



For Immediate Release

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Forum Names Steve Smith 2009 'Best Boss' Superstar Award Recipient
Chicagoland Associations to Recognize Association All-Stars on June 24

CHICAGO – The Association Forum of Chicagoland is pleased to announce Steve R. Smith, CAE, executive director/CEO of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM), as the recipient of its 2009 Superstar award.

Given to an "All-Star" who creates a positive and innovative workplace, the Superstar award is presented annually to an association chief executive officer who demonstrates an effective overall leadership style based on criteria such as staff recognition, team member training and development, and low employee turnover.

"Strong associations need strong leaders who are capable of not only managing employees, but also inspiring them," said Christie A. Tarantino, CAE, president and CEO of the Forum. "Steve Smith is that type of leader. On behalf of the entire association community, Forum is pleased to salute him for his willingness to enthusiastically support, motivate and develop his team."

Also known as the "Most Valuable Boss" award, the Superstar award is unique because it's given based on nominations not from peers, but rather from staff.

"It's a very humbling honor," Smith said. "It means a great deal because it comes from my colleagues. Of course, behind every 'super' boss is an even more impressive team. And that's clearly the case when it comes to the team at Association Management Center that supports the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine."

AAHPM's executive director/CEO since 2007, Smith is "generous, thoughtful and innovative," according to his team, who said that "his participative management style makes you feel you have a voice and that someone is listening who appreciates your ideas to help the organization grow and achieve its goals."

"My leadership style has been described by other colleagues as communicative, collaborative and catalytic," Smith said. "I like innovation and believe strongly that the best way to move an organization forward is by identifying a shared vision and engaging people in the work that needs to be done. When there is a compelling mission and important work to do, it's easy to motivate staff to work hard and take on new challenges. My primary job is to empower and encourage them to succeed — and to provide the tools and resources needed for growth and success."

Since joining AAHPM, Smith has made employee development and recognition a No. 1 priority, according to his employees, who say they are grateful for his ongoing gestures of gratitude, encouragement and support.

“Steve demands excellence from himself and the team and it is a pleasure to work hard in the culture of the team he leads,” AAHPM staff said. “He makes coming to work easy.”

Smith will be recognized as part of Forum’s 2009 Association All-Star Day on June 24, during which more than 120 Chicagoland associations and supplier partner organizations will honor their staffs in unique and creative ways for making a difference and playing an important part in their organizations’ success.

All-Star Day is part of Association Week 2009, which also includes Forum’s Annual Meeting on June 23. Taking place June 22-26, 2009, Association Week is a time for education, appreciation and celebration for 2,000 associations in the Chicagoland area.

For more information about Association Week 2009, All-Star Day or the Superstar award, visit www.associationweek.org.

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ABOUT THE FORUM

The mission of the Association Forum of Chicagoland is to “advance the professional practice of association management.” Founded in 1916, the Forum serves 47,000 association professionals whose efforts serve more than 37 million members and generate \$22 billion in global annual expenditures.