

2022 EXCELLENCE IN INSURANCE EDUCATION AWARD RECIPIENTS

The Excellence in Insurance Education award recognizes state associations and staff who have made significant contributions to insurance education for members and the industry. Through a variety of traditional and cutting-edge professional development programs, recipients of this award have proven their dedication to promoting quality insurance education and the Big 'I' Agent Development Group is proud to honor them for their accomplishments.

DIAMOND ELITE*

**States that have achieved Diamond status for 10+ years in a row*



Florida

Four-time Diamond Elite recipient Florida's focus is on filling the talent gap. To help achieve this goal, the association partners with 11 state colleges offering risk management programs. Addressing virtual work trends, the state also developed well-received academies to help license agency staffers and will continue to deploy them throughout the year.

Kansas

Achieving Diamond Elite status this year, Kansas has a Professional Development Committee dedicated to helping members evolve and creating opportunities where education is easily accessible. Free Friday Ethics classes and partnering with Big 'I' Oklahoma on some continuing education/simulcasting classes are just two more reasons for the state's continued success.

Maine

Maine, reaching Diamond Elite status this year, continues to develop remote learning opportunities to help serve the needs of its members. Adding a new instructor who lives and works part time for an agency in the state is bringing even more credibility and real-world examples to the state's incredible education program.

Massachusetts

With long standing success, Massachusetts reached Diamond Elite status this year. The state continues to evolve to meet the needs of its members by offering all key programs with both online and in-person options and focusing on long-term strategies like the state's plan to implement a learning management system by the fall of 2022.

Nebraska

Achieving Diamond Elite status this year, Nebraska has proven up to the task of accommodating the everchanging needs of its members. The state elevated its CISR offering to include online, in-person, and hybrid classes which have been tremendously successful, and their NextGen Lunch & Learn 1-CE webinars have also been well received.

New Hampshire

New Hampshire, reaching Diamond Elite status this year, continues its success with many educational offerings including the ACSR, AAI, and CRIS designations. The state's popular NH-specific Commercial Insurance Advanced Studies (CIAS) program offers core classes, webinar requirements, classes in the student's specialty, and an amazing case study final where students apply learned skills.

DIAMOND ELITE

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New Jersey

In its first year as a Diamond Elite recipient, a well-rounded and vital education program is what New Jersey brings to its members. The association offers P&C pre-licensing classes, designation programs including ASCR, AAI, CRIS, and MLIS, and a whole host of content from entry level to complex technical and management seminars meeting the educational needs of all its members.

New York

Three-time Diamond Elite recipient New York continues to build on its past success. The reach of the state's Big 'I' New York Leadership Academy – with topics like setting goals, communicating, building a team, Intrinsic Validation, and creating a Championship Culture – continues expand and the association's two CE On Demand classes and 15inOne CE programs are helping to keep attendance numbers keep growing.

North Carolina

Two-time Diamond Elite recipient North Carolina continues to evolve their education program with instructor led webinars, on-demand CE classes, hybrid class offerings, and in-person sessions held throughout the state. New course categories were also added including advanced level courses, agency perpetuation and customer service training, and a variety of non-CE content.

South Carolina

In its second year as a Diamond Elite recipient, South Carolina is dedicated to increasing its members' technical insurance knowledge through designations like CIC, CISR, and AIAM. The state also offers courses in agency operations and sales to help members finetune their business knowledge to help them run successful and profitable agencies.

Virginia

Achieving Diamond Elite status this year, Virginia weathered the storm of shifting continuing education requirements in the state and a change of Education Director in part by partnering with a different distance learning platform and purchasing A/V equipment to greatly enhanced the state's webinar experience for members.

DIAMOND

Arizona

Seven-time Diamond recipient Arizona found success with hybrid courses, new content, and continuing to put students first throughout the year. With a higher amount of people contacting the association voicing an interest in careers in insurance, the state hosted the first P&C licensing class they've had in a long time which proved successful.

