



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 30, 2012
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Tucson Woman Receives Prestigious New Award

In recognition of National Infant Immunization Week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the CDC Foundation are honoring immunization advocates around the country with the first ever CDC Childhood Immunization Champion awards. These awards acknowledge people who have made immunization success possible in their community, including Leslie Maier from Tucson, Arizona.

Leslie lost her seventeen-year-old son, Chris, to bacterial meningitis in 2005. Chris Maier was a healthy, athletic high school senior and star soccer player when he suddenly became ill with meningitis and died within 18 hours of showing symptoms of illness. In the wake of her son's death, Leslie joined the National Meningitis Associations' (NMA) Moms on Meningitis program to teach other families about the dangers of meningococcal disease, and prevention methods, including immunization. She was elected as a NMA board member in 2006.

Leslie is an advocate for meningitis education, prevention and immunization. She was a driving force behind the addition of meningitis immunization requirement to Arizona's school rules in 2008. Leslie collaborated with the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and The Arizona Partnership for Immunization to develop meningitis education materials for parents, schools and health care providers in Arizona. She continues to honor Chris' memory by speaking at national, regional and local meetings and conferences.

WHAT: Arizona's CDC Childhood Immunization Champion Award Winner

WHEN: Wednesday, May 2nd 3:30 pm

WHERE: Arizona Department of Health Services, 150 N 18th Ave, Phoenix

WHY: Educate Arizonans about the importance of immunizations

WHO: Leslie Maier & ADHS Immunization Staff

Later that evening, Leslie will be recognized at The Arizona Partnership for Immunization's 16th Annual Big Shots for Arizona Award Ceremony at the Phoenix Country Club.

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is an annual observance to highlight the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and to celebrate the achievements of immunization programs in promoting healthy communities throughout the United States. This year, during NIIW, communities across the U.S. celebrate the [CDC Childhood Immunization Champions](#).

“Vaccine-preventable diseases still circulate in the United States and elsewhere. Without the diligent efforts of our champions, these potentially deadly diseases would be an even greater threat to our nation's children,” said Dr. Anne Schuchat, Director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. “Each of us has the potential to be a champion by protecting children's health through immunization.”

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