, the national system provides a network for sharing educational assets, best practices, and lessons learned. CES has a longstanding commitment to addressing local needs, especially in rural areas where its historical focus on agriculture has established a trusted foundation. The EXCITE national team facilitated engagement and collaboration between Land Grant institutions, and state and local health partners within medically underserved communities. These collaborations enhanced communication between communities and healthcare systems, accessibility and acceptability of local clinics, and implemented health initiatives. Leveraging their deep understanding of community demographics and their status as trusted messengers, CES effectively supported healthcare sys-

tems in delivering immunization education, collectively boosting adult immunization rates nationwide.

From April 2021 to May 2023, CES conducted 104 immunization education projects that involved 77 Land-grant Universities (LGUs) across the United States. In this two year period, over 19 million individuals were reached through 178,000 engagement activi-



6,637,025 • Reach



38,080 • Engagement Activities



234 • Partners



560 • Assets Developed & Adopted

ties and over 26,000 COVID-19 and other adult recommended vaccines were provided in partnership with local health organizations.



Honorable Mention Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

Indiana Immunization Coalition (IIC)

(Indianapolis, IN)



Robust partnerships enable IIC to offer best practice continuing education nationwide. In just the last four years, over 7000 providers from 47 states have participated in continuing education programs offered by IIC. In addition, IIC offers two Maintenance of Certification (MOC) programs for physicians that focus on improving HPV and Tdap vaccine rates.

IIC hosts three national education and advocacy initiatives: Beware of B and HPV Free are college and university campaigns that provide education and resources related to Meningitis B and HPV. IIC also participates in “We the People Vax,” a nationwide collaboration of public health advocates who promote immunization efforts. IIC also collaborates with statewide partners to advocate for vaccine policies that promote the public health of all its citizens.

IIC provides staff support for “Hoosier’s Vaccinate,” the state’s grassroots network of 130 advocates who provide a unified voice for science-based vaccine policies. Through an online-advocacy portal that IIC operates, over 1175 letters have been sent to Indiana legislators encouraging their support of pro-vaccine policies.

IIC expanded its mission to include direct service in 2020. With funding from Indiana Department of Health (IDH), IIC began implementing mobile vaccine clinics throughout the state. This best practice strategy for eliminating barriers to vaccination was an important and timely response to the state’s waning immunization rates associated with missed medical visits during the pandemic. Post pandemic, IIC has become the largest vaccine provider in the state, administering over 105,500 vaccines to over 30,000 individuals each year for the past 4 years.



Lisa Robertson, MPH,
Executive Director, IIC



Honorable Mention Winners



Healthier Together

PROTECT YOUR RESIDENTS AND STAFF

Severe illness, hospitalization and death due to COVID-19 increases with age. **Most COVID-19 deaths occur in people aged 65 and older.** Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines is the best way to protect your residents and those around them.

Our vaccine care team will come to your location to provide vaccines and education.

For more information, please contact (702) 759-1910

Magkasamang Mas Malusog.

Protection ang iyong mga residents at staff

Severe illness, hospitalization and death due to COVID-19 increases with age. **Most COVID-19 deaths occur in people aged 65 and older.** Staying up to date with COVID-19 vaccines is the best way to protect your residents and those around them.

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SENSORY-FRIENDLY VACCINE KITS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTHCARE NEEDS IN THE STATE OF NEVADA

For much of the population, recreational activities can be a sensory-rich experience and present a barrier to recreation.

People who experience sensory sensitivity or sensory overload can benefit from sensory-friendly experiences and environments. This may include Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN), including individuals living with autism, PTSD, or hearing loss. A 2018 study revealed that sensory sensitivity is a major barrier to facility care access for people living with autism.

Sensory-friendly vaccine clinics are vaccine facilities that have been adapted to the needs of children and youth. This can include changes in the environment and staff training to support the vaccine experience for patients.

October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020

Health Center for Healthcare Innovation

Ways to Create a Sensory-Friendly Vaccine Clinic

- 1 Remove bright and flashing lights
- 2 Reduce noise
- 3 Provide accessible bathrooms
- 4 Welcome caregivers
- 5 Provide snacks and water
- 6 Develop clear and concise instructions
- 7 Create sensory-friendly hours



Champions in Action

Special Recognition

THANK YOU to the members of the NAIIS Awards Committee:

- ♦ Shelle Allen (FFF)
- ♦ Carolyn Bridges (Immunize.org)
- ♦ Susan Farrall (HHS/OASH)
- ♦ Claire Hannan (AIM)
- ♦ Joe Lastinger (FFF)
- ♦ Charlaine Muhammad (HHS/OASH)
- ♦ *Mitchel Rothholz, (Three-C Consulting), chair
- ♦ Elizabeth Sobczyk (AMDA)
- ♦ LJ Tan (Immunize.org)

* = did not vote, unless there was a tie

ACCESS NAIIS INFORMATION AND RESOURCES AT: <https://www.izsummitpartners.org/>



About the National Adult & Influenza Immunization Summit

The National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit, started in the year 2000 (as the National Influenza Vaccine Summit), is an action-oriented entity with more than 700 members who represent more than 130 public and private organizations with an interest in addressing and resolving influenza and adult vaccine issues. Visit the Summit's website at [izsummitpartners.org](https://www.izsummitpartners.org)

STANDARDS FOR ADULT IMMUNIZATION PRACTICES

The National Vaccine Advisory Committee's revised Standards for Adult Immunization Practice were released on September 10, 2013. The NVAC standards recognize the importance of the healthcare provider recommendation for patients to receive needed vaccines, the current low vaccination rates among U.S. adults, and reflect the changed environment within which adult vaccines are now given. The standards were published in the March/April 2014 issue of *Public Health Reports*.