Arkansas

First-time Diamond recipient Arkansas began offering all designation programs in hybrid format with great success. The state also played an important role in getting a 2-year insurance degree program approved at a local technical college which includes coursework, internship opportunities, and the opportunity for students to complete the CISR exam all while earning their degree.

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Colorado

Four-time Diamond recipient Colorado hosted a 4-hour agency perpetuation session which proved to be one of the state's most well-attended sessions outside of their typical continuing education courses. Producing an E&O class with the association's general counsel and CEO was also a great success, and this valuable content is offered free to all of the state's members.

Delaware

Six-time Diamond recipient Delaware found continued success by going with the flow, responding to members' needs, and being nimble offering educational engagement in every format including on-demand, webinar, and in-person classroom. Since its inception in 2018, the state has developed a much-needed insurance education scholarship program that has benefitted dozens of agencies throughout Delaware and Pennsylvania.

Illinois

Seven-time Diamond recipient Illinois transitioned to hybrid learning for CISR and CIC classes this year with lots of success. The format allows the state to have an in-person feel with a virtual aspect. The state was also able to pass legislation to allow virtual pre-licensing classes, a total game changer as it opens this training up to the entire state without the added burden of travel costs.

Kentucky

Six-time Diamond recipient Kentucky added more than 10 courses to their ABEN catalog and most of the courses are being offered in other states as well. In 2021, the state launched its Commercial Lines Coverage Specialist (CLCS) designation which has since been adopted by two other states. Reigniting some in-person options like the state's CE Road Shows and 6-hour Disaster Day also proved quite successful.

Louisiana

Six-time Diamond recipient Louisiana's goal was to bring back in-person events because they believe some of the best learning takes place when folks get together not only inside but outside the classroom as well. The state also continued to find success with its online CE offerings and made a concerted effort to make each communication with its members the right communication for the individual.

Maryland

Maryland elevated to Diamond level for the first time this year, and the state found its greatest success of 2021 in a CE Day offered through the Big 'I' Virtual University to one of its Associate Partners, Chesapeake Employers Insurance Company. The convenience of being able to do this for the carrier and having a huge turnout was a great achievement for the state and a great value to its members.

Michigan

For the seventh year in a row, Michigan achieved Diamond level. Behind this success lies the state's Professional Development Committee which helped to create a new vision for education, a vision focused on building the leadership, communication, and relationship building skills of its members for strategic agency growth. The state is also exploring a 2022 partnership with Dale Carnegie.

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Minnesota

Minnesota, earning a Diamond award for the second year in a row, made setting the association up for the future their main goal for 2021. To help achieve this goal, the state hired its first Virtual Professional which led to modifications in longstanding systems and best practices and changing how tasks are completed that were otherwise outdated. Job duties among current staffers were rearranged and a second education staffer was hired as well.

Montana

Earning a third Diamond award this year, Montana worked to make sure producers, regardless of membership, knew that the state is *the* local source of CE. The association utilized the CSI producer email list and marketed all classes to the entire list placing heavy emphasis on the fact that the state's online classes are live and do not require an exam for attendees to receive CE.

New Mexico

Seven-time Diamond recipient New Mexico found success in converting in-person hotel CE seminars to the virtual realm with CE "Zoominars". These sessions were successful in reaching agents far and wide throughout the logistically challenged state. Investing in future partnerships and technology to continue the state's remote learning offerings is on the agenda for 2022.

Ohio

Three-time Diamond recipient Ohio added a new staffer which has allowed the state to begin implementing big ideas for future growth. Already, the state found great success approaching large companies with minimal participation in state education, creating custom education plans for them, and exceeding total 2020 annual revenue just four months into 2022.

Oklahoma

Eight-time Diamond recipient Oklahoma partnered with Kansas to provide the interactive simulcast classroom which includes both in-person and online options for CIC/CISR classes. This hybrid offering has increased attendance and allows for more members to participate, those from across the state who have never been able to participate in classes due to distance as well as individuals from all over the country.

