

2023 Immunization Excellence Awards



Awards Presentation

May 10, 2023
Atlanta, GA



National Adult
and Influenza
Immunization
Summit

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NATIONAL ADULT & INFLUENZA IMMUNIZATION SUMMIT

2023 Immunization Excellence Awards

Awards Presentations

NATIONAL WINNERS

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

- **AltaMed Health Services - Community Organizing and Research Engagement (CORE) Team**
- **Virginia Cooperative Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement**

Laura Scott 2022-23 Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award

- **AMGA Foundation’s Rise to Immunize™ Campaign**
- **New York City Health + Hospitals/Elmhurst**

HONORABLE MENTION WINNERS

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

- **Casa Immigrante & Julissa Soto**
- **Houston Health Department Immunization Bureau**

Laura Scott 2022-23 Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award

- **National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF)**

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 (NAIIS) is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2023 Immunization Excellence Awards. In 2023, 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

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

**AltaMed Health Services -
Community Organizing and
Research Engagement
(CORE) Team**

(Commerce, CA)



Altamed Health Services is a Federally Qualified Health Center in Southern California with the mission to eliminate disparities in health care access and outcomes. AltaMed’s network of 40 clinics was on the frontlines of COVID-19 response throughout 2020 with testing and healthcare delivery, while its Institute for Health Equity (AIHE) implemented research projects and innovative community programs to mitigate the impact of the pandemic in Los Angeles (LA) and Orange Counties (OC). Early response efforts failed to reach the most vulnerable Latinx communities because health systems didn’t have the inroads to deploy culturally appropriate information, serve as trusted community messengers, and deliver necessary resources. The same was occurring with vaccine deployment. “Vaccine hesitancy” was cited as an ex-



planation for why Latinx communities would object to vaccines. However, such pre-emptive reasoning missed an opportunity to engage Latinx community members as partners in equitable vaccine distribution.

AIHE’s Community Organizing and Research Engagement (CORE) team launched a local COVID-19 outreach, vaccination, and recovery campaign from June 2021 - December 2022, in alignment with AltaMed’s statewide Andale Que Esperas (AQE) Vaccination Campaign. The AQE LA and OC Local Campaign was led by Rosa Vazquez, a community organizing and public health consultant, alongside 32 Community Health fellows (ages 18-28), and co-developed in partnership with a COVID-19 Community Advisory Board made up of 25 community members (ages 32-63). The program was implemented by 50 Street Vendor COVID-19 Ambassadors; and a partner coalition that mobilized 82 small

businesses, 65 schools-based messengers, and 43 community-based organizations.

The central aim of the AQE Local Campaign was to reduce vaccine disparities in predominantly working-class Latinx communities in Southeast LA and Central Orange County by holistically engaging community members and hyper-local stakeholders as power-sharing partners in COVID-19 response, mitigation, and recovery efforts. Program outcomes of the neighborhood-based campaign include: 1) conducted outreach to 252,835 contacts in working-class Latinx communities; 2) provided 44,129 COVID-19 vaccine support services among our priority populations to decrease barriers to obtaining a vaccine- such as transportation and social service navigation 3) linked 15,068 individuals from areas with the highest social vulnerability index to vaccines; and 4) trained and deployed 244 community members as Volunteer COVID-19 Outreach Ambassadors.



National Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

Virginia Cooperative Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement (Abingdon, VA)



Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) partnered with state and local offices of the Virginia Department of Health during the COVID-19 pandemic to serve as a trusted messenger regarding vaccination in local communities across Virginia. Extension agents collaborated with local emergency medical services, the local hospital, the local school system, and parks and recreation to create a local vaccination clinic held weekly for 13 weeks beginning in January of 2021.



Kathy Hosig,
VCE

Extension interns staffed a hotline for call-in registration to supplement the online registration system offered by the department of health and called people who were on the health department’s list of eligible residents.

