



2027 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?

Submit the [online application](#) and email the four **signed** support letters according to the directions on the application. All materials support letters must arrive by email in **one PDF (portable PDF files are not acceptable)**. To do this, assemble all materials, scan them, then email the resulting PDF. **Material received in piecemeal or that includes unsigned letters will not be accepted.** Direct any questions to acgmeawards@acgme.org or 312.755.5059. **Note: Do not email the nomination form; only the support letter PDF should be sent via email.**

Who must sign group letters?

All contributors to group letters must sign.

Are signatures generated by DocuSign acceptable?

Yes. Otherwise, signatures should be handwritten on the letters or use other platforms that generate electronic signatures.

What is the deadline for nominations?

All nominations (including support letters and completion of the online form) must be submitted before **5:00 p.m. Central on Wednesday, March 18, 2026**. Nominations received after the deadline and/or submitted piecemeal will not be considered.

How many awards are given?

Up to ten 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 2027



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ACGME Annual Educational Conference, where the award will be presented. Conference registration will be waived for the awardee. The 2027 conference will take place on February 25-27 in San Antonio, Texas.

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:

"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 2026 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 2027 ACGME Annual Educational Conference.