ALL healthcare professionals should take the following steps to ensure that adult patients are fully immunized and have maximum protection from serious diseases.

1. **ASSESS** immunization status of all patients in every clinical encounter.
2. **SHARE** a strong recommendation for vaccines that patients need.
3. **ADMINISTER** needed vaccines or **REFER** to a provider who can immunize.
4. **DOCUMENT** vaccines administered or received by your patients.

NAIIS In Action

Observations from Other Nominees

The team successfully mobilized their institution to receive **leadership buy in** on quality improvement initiatives implementing the Standards of Adult Immunization Practice. The team began by identifying barriers to Influenza and COVID-19 uptake within their patient population and implemented an innovative immunization assessment tool within their EMR to pilot at their clinic.

In tandem with their QI project, the team **collaborated with numerous external stakeholders** across the state to share best practices in Influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations. Integral to their success is an incredibly dedicated and hands-on physician champion whose can-do attitude empowers the team to rally behind their projects with the goal of increasing positive patient outcomes through completion of routine vaccination for all who are eligible.

Their strategic approach involves organizing **vaccine clinics at community locations**, a practice shown to improve vaccine confidence, access, and uptake among underserved and vulnerable populations. Their commitment to collaboration is evident through more than 60 partnerships with diverse entities, ranging from manufacturing warehouses to primary care offices. These collaborations have allowed them to dismantle barriers and serve and educate populations previously unreached by public health efforts. Their partnership with a local hospital system to establish a vaccine depot program resulted in patients receiving a COVID vaccine at discharge. This initiative demonstrates a commitment to sustainability and sets a strong precedent by being resource-efficient and easily maintainable. Drawing from insights gained during the pandemic, they proactively applied strategies and best practices to address broader vaccination needs across different age groups. Recognizing the access challenges faced by community members, shingles and pneumonia vaccines are offered annually at local senior centers in partnership with a local independent pharmacy. Adults at higher risk of Hepatitis A infection are provided with vaccination opportunities at monthly clinics hosted at a local shelter. To provide children without health insurance or a primary care provider with timely access to routine pediatric immunizations while serving as an entry point into permanent medical care, routine pediatric vaccine clinics held at public schools.

The Health Department in coordination with the Immunization Coalition developed, implemented, and evaluated a program entitled **Community Immunization Ambassadors**. This ambassador model included 4 key components. The Health Department provided staff support for planning, recruitment, training, and technical assistance. Individual ambassadors provided insight into the planning, conducted peer outreach and education, and participated in marketing efforts. Organizational ambassadors hosted and/or trained employees to be ambassadors and incorporated activities into their workflow. Community members were empowered with the necessary tools to make the best decisions related to immunization and to share the information to members of their social network.

To raise awareness of vaccine-preventable diseases, including respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), meningitis B, shingles and flu, the initiative partnered with **influential voices and cultural icons**, reaching audiences in new, different and more authentic ways.

The effort helps readers make better health decisions by providing **practical and factual health information**. As trusted messengers, they build readers' confidence in navigating health information and sharing their knowledge with others. The program envisions a world in which everyone has the tools and confidence to make evidence-informed health decisions.

Provided multi-language scripts that include sample **messaging in over 37 languages** to help reduce health inequalities and communicate the importance of staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccines. Other resources include links to credible blogs, videos, and informational webpages to encourage patients and providers to learn more about COVID-19 vaccines and pregnancy on their own time. Providers who work with pregnant and recently post-partum people need more resources to help their patients feel confident in their choice to get vaccinated. Resources for the Pregnancy and COVID-19 vaccines toolkit were both created directly and sourced from trusted vaccine resources across the country.

An **annual initiative** is facilitating influenza vaccination opportunities across all age groups. They ensure that each county is equipped with the necessary resources and materials to effectively provide influenza vaccinations. For example, they provide comprehensive training sessions for each health department on the implementation of successful drive-thru flu clinics. Furthermore, their dedication extends to organizing school-based flu clinics in every county.

The **campaign was informed** by vaccination promotion best practices, community health equity needs expressed by partners in local health jurisdictions, and research gathered about beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, behaviors and knowledge pertaining to flu and flu vaccine.

The campaign used both **paid media and social media** to promote flu vaccination to a diverse range of demographics. Strategies included:

- Website banners, radio sponsorships, and ads on Facebook, Instagram and Google search results. Ads ran in up to five languages, including English.
- A series of social media posts in English and Spanish that promoted flu vaccination for all eligible
- A partner toolkit which was disseminated to local health jurisdictions. The toolkit included English and Spanish sample blog posts, articles, and social media posts for partners and providers to use as a resource in their own communications.

The campaign primarily focused on the "recommend" and "refer" **standards of Adult Immunization Practice**. Messaging was tailored to emphasize the benefits of vaccination and dangers of flu illness for different demographics. Messaging aimed to build vaccine confidence by correcting misconceptions about flu vaccines and emphasized vaccine safety and availability and aimed to improve access by referring audiences to vaccines.org to find a local vaccine provider. The partner toolkit supports the "recommend" standard of the Adult Immunization practices by providing sample language for providers and partners to use to recommend flu vaccination.