VCE subsequently received four grants for vaccine education beginning in May of 2021 through May of 2023 through an interagency agreement with the USDA National Insti-

tute of Food and Agriculture (USDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The initiative is entitled Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching and Engagement (EXCITE). Through EXCITE, Extension agents and specialists from Virginia Tech (VT) and Virginia State University (VSU), the two Virginia land-grant universities, lead efforts to address vaccine-related health disparities among rural and other underserved communities. Subject matter experts in health communication, science communication, health equity, community engagement and immunology guide the team’s efforts. Collaboration with state and local health department offices, United Way, public school systems, local health clinics and fire/EMS departments facilitated educational outreach and coordination with community-based vaccine clinics.

Collaboration at the state and local level is key to reaching residents of rural and underserved communities with culturally relevant and culturally sensitive vaccine education and to facilitate access to opportunities for vaccination. VCE and VDH shared educational resources such as town hall presentations tailored for specific audiences. Collaborators included county government, health departments, emergency medical services, United Way and local pharmacies to provide educational outreach activities in conjunction with vaccine clinics and other vaccination opportunities. VCE engaged community members through culturally tailored and interactive vaccine education activities at festivals and community

events across Virginia, especially in areas of high vaccine hesitancy. Through these events and vaccine clinics held in partnership with local health departments and pharmacies, VCE increased access to vaccination opportunities in high need areas.



National Winners

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

2022–23 Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award

AMGA Foundation’s Rise to Immunize™ Campaign

(Alexandria, VA)



The American Medical Group Association (AMGA) Foundation identified a lack of programming that engages multi-specialty medical groups and integrated systems of care in a coordinated manner to operationalize the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices’ (ACIP) adult immunization recommendations and improve adult immunization rates. With this gap in mind, AMGA Foundation developed and launched the Rise to Immunize™ (RIZE) campaign to mobilize healthcare organizations (HCOs) across the nation to collectively administer 25 million adult vaccinations by 2025. This four-year initiative, which just completed its successful first year, focuses on increasing rates of influenza vaccinations, as well as pneumococcal, Td/Tdap, and zoster vaccinations, among the adult population through shared resources, best practices, and comprehensive data reporting.



John W. Kennedy, MD
President, AMGA Foundation; CMO, AMGA

In Year 1 alone, the RIZE campaign mobilized HCOs to administer and/or document more than five million vaccinations – including 3,799,935 influenza vaccines (age 19+) – and provide comprehensive immunization care (meaning four out of four ACIP-recommended vaccines) to more than 60,000 adults aged 66+. There are 77 medical groups and health systems currently participating in the campaign span-

ning 29 states and employing a total of 46,000+ physicians. The RIZE campaign provides timely and relevant tools, resources, best practices, and learning opportunities to enrolled HCOs, which are distributed across many different communications channels to maximize reach.

The structure of the RIZE campaign is flexible to meet medical groups and health systems where they are and to acknowledge the diversity of the communities and patient populations these HCOs serve. Among the many tools offered are evidence-based care processes, or “campaign planks.” There are 15 campaign planks in total, spanning five domains with interventions of varying sophistication. A unique aspect of the RIZE campaign is its data reporting and analysis, which gives participants nearly real-time results of their vaccination efforts and comparisons with peer HCOs based on data sourced directly from participants’ electronic health records. This analysis provides participants with the ability to uncover opportunities and close annual and population healthcare gaps related to vaccinations.

As the RIZE campaign continues to expand, it strives to provide timely and relevant resources and opportunities for collaboration that will improve adult influenza and other routine vaccination rates that have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Its successful first year demonstrates the power of a campaign that leverages the coordinated care delivery system to improve adult immunization rates!



