



Association of
Immunization
Managers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 19, 2024

CONTACT: TESSA ATKINSON-ADAMS

Association of Immunization Managers

tatkinsonadams@immunizationmanagers.org

Association of Immunization Managers Celebrates 25th Anniversary by Inducting Five Leaders into Hall of Fame

[ROCKVILLE, MD] – December 19, 2024 – The Association of Immunization Managers (AIM), representing the 64 federally funded state, territorial, and urban area immunization programs, celebrated its 25th anniversary at its annual conference December 10-12. In addition to a Second Line through the streets of New Orleans, AIM marked this milestone by inducting five leaders into the AIM Hall of Fame.

AIM's **Hall of Fame Award** recognizes individuals who contributed outstanding leadership to the field and the vision of a nation free of vaccine-preventable diseases throughout their career. The following individuals were inducted this year:

- **Inductee: *Beth Rowe-West, RN, BSN, Retired Immunization Program Manager, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services***
 - Beth Rowe-West served as AIM Chair in 2004 and facilitated the first AIM strategic planning meeting and was a vocal presence for AIM throughout the Vaccine Management Business Improvement Project (VMBIP). Beth served as program manager in North Carolina until 2013, during which North Carolina ranked at the top for childhood immunization coverage rates. Beth also started the AIM mentor program and launched the AIM Leadership Institute, contributing to the creation of AIM's Leadership in Action conferences. Upon her retirement, she became a consultant for AIM and mentored new program managers, serving as member services director for six years. Beth won the AIM Natalie J. Smith, MD Award for Excellence in Program Management in 2006.
- **Inductee: *Jane Zucker, MD, Retired Assistant Commissioner, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Bureau of Immunization***
 - Jane Zucker managed the New York City Bureau of Immunizations for 18 years. During this time, she promoted the importance of immunization information systems (IISs) and used the IIS and its data to increase participation in the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. She was an AIM mentor, and received the AIM Natalie J. Smith, MD Award for Excellence in Program Management in 2015. Jane published numerous articles, chaired the AIM Research Committee, and encouraged immunization programs and partners to use data and evidence to drive their activities. She was involved in the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), serving on many workgroups, and encouraged program managers to get involved and share their opinions.
- **Inductee: *Laurel Wood, MPA, Retired Immunization Program Manager, Alaska Division of Public Health***
 - Laurel Wood's involvement with AIM goes all the way back to 1999, and even earlier, when she had a vision of a community for program managers to share their

challenges, successes, and ideas. Laurel Wood was program manager in Alaska for 16 years, where she managed a vaccine depot, built a statewide IIS, and developed a statewide preparedness program. Laurel served as chair of AIM in 1999, was a recipient of an AIM Bull's-Eye Award for Innovation and Excellence in Immunization, and won the Natalie J. Smith, MD Award for Excellence in Program Management in 2007.

- *Inductee: **Pejman Talebian**, MA, MPH, Immunization Division Director, Massachusetts Department of Public Health*
 - Pejman Talebian served as AIM chair in 2003. During his tenure, AIM acquired its first funding and hired its first executive director. Pejman planned and facilitated monthly General Membership calls, took minutes, facilitated the AIM meeting for program managers in 2004, and worked closely with the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) to set up financial infrastructure so that AIM could accept its first cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Pejman accomplished all this while leading the Massachusetts immunization program to some of the highest coverage rates in the country. Pejman served as AIM chair again in 2015, was the Natalie J. Smith, MD Award for Excellence in Program Management winner in 2017, and has served many years on the AIM Executive Committee.

- *Inductee: **Ron Balajadia**, MS, Immunization Branch Chief, Immunization Branch, Hawai'i Department of Health*
 - Ron Balajadia has over 20 years of experience working in the field of immunizations in the Pacific region. Ron participated in the first AIM strategic planning meeting in 2004 as the program manager in Guam, where he worked for 10 years. Later, he joined the Hawai'i Department of Health as the immunization branch chief, where he has served for the last 10 years. He has participated in numerous AIM committees, including serving the second longest tenure as AIM chair. Ron has been instrumental in bringing the Pacific Islands program managers into the AIM community and bringing the AIM community to the Pacific Islanders. Ron was also the recipient of the 2016 AIM Impact Award and the 2024 Natalie J. Smith, MD Award for Excellence in Program Management.

Congratulations to the new Hall of Fame inductees!

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

###

About 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 in 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/