

National Public Service Award Winners Announced

Cosponsored by the American Society for Public Administration and the National Academy of Public Administration

WASHINGTON, DC /Send2Press Newswire/ – Winners of the prestigious National Public Service Awards, the premier awards for excellence in public service at all levels of government, have been announced by the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). They will be presented on Monday, April 4, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Milwaukee, WI, at noon, at the ASPA National Conference.

ASPA and NAPA established the National Public Service Awards in 1983 to honor individuals whose accomplishments are models of public service within and outside the work environment. The NPSA Awards Program recognizes individuals who exhibit the highest standards of excellence, dedication, and accomplishment over a sustained period of time and who are creative and skilled career managers at all levels of public service. The 2005 National Public Service Award winners are:

Frank A. Fairbanks, City Manager of Phoenix, Arizona has been a leader in local government for 32 years; during his tenure, Financial World Magazine recognized Phoenix as the “Best Managed City in the Nation” in 1995. He began his career as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Office of the President of Costa Rica.

Under Fairbanks’ leadership, Phoenix consolidated city departments in a new city hall, which was completed on time and under budget, developed e-government, and achieved an AAA excise tax revenue bond rating from Standard and Poors. As if running the U.S.’s largest council-manager form of government were not enough, Fairbanks has co-chaired the Phoenix Violence Prevention Initiative since its inception, served on the Arizona Family Housing Fund, and has started, coached, and refereed youth soccer.

Throughout the city management profession, Fairbanks is known as one who nurtures other public servants. Mayor Phil Gordon notes that Fairbanks believes strongly in building outstanding employees and “takes great pride in sustaining and growing the tremendous amount of cooperation that exists between the mayor, City Council, city staff, and the community.”

Maria Gomez, recently retired Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Human Services Child and Family Services, has served under five Minnesota governors from three political parties and reshaped every major human services program and improved the lives of thousands of Minnesotans. She began her Minnesota career as an intern, having previously been a social worker in Florida, working with the influx of Cuban immigrants.

Gomez also took the lead on redesigning nursing reimbursement funding and

developing programs that allowed low-income, elderly Minnesotans to receive home and community-based services. Such changes have saved countless tax dollars and allowed many Minnesotans to stay at home rather than move into nursing homes.

Governor Tim Pawlenty notes that, "With a constant focus on public policy and people, especially children, Gomez has developed visionary efforts...such as launching the Minnesota Family Investment Program, and implementing a children's initiative to coordinate children and family services. Thousands of families have left welfare for work and hundreds of children have left the foster care system for safe and permanent homes."

Elizabeth Hill, Executive Director, California Legislative Analyst's Office, is respected as one of the top leaders in state government; within the state, and nationally. As California's fiscal advisor to both houses of the legislature, she has put her analytical, nonpartisan eye on nearly all issues that have come before it for 20 years.

In the 1980s, her office uncovered a budget deficit that the governor's staff insisted was not there; she was correct and the budget was adjusted. In the 1990s, her staff developed the policy analysis that helped shape the state's welfare reform law. More recently, Hill led the LAO's review of Governor Schwarzenegger's California Performance Review (CPR), a five-volume, 2,500-page report with proposals to reform state government.

In 1997, Governing Magazine named Hill "Public Official of the Year," noting that the LAO's annual Perspectives and Issues makes it "possible for relatively neophyte, term-limited legislators to get a quick grasp of major challenges facing them."

M. Peter McPherson is a Founding Co-Chair and Director of the Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa. Until recently, he was president of Michigan State University (MSU). In 2003, McPherson took a leave of absence to serve as the Director of Economic Policy for the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance in Iraq, where he helped establish a central bank and develop a new currency.

McPherson's public service career began as a Peace Corps volunteer in Peru, where he worked with other volunteers on school feeding programs. As USAID administrator from 1984-1985, he led the U.S. response to the famine in Africa. McPherson's interest in world humanitarian and agricultural issues has made a difference for millions of people. As Ambassador Julia Chang Block noted, "Famine in Africa has not ended, nor has Peter's dedication to do something about it."

To learn more about 2005 NPSA winners, visit:
www.napawash.org/about_academy/about_npsa2005winners.html

To nominate someone for the 2006 awards, visit:
www.napawash.org/about_academy/about_npsa.html

For a list of all past winners, visit
www.aspanet.org/scriptcontent/index_awardsnpsa_winners.cfm

National Academy of Public Administration, 1100 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 1090E, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 347-3190, ext 3008, npsa @ napawash.org.

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