National Winners

Laura Scott

2022–23 Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award

New York City Health + Hospitals/Elmhurst

(Elmhurst, NY)



Elmhurst

NYC Health + Hospitals/Elmhurst is the second oldest municipal hospital in New York City. They are part of the largest public healthcare organization in the nation. Serving an ethnically and culturally diverse community of approximately 2.4 million people, NYC H+H/Elmhurst, has over 6,000 employees to vaccinate or support in vaccination efforts every year. During and immediately following the COVID-19 pandemic, in which NYC H+H/Elmhurst received both national and international coverage for its COVID response in the Queens community, flu vaccination rates in employees plummeted from over 70% to only 38.11% in 2020-2021 and 31.97% in 2021-2022 seasons. Staff exhaustion, mandates for COVID vaccination in employees and employee mask-requirements while on duty, likely contributed to the steep decline in vaccination rates. Similarly, demand from patients and the community also declined from prior years.

To re-engage employees and community and create an enthusiasm and demand for what had once been a rather popular seasonal vaccine, NYC H+H/Elmhurst initiated a robust campaign to vaccinate as many patients and staff as possible beginning in October 2022. Activities included: a heavy marketing campaign on site for employees and patients; working closely with Occupational Health and its affiliate institutions to process all flu vaccination records for staff in a timely and efficient way – scanning and uploading all documents into the medical record on a daily basis; a dedicated vaccination center open daily, with extended evening hours and some weekends, for community and employees; use of a “Flu Fairy” and campaign theme material; collaborating with local Community Based Organizations & Local Elected Officials; and, campaign incentives for staff and patients.



Helen Arteaga Landaverde
Chief Executive Officer



The rates of employee vaccination for 2022/2023 Flu Season (as of 1/19/23) is 55.38% (and counting!)

National Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

Casa Immigrante & Julissa Soto (Denver, CO)

Casa Immigrante, through Vacunas en su Casa and led by Julissa Soto, brings critical child and adult vaccinations from DTaP/Tdap, MMR, Polio, Varicella, tetanus etc., as well as Covid-19 and flu, into communities within Colorado. Colorado is 44th in the nation in overall vaccination, and Latinos, who make up 22% of Colorado’s population, are impacted the most. Less than 50% of Colorado Latinos have had at least one dose of Covid-19 vaccine, compared to 70% of white non-Latinos.



During the pandemic they brought in hundreds for vaccination at each community mobile vaccination event. The program’s strategy for vaccination to go into the community wherever people are, but on their timelines like evenings and weekends, proved successful for the program. To date, vaccination events in the community, working with state and county health departments and community clinics, have vaccinated 20,000+ in under-vaccinated “Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color” (BIPOC) and Latino communities.

Vaccinations provided in culturally relevant ways through authentic community engagement reduce the distrust and suspicions that have kept the BIPOC community out of any health care. This was brought out in the 2022 Colorado Health Access Survey (CHAS). Bringing health care into community through vaccinations this way builds trust and opens the door for all facets of health, including the mental health access challenge, which, like vaccination, have been avoided and contributed to the mistrust of health systems by BIPOC communities. Working with state and county health departments as well as Colorado Regional Accountable Entities (RAEs), strong partnerships were established to test and implement innovative solutions to address the health care disparity in Colorado.

Casa Immigrante works closely with the Colorado State Health Department (CDPHE) as well as county health departments, and Colorado’s Regional Accountable Entities to assure vaccines and vaccinators will come into the communities that most need them. In addition the program works with Immunize Colorado, Vaccinate your Family, as well as the Colorado Vaccine Equity Taskforce. Working closely with these organizations assures all state and county procedures and standards are met and documented through the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS). In addition, they work closely with community leaders in churches, schools, markets, libraries, apartments, etc., wherever people congregate, to coordinate access into the community and bring community members to the vaccination events.



Honorable Mention Winners

“Immunization Neighborhood” Champion Award

Houston Health Department Immunization Bureau

(Houston, TX)



The Houston Health Department (HHD) Immunization Bureau has exerted tremendous efforts to improve vaccination rates within the Harris County and City of Houston jurisdiction. Several initiatives were developed and implemented with a goal to protect the community from vaccine-preventable diseases as the city navigated through the COVID-19 pandemic, mpox outbreak, and a severe flu season. As the COVID-19 pandemic progressed and vaccine uptake continuously decreased, the Immunization Bureau devised strategic plans to ensure the community were both educated and provided equitable access to vaccines.

