

## Melissa Varnavas Spirit of Service Award

### Summary

The Association for Clinical Documentation Integrity Specialists (ACDIS) *Melissa Varnavas Spirit of Service Award* recognizes an individual who has committed themselves to service by volunteering their time and skills to assist their peers and advance the CDI profession.

The *Melissa Varnavas Spirit of Service Award* honors a professional who:

- Volunteers their time and skills to serve both the profession and their peers on a regular basis
- Has made a difference in their facility and/or in the broader CDI community/profession
- Exhibits a love of learning by seeking out additional educational resources to advance their proficiency within the profession
- Strives to make the CDI community a welcoming and nurturing place for those looking to achieve professional growth
- Embodies key ACDIS values, as outlined in the ACDIS *Code of Ethics*
  - Honesty and integrity
  - Acting in a manner that brings honor to self, peers, and profession
  - Committing to continuing education and lifelong learning

### Criteria

To that end, nominees for the *Melissa Varnavas Spirit of Award* should:

- Hold an active position within a CDI department or a role serving the CDI profession
- Be making active, continuing efforts to serve the CDI profession and their peers

### Attributes

Additionally, nominees for the *Melissa Varnavas Spirit of Service Award* should:

- Contribute to the advancement of the profession through volunteer efforts by (for example)
  - Serving as a leader (or member of the leadership committee) for a local ACDIS chapter or networking group
  - Serving on an ACDIS board or committee
  - Serving on boards and committees related to CDI at one's own facility
- Actively engage with the ACDIS community by (for example)
  - Participating in quarterly conference calls
  - Contributing to discussions on the ACDIS Forum
  - Donating materials to share as ACDIS Resources
- Adhere to the ACDIS Code of Ethics by (for example)
  - Following the core ethical principles
  - Applying the core principles to daily activities
  - Describing the purpose of core principles to colleagues

### **Nomination considerations**

The following questions are designed to assist the nominee and their colleague(s) in the submission process. The nominator will/should work in conjunction with the nominee to provide:

- Resume or CV
- Description or supportive evidence of volunteer work in the CDI community
- Letter of recommendation (recommended but not required)

### **Evaluation considerations**

All nominations will be evaluated by the ACDIS team, which will consider the following questions:

- What makes this nominee stand out from their peers?
- How has this nominee contributed their time and skills in service of the profession and their peers?
- In what capacity is the nominee involved with related professional associations and the broader professional community?
- Does this nominee exemplify the ethical standards of the Association?
- Does this nominee advocate for the CDI profession?
- How has the nominee encouraged others to progress?

### **About Melissa Varnavas**

ACDIS is proud to present this award in honor of our friend and colleague, Melissa Varnavas, who passed away in 2022. Melissa's spirit of service imbued ACDIS with so much over the years, including the creation and nurturing of local chapters and networking groups around the country, which she devoted herself to supporting. She joined the ACDIS team in 2008, only a year after its inception, and she was truly the heart and soul of ACDIS. Through her work with ACDIS local chapters, conferences, and publications, she was able to connect with so many members of the association, and she brought so much joy to so many people. She focused on education and service, but always with an eye to making it accessible, interesting, and entertaining. With this award, we wish to honor those who exhibit her passion for service and ensure that Melissa's legacy lives on in the ACDIS community.