



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION®

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Secretary Janet L. Yellen and Governor Gary F. Locke to Receive the National Academy of Public Administration's “Elliot L. Richardson Prize for Excellence in Public Service”

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) today announced that **Secretary Janet L. Yellen**, American Economist, former Treasury Secretary and former Chair of the Federal Reserve of the United States, and **Governor Gary F. Locke**, former U.S. Ambassador to China, U.S. Secretary of Commerce and Washington State Governor, will receive the **Elliot L. Richardson Prize for Excellence in Public Service** on **January 28, 2026**.

The award ceremony will take place at the **Ronald Reagan International Trade Center at 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C, from 7-9p.m** on Wednesday, **January 28** after a reception beginning at 6:00 p.m. Journalist **Jenn White, host of NPR's 1A program**, will moderate a discussion with the two award recipients as part of the event.

The Elliot L. Richardson Prize is presented on a biennial basis to individuals exemplifying the public service virtues demonstrated by the award's namesake. The prize in the amount of \$50,000 will be split between the two awardees. Consistent with the public-spiritedness of Elliot L. Richardson, recipients of the award are required to designate one or more charities to receive half the prize amount they are awarded.

“Secretary Yellen and Governor Locke are pioneering public servants whose careers embody the spirit of service championed by Elliot Richardson,” said James-Christian Blockwood, President and CEO of the National Academy of Public Administration. “They exemplify a model of leadership rooted in commitment, excellence and service that will inspire future generations of public servants.”

Elliot L. Richardson is considered to be one of the nation's finest public servants. An Academy Fellow, he served in four Cabinet-level positions in the U.S. government: Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW); Secretary of Defense, Attorney General; and Secretary of Commerce under both Republican and Democratic Presidents. Richardson is remembered for his integrity and courage that saved the nation from a constitutional crisis during the “Saturday Night Massacre” incident during the Nixon administration.



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This year's honorees have distinguished themselves in public service, upholding Richardson's legacy:

Janet L. Yellen is defined by her groundbreaking leadership in U.S. and global economic policy, as well as her historic firsts in government service. Yellen served as the 78th U.S. Secretary of the Treasury from 2021 to 2025, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System from 2014 through February 2018, Vice Chair of the Board of Governors from 2010 to 2014 and president and chief executive officer of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco from 2004 to 2010. She was appointed by President Bill Clinton to serve as chair of the Council of Economic Advisers from 1997-1999. She is the first woman to ever serve in these positions and is also the only person to have led all three of these government organizations. Her tenure saw one of the longest economic expansions in U.S. history, with steady job growth and low unemployment. She is also recognized for her academic work on unemployment and for her influential role in managing the U.S. economy through post-recession recovery. Throughout her career, Secretary Yellen has highlighted the economic costs of inequality and the importance of expanding opportunity, particularly for working families and marginalized communities.

Gary F. Locke's legacy has many dimensions reflecting his varied roles as a trailblazing politician, public servant, and a diplomat who has been a leader in the areas of education, employment, trade, human services, and the environment. Locke served as the 10th United States Ambassador to China from 2011-2014, the 36th U.S. Commerce Secretary from 2009-2011 and Washington State's 21st Governor from 1997-2005. Locke was the first Chinese American Secretary of Commerce, and the first Chinese American to be elected governor in United States history as well as the first Asian American governor in the continental U.S. His innovations in government efficiency, customer focus, and priority-based budgeting, as well as successful and under-budget management of high-risk initiatives, have won acclaim from nationally recognized authors and organizations, including Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. During his two terms as Governor, Washington was ranked one of America's four best-managed states. Locke currently serves as the chairman of Locke Global Strategies, advising domestic and international clients in several areas, including trade, regulatory, and investment issues. His pragmatic and cross-cultural leadership working across party lines and international borders, has provided effective solutions to pressing problems. His ability to balance diplomacy with the values and priorities of the United States made him a bridge-builder of rare distinction.

Previous recipients of the Elliot L. Richardson Prize include: Colin Powell, Alice Rivlin, George Shultz, Norman Mineta, Sandra Day O'Connor, Lee Hamilton, Tom Kean, James Baker, George J. Mitchell, Robert Gates, Paul Volcker, Sheila Bair, John Koskinen, William Ruckelshaus, Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Leon Panetta, Jerry Brown, Dr. Francis Collins, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Thad Allen and David Beasley. (see more detail about this year's and past awardees in the press kit)



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Registration details can be found online here: <https://napawash.org/event/elliott-l-richardson-prize-for-exceptional-public-service>

MEDIA: Media planning to attend this event MUST RSVP to:

Karen Baratz: karen@baratzpr.com

About the National Academy of Public Administration

Chartered by Congress to provide non-partisan expert advice, the Academy is an independent, nonprofit, and nonpartisan organization established in 1967 to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. Learn more at www.napawash.org

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