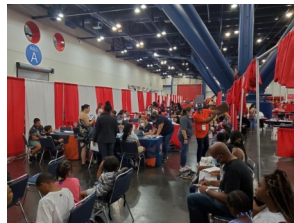


H. Omar Salgado
Immunization Bureau Chief

The “Provider Engagement Coalition” was an initiative developed to leverage with partnered TVFC/ ASN/COVID-19 providers throughout the Greater Houston metropolitan area. More specifically in vulnerable zip codes with low vaccine coverage rates and high COVID-19 cases to provide equitable vaccina-

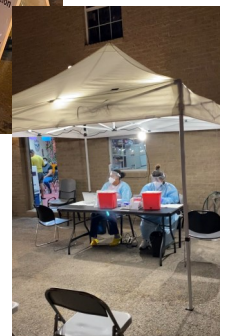
tion services. The initiative kicked off by identifying these targeted zip codes and vaccine providers within the area. The providers were contacted for partnership while relating the initiative of endorsing their practice as HHD’s Mobile Vaccine Unit (MVU) conducts pop-up clinics within the community. The goal was to provide continuity of care and assurance of series completion. Vaccine education was provided in each community by going door-to-door promoting the pop-up clinic with HHD’s Outreach Team. The outcome of this effort resulted in high series completion coverage rates in certain targeted zip codes.

Just as the city was finally experiencing some form of normalcy, the mpox outbreak hit Houston. With the knowledge on hand from the experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Immunization Bureau spearheaded vaccinating Houstonians with JYNNEOS vaccines. In tandem with the Health Department’s Epidemiology Team, pre/post exposure prophylaxis was offered to high-risk individuals. From administering vaccines at client’s homes, to identifying outbreak locations, like nightclubs and community events, the Houston Health department was present to serve the community highly effected by this outbreak. This effort led to Houston having the highest number of mpox vaccine doses administered within the regions in the state of Texas.



This flu season, vaccine uptake scaled so highly that numbers have surpassed pre-pandemic coverage. In 2020-2021, 203,540 flu doses were administered. While in the 2021-2022 flu season, the number increased to a whopping 406,799 doses administered. The current uptake for the 2022-2023 flu season has reached to 446,740 doses administered as of February 2023.

The Houston Health Department’s achievements are not only evident in the work and ingenuity it has put forth, but continues to demonstrate its commitment in protecting the community from vaccine preventable diseases.



Honorable Mention Winners

Laura Scott

2022–23 Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award

**National Minority Quality
Forum (NMQF)**
(Washington, DC)



Ahead of National Influenza Week the National Minority Quality Forum (NMQF) launched a campaign to urge Black and Hispanic communities to prevent serious illness from the flu by getting vaccinated. Historically, minorities experience a disparity in that their vaccination rates can differ by as much as 16%, compared to the non-Hispanic white population. Black and Hispanic populations are more likely to experience complications from the flu but less likely to be vaccinated.



Laura Lee Hall, PhD
Center for Sustainable Health
Care Quality and Equity

NMQF launched fact sheets, appealed for patient stories on social media by promoting #MyFluStory as well as developed illustrated videos on four cultural values as identified by audience research data for communities of color, particularly those ages 60 and up: faith, safety, tradition and family. NMQF received over 100 stories from people regarding their experience with the flu, including some sobering accounts of losing loved ones to the disease. Furthermore, NMQF stressed the importance of the high-dose flu vaccine after the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) updated its guidelines following advocacy from NMQF and others to recommend that patients 65 and older should receive Fluvad Quadrivalent, Flublok Quadrivalent or Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent. Their advocacy efforts included a Lancet article titled, “Effect of race and ethnicity on influenza vaccine uptake among older US Medicare beneficiaries: a record-linkage cohort study.” This study identified substantial racial and ethnic disparities in seasonal influenza vaccine uptake among Medicare beneficiaries aged 65 years or older, and the need for new legislative, fiscal, and educational strategies to address these inequities.

