



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 over 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), culminating in a powerful National Awards Gala, we honor the torchbearers of our democracy: the federal, state, and local civil servants; the first responders and National Guard; the Coast Guard, active duty, reserve, and military veterans—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. This is more than a celebration; it is a 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—join the Celebration of the American Public Servant as a partner, to illuminate the heroes of our democracy and inspire the next generation to lead it forward!

Introduction

In 2026, the United States will celebrate its 250th anniversary. It will be a defining 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.

Launched in November 2025 and running through July 2026, culminating in a national awards gala, 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.

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: 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.

The Academy anticipates developing this work with a small group of partners who are interested in shaping elements of the research together. The initiative will culminate in a convening in September 2026 to launch a practical roadmap for the field's continued relevance and impact over the next 250 years.

CAPS 250 Gala & National Awards Celebration: The CAPS 250 Gala & National Awards Celebration will take place on **June 22, 2026, at the Library of Congress**, aligning with the height of America's Semiquincentennial commemorations. This culminating 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 and civic and private-sector partners who share a commitment to strengthening democracy through service.

A central highlight of the evening will be the launch of new national awards programs designed to honor and celebrate innovation in public service across the nation and at all levels of government. These inaugural awards will recognize individuals and organizations whose work demonstrates exceptional leadership, creativity, and measurable impact in advancing effective, ethical, and responsive governance. By elevating a diverse set of public service innovators and change agents, the awards will spotlight the breadth and depth of excellence across the public sector, inspire the next generation of public servants, and reinforce the Academy's role as a national convener and champion of good government.

Together, these three signature initiatives, 250 Champion, The Future of Public Administration, and the CAPS 250 Gala & National Awards Celebration form the heart of the CAPS campaign. These offerings shall elevate leaders, engage communities, and generate lasting momentum for a renewed understanding of what Public Service means and what is good Government, today. These happenings will 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 gain yearlong visibility, exclusive engagement opportunities, and recognition at major events reaching top leaders across sectors.

Sponsorship customization is available upon request to maximize impact and alignment with your organizational mission or personal goals. Sponsorship offerings are subject to availability and change.

Signature CAPS Programming Partnership Levels and Benefits

Partnership Level Name/Title	Core Feature	<i>Suggested Investment</i>
Founders of Freedom: Elevating the Legacy of Service (<i>1 available with VIP Enhancements</i>)	Exclusive Presenting Sponsor with top visibility and full benefits	\$500,000
Guardians of Democracy: Defending the Pillars of Public Trust (<i>4 available, 2 with VIP Enhancements</i>)	Gala Co-Host, on-stage role, and branded storytelling	\$250,000
Champions of Civic Trust: Restoring trust in Government (<i>8 available, 4 with VIP Enhancements</i>)	Option of an exclusive branded panel or breakout session during a CAPS Critical Conversation or Academy convening, or opportunity to collaborate on a CAPS white paper or thought piece distributed nationally.	\$150,000
Voices of the Republic: Telling the Story of Civic Impact (<i>10 available</i>)	Major supporter of storytelling, digital campaigns, and media	\$50,000
Community Stewards: Celebrating Local Heroes in Government (<i>10 available</i>)	Recognition in outreach, policy forums, and CAPS media	\$25,000
Friends of the Public Servant: Sharing Gratitude for Service (<i>15 available</i>)	Regional and educational event sponsorship	\$10,000

Partnership Level Name/Title	Core Feature	Suggested Investment
Torchbearers: Lighting the Way for the Next Generation <i>(20 available)</i>	Individual or small group tribute and engagement with honorees	\$5,000
Semiquincentennial Circle: A Lasting Tribute to Our Nation's Servants	Legacy participation with digital recognition	\$1,776

Signature Benefits by Level (Highlights)

Contributions to The Peoples 250 Fund unlock exclusive, tiered benefits, including elevated visibility, tailored engagement opportunities, and recognition commensurate with each level of support. (Subject to Availability and Change)

Benefit	Founders of Freedom	Guardians of Democracy	Champions of Civic Trust	Voices of the Republic	Community Stewards	Friends of the Public Servant	Torchbearers	Semiquincentennial Circle
Title Sponsor Designation	✓							
Gala Speaking Role	✓	✓	✓					
Number Available	1	4	8	10	10	15	20	Unlimited
VIP Gala Tickets	20	10	6	4	2	2	1	—
Feature in Academy Video/Newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Branding on Program/Website/ Social Media	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Commemorative Recognition/Tribute Gift	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Campaign Elements for Partner Visibility and Recognition

