



National Lieutenant Governors Association

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LT. GOVERNOR MICHELS RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY FOR HIS LEADERSHIP ADVANCING PUBLIC HEALTH

South Dakota Lt. Governor Matt Michels today received the 2016 Public Leadership in Advancing Healthy Lifestyles award, a national recognition of his effective advocacy for public health. The award is presented annually by Takeda Pharmaceuticals USA in partnership with the National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA).

The award was presented by last year's recipient Connecticut Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman and by Jim Delatte of Takeda. "Lt. Governor Michels has been a long-life contributor to advancing healthy lifestyles," said Delatte. "Starting in college through his professional career and now as a state leader, Lt. Governor Michels has been a constant and effective voice on critical issues of health," said Delatte.

In college, Lt. Governor Michels worked as an orderly and as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) earning his nursing degree in 1980. He later obtained his Bachelor's degree in health services administration. As an attorney, Lt. Governor Michels practices health care and hospital law. Lt. Governor Michels served as Chairperson of his state's Health Insurance Exchange Task Force and he was and remains a key leader in South Dakota's implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

"The award recognizes Lt. Governor Michel's work to advance healthy lifestyle opportunities for tribal communities, a key constituency of his state. He works tirelessly for veterans to achieve all assistance they need," said NLGA Director Julia Hurst. "Lt. Governor Michels advances the state's health care career outreach by encouraging people to consider medical careers, including becoming Physician Assistants. He supported the state's growing use of technology to increase hands-on training of medical professionals, as well as to collaborate with other healthcare experts."

In receiving the award, Michels said, "I have had the opportunity to wear a lot of different 'hats' through the years. Few have been as formative as my nurse 'hat.' Nursing exposed me to people from many different walks of life and taught me about compassion and countless other life lessons. But, it also taught me about the far-reaching impact of medical ailments and how we confront those ailments. Over the years, the development of new medicines has been vital in helping people live longer and healthier lives." Lt. Governor Michels actively advances healthy lifestyles through his promotion of the need for diversity in clinical trials.

"NLGA is proud to partner in the process of recognizing, bi-partisanly and nationally, one state leader for his or her commitment to effectively tackling the current and future health challenges of the country," said Hurst. "By recognizing Lt. Governor Michels, we hope attention is brought to his work in a way that brings new ideas to other states."

The award was announced and the presentation made during the NLGA Federal-State Relations meeting in Washington D.C.

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