



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION®

Celebrating the American Public Servant

From Founding Patriots to Today's Public Service Leaders

Nearly two hundred and fifty years ago, on Thursday, July 4, 1776, the colonial rebels to the British Empire committed their lives and liberty to the ideals of a democratic republic and launched the creation of the United States of America through the Declaration of Independence. Those rebels became America's first Public Servants—risking everything to build a Government not of autocrats and monarchs, but of, by, and for the people. Today, the National Academy of Public Administration's more than 1,000 Fellows proudly carry forward that sacred legacy. As successors to those founding patriots, these distinguished leaders—former governors, cabinet secretaries, scholars, military officers, mayors, and civic innovators—continue to guide the institutions that hold our Federal Republic together.

Through a bold, year-long Celebration of the American Public Servant (CAPS), the Academy will elevate the people who make our democracy work, highlighted by the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala on June 22, 2026, at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Set against one of the nation's most enduring symbols of democratic knowledge and civic stewardship, the Gala will convene leaders from across sectors to honor the torchbearers of our democracy: public servants at all levels—those who keep the flame of liberty burning.

They are the soul of good Government—a Government that works well and works well for all. CAPS is more than a celebration; it is a national call to recognize, elevate, and champion the noble pursuit of Public Service in every corner of the American story.

Now is your moment to stand with us. Support the Peoples 250 Fund and join the Celebration of the American Public Servant as a partner—to illuminate the heroes of our democracy, shape a defining moment in our nation's 250th anniversary, and inspire the next generation to lead it forward.

Introduction

In 2026, the United States will celebrate its 250th anniversary, a defining national moment to reflect on the people who have quietly and consistently shaped our nation: public servants.

To honor this milestone, the National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) is launching the Celebration of the American Public Servant (CAPS). This once-in-a-generation initiative will spotlight the individuals who keep our democracy running and elevate the role of Public Service at a time when trust in Government is greatly diminished.

The Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala will take place on June 22, 2026, at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The Gala will convene leaders from across government, academia, the private sector, and civil society to honor exemplary public servants, unveil new national awards, and celebrate the people behind the institutions that make democracy work.

CAPS is more than a campaign. It is a movement to reignite civic pride, recognize inspiring leaders, and tell the human-centered stories behind Government that too often go untold.

We are seeking mission-aligned partners, sponsors, and storytellers to help us make this moment unforgettable. Join us in honoring those who serve the public every day and in shaping a defining celebration of American democracy.

Centering the People Behind the Progress

As the nation prepares to celebrate its 250th anniversary, many efforts are focused on the founding ideals, institutions, and historical moments that shaped the United States. These stories matter, but they are only part of the picture.

CAPS is different. This initiative centers the people who have made those ideals real in everyday life. From budget analysts and public health professionals to first responders and city planners, Public Servants are the ones who translate democratic principles into action. Their stories are the heart of this celebration.

Too often, public administration is viewed as abstract or impersonal. CAPS is designed to change that by telling human-centered narratives that show the impact of Public Service through the lived experiences of those who serve.

This is not just a look back. CAPS will also look ahead—to the future of Public Service and the evolving role of public administration in a rapidly changing world. It will ask: What kind of Government do we want for the next 250 years? Who are the people who will lead us there? And how can we inspire a new generation to answer the call to serve?

CAPS aims to spark a national conversation about service, trust, leadership, and the power of Government to do good, now and in the future.

Vision and Objectives

CAPS envisions a future where Public Service is celebrated, trusted, and pursued with pride. We aim to shift the national narrative around Government by putting real people, and their stories, at the center of America's 250th anniversary.

Through CAPS, we seek to:

- Honor Public Servants at all levels of Government for their contributions to the nation's strength, stability, and progress.
- Humanize public administration by sharing compelling, personal stories that show the real-world impact of Public Service.
- Inspire a new generation to consider careers in Public Service and see Government as a powerful force for good.
- Engage the public in conversations about trust, democracy, and the role of Government over the next 250 years.
- Elevate the profile of public administration as essential to the country's past, present, and future.