(Subject to Availability and Change)

- CAPS 250 Gala & National Awards Celebration with Livestream and Broadcast Distribution
- Public Service Hall of Honor Digital Platform
- Recognition in Academy's Annual Report to the US Congress
- Year-long recognition in Academy forums (AI, Shared Services, Fiscal Resilience)

Add-On Partnership Options (Available to All Levels \$10K+)

(Subject to Availability and Change)

Add-On Partnership Option	Price
Gala Wine Service Sponsor	\$25,000
250 Champions Reception Co-Host	\$20,000
Commemorative Video Series Sponsor	\$15,000
Branded Charging Station	\$5,000

GRAND CHALLENGES 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.

The awards program will be anchored in the Academy's 12 Grand Challenges of Public Administration, which define the most critical and complex issues facing government today, ranging from strengthening democratic institutions and advancing social equity to improving environmental sustainability and leveraging emerging technologies. Collectively, the Grand Challenges provide a comprehensive framework for understanding what effective and forward-looking public administration requires. Through these awards, Naming Partners will have the opportunity to recognize individuals and organizations making meaningful contributions to public administration and to the communities they serve.

The Academy is seeking a select group of partners to sponsor and collaboratively shape these awards programs. Contributions at this level to The Peoples 250 Fund support the long-term sustainability of CAPS and unlock meaningful engagement opportunities, including input on award design and Award Naming Rights.

Naming-Partner Benefits include:

- Input on Award Program Design
- Award Naming Rights
- On-stage presentation of the award at the CAPS Awards Gala
- Logo placement on awardee videos, storytelling platforms, and press materials
- Featured recognition in the CAPS Commemorative Digital Book
- Six VIP tickets to the CAPS Awards Gala
- Recognition across Academy newsletters and social media channels

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.

Protecting and Advancing Democracy

- Protect Electoral Integrity and Enhance Voter Participation
- Modernize and Reinvigorate the Public Service
- Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement
- Advance National Interests in a Changing Global Context

Strengthening Social & Economic Development

- Foster Social Equity
- Connect Individuals to Meaningful Work
- Build Resilient Communities
- Advance the Nation's Long-Term Fiscal Health

Ensuring Environmental Sustainability

- Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change
- Create Modern Water Systems for Safe and Sustainable Use

Managing Technological Challenges

- Ensure Data Security and Privacy Rights of Individuals
- Make Government AI Ready

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Modernize and Reinvigorate the Public Service

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Advance National Interests in a Changing Global Context

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



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Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change

Create Modern Water Systems for Safe and Sustainable Use

MANAGING TECHNOLOGICAL CHALLENGES



Ensure Data Security and Privacy Rights of Individuals

Make Government AI Ready

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.

Timeline

November 2025

Official CAPS Kickoff at Annual Academy Conference
Launch Why Government video campaign and CAPS partner toolkit

December 2025

Partner Briefings Begin

January 2026

Elliot L. Richardson Prize Ceremony

February 2026

Critical Conversation: Rebuilding Trust in Government

March 2026

National Public Service Award Ceremony
Close nomination portal and begin review

Academy Convening on the Future of Government: The Next 250 Years

April 2026

Announce Grand Challenges Awards recipients
Begin storytelling collection process

Podcast Takeover: Public Servants You Should Know

May 2026

ICMA National Conference Announcing 250 Change Makers

Critical Conversation: Public Service at the Local Level

June 2026

CAPS 250 Gala & National Awards Celebration, featuring the Grand Challenges Awards in Washington, DC

National livestream and local watch parties

July 2026

Final Critical Conversation: What's Next for Civic Trust

August – October 2026

Ongoing storytelling and regional follow-ups

Continued development of Future of Public Administration outputs

November 2026

Annual Academy Conference Wrap-Up

Share CAPS learnings, storytelling highlights, and announce legacy initiatives

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 – \$500,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Guardians of Democracy – \$250,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Champions of Civic Trust - \$150,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Voices of the Republic – \$50,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Stewards – \$25,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friends of the Public Servant – \$10,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Torchbearers – \$5,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Semiquincentennial Circle – \$1,776
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grand Challenges Named Award Sponsor – \$100,000
<input type="checkbox"/>	Add-On 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):

Supplemental Notes / Questions / Customization

Please use the space below to provide additional notes, questions, or customization requests:

Authorization

Authorized Representative	
Title	
Signature	
Date	

Return this 2-page form to:

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