NMQF also partnered with health systems and community health workers through our Health Champions programs to provide access and education directly to community members and encourage flu vaccination. Their multi pronged approach gave NMQF the opportunity to reach millions of people with flu vaccine information and directly impact hundreds of people with in-person outreach.

Honorable Mention Winners

Special Recognition

THANK YOU to the members of the NAIIS Awards Committee:

- ◆ Carolyn Bridges (Immunize.org)
- ◆ Susan Farrall (HHS/OASH)
- ◆ Claire Hannan (AIM)
- ◆ Joe Lastinger (FFF)
- ◆ Alexandra Piasecki (CDC)
- ◆ *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



National Adult
and 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

Communications: A fundamental principle of effective healthcare is tailoring communication to the individual. “Healthcare providers who communicate in a personalized, targeted way are found to significantly increase a patient’s attention, knowledge, medical compliance, positive health behavior, and improved health outcomes.”

Reaching certain populations:

Unhoused populations: The team was able to vaccinate over 1,000 members of the “unhoused population” by word-of-mouth referrals and use of a mobile vaccine pop-up clinic method. They enlisted collaboration with other stakeholders to offer mobile vaccination services to the community experiencing homelessness. The primary goal was to meet people where they were to vaccinate against an approaching Mpox outbreak while offering equitable access to healthcare services, education, and compassion. Additionally, they were able to offer flu and COVID-19 vaccines to community members at no cost. In settings such as primary medical homes and urgent care centers, unvaccinated individuals within this population were often unable to access immunizations and many lacked the resources to pay for appointments, transportation, or even tools for vaccination follow-up.

Bringing to Where People Are: Mobile vaccine clinics provided adult vaccines for COVID-19 and Influenza. In addition, the coalition conducted preventative health screenings such as blood pressure, glucose, and cholesterol screenings. Many of the people served had food and housing insecurities, therefore we coordinated other community organizations to address those needs by joining the clinic. A local food bank brought food boxes and community organizations that address immigration and housing needs provided information at the clinic.

We used two main strategies: subsidizing vaccinations to uninsured and underinsured individuals at sponsored clinics, and providing grant money to colleges, universities, and medical clinics that serve these populations. We also provides logistical support for mobile vaccination clinics at community locations as a key convener to vaccine administrators. They work with both community organizations and vaccine providers to sponsor mobile clinics, particularly among for youth and in communities of color.

Hispanic / Latino Community: Due to the high level of work previously conducted in the Hispanic/Latino community, the coalition was the first to collaborate with the Mexican Consulate (MC) office to provide vaccines while the MC held appointments. The day before the clinic, an MC staff member would call people to remind them of their appointment, inform them of the vaccine clinic and provide vaccine education.

College Students: College students in emerging adulthood are a key group to connect with so they can be empowered to take ownership of their preventive healthcare. The Collegiate Challenge included a fully equipped social media toolkit with color options customized to participating schools. There was also a complete campaign toolkit designed to help student health clinics and administrators develop a plan to improve flu vaccination on campus.

Collaboration:

The Immunization Coalition’s motto is “Promote Immunization, Prevent Disease, Protect Our State.”

Training: The collaboration with the local communities included real-time vaccine-information “Train the Trainer” zoom-delivered programs for community health workers who interface with community members and individual vaccine-expertise support when needed upon request.

Pharmacy: Education, trust, and quality care are vital to a successful clinic, therefore we carefully selected partners who were trusted in the community to provide mobile vaccine clinics and education. One of the partners, the College of Pharmacy, provided care in line with the Standards for Adult Immunization Practice while training student pharmacists. This ensures that the practice of providing care to underserved populations continues.