CAPS is not just a recognition campaign. It is a bold invitation to reimagine the role of Public Service in American life and to build momentum for a stronger, more connected, and more trusted Government.

Program Overview

The Celebration of the American Public Servant (CAPS) will include a curated selection of existing Academy offerings reframed through the CAPS lens, as well as bold new programming designed to elevate and connect the next generation of Public Service leaders. Together, these efforts form a cohesive campaign that will build momentum throughout 2026.

Elevating Ongoing Work Through the CAPS Framework

CAPS will serve as a unifying brand for the Academy's curated signature initiatives, aligning them under a shared goal of honoring and humanizing Public Service. These ongoing programs will be infused with CAPS messaging, storytelling, and public-facing engagement, including:

- **The Why Government Campaign:** An ongoing video and storytelling campaign featuring real Public Servants reflecting on why they chose service. During CAPS, this campaign will expand to include new voices, feature members of the 250 Champions cohort, and serve as a digital archive of modern Public Service.
- **Critical Conversations Speaker Series:** A national civic dialogue series exploring trust in Government, Public Service leadership, and the future of public administration. CAPS will bring a refreshed focus to these conversations, with special editions co-hosted by partners and designed for wider public participation.
- **The National Public Service Award:** Co-sponsored by the Academy, this prestigious honor recognizes exemplary Public Servants. In 2026, awardees will be featured as CAPS honorees and celebrated alongside other initiative components.
- **The Elliot L. Richardson Prize for Excellence in Public Service:** Recognizing lifetime achievement and outstanding contributions to public administration. The 2026 award cycle will be part of the CAPS narrative, connecting past excellence to future promise.

Through CAPS, these established efforts will gain countrywide awareness, enhanced storytelling, and a stronger collective impact as part of a national movement.

Launching New CAPS Signature Initiatives

In addition to elevating the Academy's existing programming, CAPS will launch three bold new offerings designed to recognize emerging leaders, shape the future of the field, and bring the nation together in celebration of Public Service.

250 Champions: In partnership with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the Academy will identify and elevate 250 exceptional individuals from all levels of government whose work demonstrates innovation, integrity, and impact. These individuals may not yet be widely recognized, but they are already shaping the future of their communities and our democracy. This effort is not merely about honoring individuals. It is about building a new national network of inspired, high-potential leaders who are ready to guide the future of Public Service.

The Future of Public Administration Research: This research initiative will examine how public administration has evolved over the past 250 years and how it must continue to adapt to meet the challenges of the next 250. Building on the Academy's work to strengthen effective, trusted government, including research conducted in collaboration with the Bridge Alliance, the effort will explore the future of Public Service at a pivotal national moment. The initiative will convene leaders in governance, public administration, and foresight to reflect on lessons from the nation's first 250 years and co-create a forward-looking vision grounded in the principles of good government. Outputs will include short research products, guiding tenets for the field, and the identification of priority areas for near-term action and longer-term system shifts.

Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala: The Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala will take place on June 22, 2026, at the Library of Congress, aligning with the height of America's Semiquincentennial commemorations. This celebration will serve as the ceremonial centerpiece of the CAPS partnership and a national stage to honor the people who make our government work through exemplary public service. Attendees will include leaders from all levels of government, along with civic and private-sector partners who share a commitment to strengthening democracy through service.

A defining feature of the evening will be the combination of a curated exhibit experience and the launch of new national awards programs, together bringing the story of American public service to life. The exhibit will guide guests through the past, present, and future of public administration, highlighting the people behind the institutions and the evolving work of government in service to the public. Complementing this experience, the CAPS national awards will honor individuals and organizations whose work demonstrates exceptional leadership, creativity, and measurable impact in advancing effective, ethical, and responsive governance across all levels of government. Together, the exhibit and awards will elevate a diverse set of public service innovators and change agents, reinforce the human-centered narrative at the heart of CAPS, inspire the next generation of public servants, and underscore the Academy's role as a national convener and champion of good government.