Oregon

In its seventh year as a Diamond recipient, Oregon was able to stay strong despite several challenges and setbacks. In-person meetings had to become virtual, and with a small but mighty team of two, the association was still able to pivot, put on quality online events, and received some really great rave reviews from attendees.

Pennsylvania

Six-time Diamond recipient Pennsylvania found continued success by going with the flow, responding to members' needs, and being nimble offering educational engagement in every format including on-demand, webinar, and in-person classroom. Since its inception in 2018, the state has developed a much-needed insurance education scholarship program that has benefitted dozens of agencies throughout Pennsylvania and Delaware.

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Rhode Island

Rhode Island, reaching Diamond level for the first time this year, offered education in a variety of new and traditional formats. Partnerships and hybrid classes added to the state's strengths, and for the first time, the state was able to attract enough students to run all scheduled ACSR and AAI modules and some students even completed their designations.

Tennessee

Three-time Diamond recipient Tennessee gained momentum in 2021 despite setbacks in staffing. With a new education director at the helm, the state was able to hold all remaining CIC and CISR classes and switched two in-person events to virtual. Implementing Invest and offering hybrid events are the association's primary areas of focus in the coming year.

Texas

Four-time Diamond recipient Texas revamped and expanded its Custom Training program where members select CE courses to design an agency-specific day of learning, and the association provides the curriculum, instructor, and materials. Very popular among agency owners, the program provides a convenient, economical way for staff to earn CE without leaving the office with team-building as a fringe benefit.

Utah

Utah earned its first Diamond award this year and broadened the state's education offerings with a three-tiered approach: partnering with corporate partners that offer CE, broadening its National Alliance offerings, and offering in-person CE at state association events. Adding two additional CIC classes and moving them all to remote learning meant the state was able to attract attendees from across the country.

Vermont

Five-time Diamond recipient Vermont offered classes online which greatly expanded the state's reach. Partnering with Rhode Island, the state was able to run designation classes including AAI, ACSR, CRIS, CPIA, MLIS, and AFIS. A well-attended hybrid convention was hosted in September as well where people attend both in-person and virtually.

Washington

Nine-time Diamond recipient Washington turned a challenging year into success with a free leadership webinar series featuring nationally known industry speakers. Designed to help members develop leadership skills despite limitations placed on in-person happenings, the training series was so successful, the state plans to use it in 2022.

Wisconsin

For the second consecutive year, Wisconsin earned a Diamond level award noting two key areas of success. The state offered two new online webinars on Cybersecurity Regulations which was offered to all states and also launched a six-month Project Management course offered in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

GOLD

Alabama

Alabama earned Gold for the seventh year in a row and hired a new staffer to develop marketing, promotion, and advertising, a position the state hasn't had active for several years. Plans are in place to build on the hybrid classroom/virtual models developed over the past couple of years and partnerships with several industry groups to offer even more valuable content to members.

Connecticut

Big 'I' New York manages Connecticut's education program, and this first-time applicant earned a Gold level award. The team put a strategy together that focuses on three things: an attempt to "rebrand" and gain attention for the program, a commitment to developing industry partnerships with organizations like ABEN and NLP, and a plan to create more great content to offer.

Indiana

Three-time Gold recipient Indiana moved the state's CIC, Ruble, and CRM programs totally online. Doing so not only increased attendance numbers but also freed up staff time and allowed for more seamless and consistent marketing efforts. Facing the year's challenges with a renewed commitment to 2022 and beyond, the state is poised for even bigger and better things in the future.

Iowa

Iowa, achieving its first Gold level award this year, continues to embrace a shift towards online education while hoping to bring folks back together at in-person conferences and conventions. A focus on quality over quantity is a longstanding theme that has served the state's education program well and will continue to do so as the program evolves into the future.

Nevada

In its first year as a Gold level award recipient, Nevada continues to strive to be the resource for independent insurance education by offering several webinars and programs through ABEN and the Big 'I' Virtual University, and promoting Ask An Expert, EXCEED, and pre-licensing programs through ExamFX and Kaplan. Professional development topics are a feature of the state's annual tradeshow and conventions.