



## 2018 Natalie J. Smith, MD Immunization Champion Award

*Presented to*

*Dorit Rubinstein Reiss, PhD*

The Natalie J. Smith Immunization Champion Award is presented to an individual, group, or organization in California that has made an outstanding contribution in the immunization arena.

The Natalie J. Smith Award was established in 2003 in memory of Natalie Joy Smith, MD, MPH (1962-2003). Dr. Smith was Deputy Director of the National Immunization Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; former Chief of the Immunization Branch, California Department of Health Services (1994-2002); and a founder of the California Coalition for Childhood Immunization, a precursor organization to the California Immunization Coalition. This award memorializes Dr. Smith's exceptional leadership and her dedication to eliminating vaccine preventable diseases.

Dorit R. Reiss, LLB, PhD, is this year's recipient of the 2018 Natalie J. Smith Immunization Champion Award. Dorit is a professor of Law at UC Hastings, a tireless parent advocate, and a frequent contributor to journals, blogs, and news media. She is also a popular and oft-requested speaker at conferences and in legislative hearings. Her work focuses on health care and social policies.



Dorit's interest in immunization advocacy started in 2010 with the birth of her first son. California was in the midst of a whooping cough epidemic. Her baby was still too young to be vaccinated against pertussis, and she was determined to help protect him. As she read various parenting blogs, she was disheartened to see myths about MMR and anti-vaccination claims. She was – and still is – convinced that the science was solid. She started her pro-vaccination activism by commenting on various websites and on social media, and she has never slowed down. Since then she has created a blog, authored several articles, spoken in support of immunization-related legislation, shared information and technical expertise with CIC and its national partners, serves on the Voices for Vaccines Parent Advisory Board and has incorporated immunization and public health policy into her curriculum.

Dorit has expressed that her defense of immunization is driven by her desire to protect children and adults from vaccine-preventable diseases. In her own words: "Vaccines protect children and safeguard the public's health. Being part of those who promote immunizations gives me a purpose. I've met amazing people on this journey – people with large hearts, brilliant minds, dedication and selflessness."