Together, these three signature initiatives, 250 Champions, The Future of Public Administration, and the CAPS 250 Gala and National Awards Celebration, form the heart of the CAPS campaign. These offerings will elevate leaders, engage communities, and generate lasting momentum for a renewed understanding of what Public Service means and what good Government looks like today. Collectively, they ensure that CAPS is not only a celebration, but also a catalyst for connection, creativity, and long-term impact.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The National Academy of Public Administration is raising support for **The Peoples 250 Fund**, which will sustain and expand the CAPS initiative and its national platform to honor, elevate, and invest in public servants across the country. We invite you to partner with us in advancing this work and ensuring long-term impact.

CAPS sponsorships offer a unique opportunity to align your brand with a high-profile national initiative celebrating Public Service and good Government innovation. Sponsors receive sustained, year-long recognition and visibility that extends through 2027, along with exclusive engagement opportunities and acknowledgement at major events reaching top leaders across government, academia, business, and civil society. Sponsorship offerings are subject to availability and change.

We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with sponsors to design tailored engagements aligned with your organization’s mission, strategic priorities, or personal philanthropic goals. This may include a curated leadership roundtable with Academy Fellows resulting in a published insights brief or featured Academy blog post; a co-developed dialogue on a timely governance challenge; or a focused convening amplified through Academy communications channels. These bespoke opportunities offer meaningful engagement, credible thought leadership, and visibility that extends well beyond the CAPS initiative. We encourage you to connect with us to explore how we can structure a customized sponsorship package that maximizes both impact and alignment.

Signature CAPS Programming Partnership Levels and Benefits

Partnership Level Name/Title	In recognition of your philanthropic support of The Peoples 250 Fund, the Academy will provide the following benefits and visibility opportunities:	<i>Suggested Investment</i>
Founders of Freedom <i>(2 available)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exclusive designation as the Presenting Sponsor of the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala - One (1) reserved table at the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala at the Library of Congress - A speaking role during the Gala awards presentation, offering the opportunity to directly address guests at this landmark national convening - Premium, top-tier visibility and recognition throughout the Gala and across CAPS partnership materials, including prominent acknowledgment in events-related communications, with sustained recognition and visibility extending through 2027 - Premier recognition at the Academy’s National Conference, our flagship convening of senior federal, state, and local leaders, Academy Fellows, and nationally respected experts in public management 	<i>\$250,000</i>

Partnership Level Name/Title	In recognition of your philanthropic support of The Peoples 250 Fund, the Academy will provide the following benefits and visibility opportunities:	Suggested Investment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distinguished recognition at the Academy’s 60th Anniversary Celebration, a historic milestone event honoring six decades of advancing effective, nonpartisan governance - Exclusive opportunity to host an invitation-only meal, reception, or roundtable with senior Academy Fellows, convened around a timely public management topic and designed for candid, high-level dialogue - Invitation to participate as a guest on the Academy’s Management Matters podcast, offering a platform to share insights with a national audience of public sector leaders (subject to editorial alignment) - Opportunity to help shape the theme of a “Critical Conversation” program element, collaborating with the Academy to elevate a pressing governance or management issue aligned with your organization’s expertise 	
<p>Guardians of Democracy <i>(4 available)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One (1) reserved table at the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala at the Library of Congress - Named Award Sponsor of a new national CAPS award, with the opportunity to help shape the focus and criteria of the award in collaboration with the Academy (more details below) - Recognition as a <i>Guardians of Democracy</i> partner across CAPS partnership materials, including Gala-related communications, with sustained recognition and visibility extending through 2027 - Premier recognition at the Academy’s National Conference, our flagship convening of senior federal, state, and local leaders, Academy Fellows, and nationally respected experts in public management - Distinguished recognition at the Academy’s 60th Anniversary Celebration, a historic milestone event honoring six decades of advancing effective, nonpartisan governance - Exclusive opportunity to host an invitation-only meal, reception, or roundtable with senior Academy Fellows, convened around a timely public management topic and designed for candid, high-level dialogue - Invitation to participate as a guest on the Academy’s Management Matters podcast, offering a platform to share 	<p><i>\$100,000</i></p>

