



2026 ACGME Debra L. Dooley GME Program Coordinator Excellence Award Frequently Asked Questions



Why did the ACGME establish the Debra L. Dooley GME Program Coordinator Excellence Award?

The ACGME established the GME Program Coordinator Excellence Award in recognition of the crucial role program coordinators play in the success of residency and fellowship programs. In 2019, the ACGME renamed the award for Director, Educational Activities Debra L. Dooley upon her retirement from the ACGME. Ms. Dooley advocated for program coordinators throughout her career and helped to establish the ACGME's annual Coordinator Forum at the Annual Educational Conference. As most residents, fellows, program directors, faculty members, and ancillary staff members know, the program coordinator is a pivotal position. The ACGME is equally dependent on these individuals to wear the many hats of administrator, counselor, enforcer, coordinator, organizer, and scheduler.

How do I make a nomination?

Download the nomination form from the ACGME website, complete it, and submit it along with the letters of support. All materials (nomination form and letters of support) must arrive by email in **one PDF (portable PDF files are not acceptable)**. To do this, assemble all materials and scan them, then email the resulting PDF. **Material received in piecemeal or that includes unsigned letters will not be accepted.** Direct any questions to DeLonda Bonasera: dbonasera@acgme.org or 312.755.5059.

What is the deadline for nominations?

All nominations must be emailed before **5:00 p.m. Central on Wednesday, March 12, 2025**. Nominations received after the deadline and/or submitted in piecemeal will not be considered.

How many awards are given?

Up to five program coordinators will be selected.

Is there a limit to the number of nominations I can submit?

Only **one** program coordinator nomination per institution will be accepted.

What is awarded?

Each Debra L. Dooley GME Program Coordinator Excellence Award recipient will receive a plaque, and expenses paid by the ACGME for the awardee and a guest to travel to the 2026 ACGME Annual Educational Conference, where the award will be presented. Conference registration will be waived for the awardee. The 2026 conference will take place on February 19-21 in San Diego, California.

In addition, each awardee will receive an expenses-paid retreat experience unlike any other. New and former awardees will meet in a setting designed to support and honor them and their work and create a space that invites but does not intrude, fostering a sense of community. The retreat is typically held the third week of May, beginning on a Wednesday evening, and ending on a Friday afternoon. Some former awardees have had this to say about their retreat experience:



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"In a job where there are so many competing demands, it was refreshing to work at a completely different pace! Just GO... Our world does not allow for us to do these things often enough in this digital, instant access age... JUST GO... you won't be sorry you did!" - Nedd Brown, EdD, Courage to Lead Awardee

"This was amazing and should be continued. Self-work is not self-ish. The more I am ok, the healthier and more insightful I am, the better leader I become." - Sandi Moutsios, MD, Courage to Teach Awardee

"I am more than the tasks I accomplish. I will continue to marinate and percolate on this experience for a very long time. I'm leaving full, not exhausted nor emotionally drained." - Kelly Corning, Debra L. Dooley GME Program Coordinator Excellence Awardee

When will award winners be announced?

Selections will be made by the ACGME Awards Committee at its fall 2025 meeting, and shortly thereafter recipients will be notified. Award announcements will then be published in a press release, the *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*, and the ACGME *e-Communication*, as well as on the ACGME website and social media accounts.

When will the award be presented?

Awards will be presented at the 2026 ACGME Annual Educational Conference.