



NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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Noted Family History Expert Megan Smolenyak Receives Honors from the National Genealogical Society

Haddonfield, NJ Genealogist Is Recognized for Bringing Sound Genealogy Practices and DNA Testing to the Public Eye

(May 13, 2010) – Described as a “major influence on directing the newly interested toward uncovering family relationships and history, rather than merely posting names to a pedigree chart,” Megan Smolenyak received the 2010 NGS Award of Merit for her work in advancing responsible genealogy to a broad popular audience. The prestigious award was presented at the National Genealogical Society Family History Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah on April 30, 2010.

Smolenyak, formerly chief family historian for Ancestry.com, is the author of *Who Do You Think You Are?: The Essential Guide to Tracing Your Family History*, the companion guide to the popular NBC series, and served as researcher for this show as well as PBS series *Faces of America* and *African American Lives* with Henry Louis Gates, Jr. The Haddonfield, New Jersey, resident co-founded RootsTelevision.com and contributes a genealogy column to *Huffington Post*. She founded UnclaimedPersons.org, a volunteer group that assists coroners and medical examiners to help reunite unclaimed deceased individuals with their families, and consults on cold cases with the U.S. Army, FBI and NCIS. Since May 2000, she has supported a variety of genealogical initiatives with her monthly Honoring Our Ancestors grants program.

The NGS Award of Merit is presented to an individual or organization in recognition of exceptional contributions to the field of genealogy by significantly aiding research or increasing interest in genealogy over a period of five or more years.

Presenting the award, Lynda Suffridge, Vice President and Chair of the NGS Awards Committee, said, “Megan has helped genealogy flourish well beyond the traditional genealogical community while focusing on credible documentary and physical evidence, including DNA. She is a popular

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speaker, has written widely in genealogical magazines, published several books, and appeared on national television as an expert. We're proud to recognize her achievements with the 2010 NGS Award of Merit."

Founded in 1903, the [National Genealogical Society](#) is dedicated to genealogy education, high research standards, and the preservation of genealogical records. The Arlington, VA-based nonprofit is the premier national society for everyone, from the beginner to the most advanced family historian, seeking excellence in publications, educational offerings, research guidance, and opportunities to interact with other genealogists. Please visit the [NGS Pressroom](#) for further information.

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