Partnership Level Name/Title	In recognition of your philanthropic support of The Peoples 250 Fund, the Academy will provide the following benefits and visibility opportunities:	<i>Suggested Investment</i>
	<p>insights with a national audience of public sector leaders (subject to editorial alignment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to help shape the theme of a “Critical Conversation” program element, collaborating with the Academy to elevate a pressing governance or management issue aligned with your organization’s expertise 	
Champions of Civic Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One (1) reserved table at the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala at the Library of Congress - Designation as the Exhibit Sponsor, with prominent branding and recognition associated with a curated exhibit experience that highlights the people, milestones, and evolving story of American public service - Recognition as a <i>Champions of Civic Trust</i> partner across CAPS partnership materials, including Gala-related communications, with sustained recognition and visibility extending through 2027 - Invitation to participate as a guest on the Academy’s Management Matters podcast, offering a platform to share insights with a national audience of public sector leaders (subject to editorial alignment) - Opportunity to help shape the theme of a “Critical Conversation” program element, collaborating with the Academy to elevate a pressing governance or management issue aligned with your organization’s expertise 	\$50,000
Voices of the Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One (1) reserved table at the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala at the Library of Congress - Designation as a Cocktail Reception Sponsor, with appropriate on-site branding and recognition during the Gala cocktail reception - Recognition as a <i>Voices of the Republic</i> partner across CAPS partnership materials, including Gala-related communications, with sustained recognition and visibility extending through 2027 - Invitation to participate as a guest on the Academy’s Management Matters podcast, offering a platform to share insights with a national audience of public sector leaders (subject to editorial alignment) 	\$25,000

Partnership Level Name/Title	In recognition of your philanthropic support of The Peoples 250 Fund, the Academy will provide the following benefits and visibility opportunities:	Suggested Investment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunity to help shape the theme of a “Critical Conversation” program element, collaborating with the Academy to elevate a pressing governance or management issue aligned with your organization’s expertise 	
Friends of the Public Servant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One (1) reserved table at the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala at the Library of Congress - Recognition as a <i>Friends of the Public Servant</i> partner across CAPS partnership materials, including Gala-related communications, with sustained recognition and visibility extending through 2027 - Invitation to contribute a guest blog post on a pressing public administration or management issue, published through Academy communications channels and shared with our national network of Fellows, public sector leaders, and partners (subject to editorial alignment) 	\$10,000
Semiquincentennial Circle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two (2) tickets to the Celebration of the American Public Servant National Awards Gala at the Library of Congress - Recognition as a <i>Semiquincentennial Circle</i> member across CAPS partnership materials, including Gala-related communications, with sustained recognition and visibility extending through 2027 	\$1,776

Additional Partnership Options

(Subject to Availability and Change)

Add-On Partnership Option	Price
<p>250 Champions Reception Co-Host: Serve as a Co-Host of the exclusive 250 Champions Reception at the 2026 ICMA Conference in Philadelphia, recognizing exemplary public servants selected from across the country. Co-Hosts will receive prominent recognition at the reception and across related CAPS materials.</p>	\$20,000
<p>Livestream Sponsor: Support national access to the Celebration of the American Public Servant by sponsoring the livestream of the Gala and awards presentation. The Livestream Sponsor will receive recognition in the broadcast and associated digital communications.</p>	\$15,000
<p>Gala Photobooth Sponsor: Sponsor the Gala photobooth, creating a memorable, shareable experience for guests throughout the evening. The Photobooth Sponsor</p>	\$7,500

Add-On Partnership Option**Price**

will receive on-site branding and recognition tied to this high-engagement activation.

NAMED AWARD SPONSORSHIPS

(Subject to Availability and Change)

As part of CAPS, the Academy is launching a new national awards program designed to honor the nation's most innovative public servants and the most impactful accomplishments in public administration at the federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial levels. These awards will elevate exemplary leadership, creativity, and results-driven governance at a moment when effective public service is more important than ever.

Named Award Sponsors play a unique and lasting role in shaping how excellence in public service is recognized. Working in partnership with the National Academy of Public Administration, Named Award Sponsors will help inform the focus, values, and criteria of a new national CAPS award and participate in the process of identifying the individual or team to be honored. This collaborative approach ensures that each award reflects both the Academy's commitment to nonpartisan, evidence-based public service and the sponsor's vision for impact. Beyond the Gala, Named Award Sponsorship offers enduring visibility, thought leadership, and association with a prestigious national recognition that celebrates public servants whose work strengthens trust, accountability, and democratic governance.

This national awards program is designed not only to celebrate excellence, but to tell powerful, human-centered stories of public service that inspire trust, learning, and innovation across the field.

Exclusive CAPS Marketing & Engagement VIP Enhancements

Through an exclusive partnership with Leadership Connect (LeadershipConnect.io), select CAPS sponsors at designated levels will receive premium, high-value marketing and engagement benefits. These VIP enhancements extend your visibility and recognition well beyond CAPS events, ensuring year-round presence. Enhancements integrate event participation, media exposure, and thought leadership opportunities designed to elevate your organization's profile.

LeadershipConnect VIP Enhancements

Package	Benefits	Focus Area
Founders of Freedom [1 Available]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 Private Happy Hour• 1 Webinar• 2 Ads• 5 Movers & Shakers Features• 2 LinkedIn Posts• 1 Company Content Repost	Awareness
Guardians of Democracy [2 Available]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 Roundtables• 2 Happy Hours• 2 Blog Post Features	Event Programming
Champions of Civic Trust [4 Available]	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 Webinar• 1 Custom Newsletter• 1 Interview Feature• 1 White Paper	Evergreen Content

Leadership Connect provides full support for DC-based events, with additional support available for regional programming. Enhancements are available on a first come, first served basis, beginning November 2025 and continue throughout the CAPS programming that ends December 31, 2026

Partner, Today!

CAPS is more than a mere event. It is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to uplift and celebrate those Americans who make our democracy work, and to help the nation see Public Service not as bureaucracy, but as purpose.

We are looking for partners and sponsors who believe in the power of Public Service and good Government. You can be a part of something meaningful, visible, and lasting.

Join us in honoring the people who serve, inspiring the next generation, and shaping the future of public administration.

Together, let's make this moment matter!

About the Academy

The National Academy of Public Administration is an independent, Congressionally chartered nonprofit dedicated to improving Government effectiveness and accountability at all levels. With a network of over 1,000 distinguished Fellows, including former cabinet officials, governors, mayors, scholars, and public executives, the Academy brings deep expertise, nonpartisan insight, and a legacy of strengthening public serving institutions for nearly 60 years.

CAPS Partnership Registration

Thank you for your interest in joining the Celebration of the American Public Servant (CAPS). Please complete the information below to register your partnership or sponsorship. We welcome your participation and look forward to collaborating with you to honor Public Service and celebrate the United States of America beyond its 250th commemoration!

Partner Information

Organization/Individual Name	
Primary Contact Person	
Title/Role	
Phone	
Email	
Mailing Address	

Partnership/Sponsorship Selection

<input type="checkbox"/>	Founders of Freedom – \$250,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Guardians of Democracy – \$100,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Champions of Civic Trust - \$50,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Voices of the Republic – \$25,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friends of the Public Servant – \$10,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Semiquincentennial Circle – \$1,776
<input type="checkbox"/>	Additional Partnership Option (specify):

Payment Preference

<input type="checkbox"/>	Check (payable to National Academy of Public Administration)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Credit Card
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wire Transfer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

