

ADMIN AWARDS
THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSION'S HIGHEST HONOR

Your complete guide to the Administrative Profession's highest honor in 2026.



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“The Admin Awards is the best thing that’s ever happened to the Administrative Profession.”

Lori Seamons, Executive Assistant, Grainger



ABOUT

THE ADMIN AWARDS

This is Personal

The Admin Awards was founded in 2012 by Sunny Nunan, the daughter of a career Executive Secretary who witnessed firsthand the extraordinary impact Administrative Professionals have inside organizations.

Inspired by her mother, Jeannette Castellano, who served in the profession until retiring just shy of her 80th birthday, Sunny created the world's first public recognition program dedicated to celebrating the achievements of Administrative Professionals.

Today, the Admin Awards is widely recognized as the Administrative Profession's highest honor, celebrating the professionals who help leaders, teams, and organizations succeed.

What began as a personal mission has grown into a national platform elevating those whose contributions are often essential yet rarely recognized.







Continuing the legacy of Colleen Barrett, Southwest Airlines

The Colleen Barrett Award for Administrative Excellence is the Admin Awards' most prestigious honor.

Colleen Barrett was the legendary Executive Assistant at Southwest Airlines who rose to President & COO during her five-decade career at Southwest.

Herb Kelleher, Southwest's visionary CEO leveraged Colleen's extraordinary gifts for strategy, leadership, and interpersonal relationships that enabled her to be the guiding force behind Southwest's renowned "people first" culture.

Since Colleen's passing The Colleen Barrett Institute at Southwest Airlines now selects the Finalists and Winners of the coveted Colleen Barrett Award for Administrative Excellence.



"If Herb could envision it, Colleen could achieve it."

Monica Van Slate, The Colleen Barrett Institute, Southwest Airlines

Southwest®
THE OFFICIAL AIRLINE PARTNER OF
THE ADMIN AWARDS SINCE 2013



We Believe:

Just because Administrative Professionals are behind the scenes, doesn't mean they should be invisible.

Admin Awards Programming by the Numbers:

15 years
20,000+ nominations received
4,000+ nominating companies
110+ Fortune 500
10 host cities
600+ Winners Honored
42,000+ Event Attendees

The Admin Awards remains the #1 public recognition platform for Administrative Professionals today and the Administrative Profession's highest honor.



Who Participates



Trusted by the Best

We're proud to work with leading organizations including 110+ Fortune 500 companies | 52% Enterprise / 48% Small + Midmarket

bxp · NASA · Takeda · San Francisco Giants · Starbucks · Berkeley · Southwest · Obama Foundation · FINRA · Novartis

Adobe · paloalto · Tesla · Juniper Networks · Northrop Grumman · Hess · Under Armour · Giants · Pizza Hut · MIT Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Gilead · 49ers · Johns Hopkins University · Harvard University · Intuit · Uber · Applied Materials · Roche · Lockheed Martin · entergy

Google · Meta · Robert Half · Cisco · Converse · Texas Health Resources · BlueCross BlueShield Association · MBA Mortgage Bankers Association · leidos · Weber Shandwick

salesforce · MD Anderson Cancer Center · hp · Amadeus · Yum! Brands · Zoom · Toyota · Altria · Harwood International · Emirates

vmware · JPMorgan Chase & Co. · snowflake · Oracle · Synopsys · Dallas Mavericks · Nutanix · Stanford University · Interstate Batteries · Vail Resorts

Chevron · Sutter Health · Walgreens · NVIDIA · McKesson · Marsh & McLennan Agency · Grainger · PhRMA · AT&T · Ryan

UT Southwestern Medical Center · Catalyst brands · Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas · The Potter's House · The GRAMMYs · athenahealth · John Hancock · DraftKings · Brown University · Cinemark

TOPGOLF · urbanride



Notable Executive Participants

Laura Alber - CEO, **Williams-Sonoma**
Marc Aldrich - GM, **Amazon Media & Entertainment**
David Anderson – U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of California
Tim Archer – President & CEO, **Lam Research**
Cole Brown – Chief Human Resources Officer, **American Airlines**
John Chambers – Former CEO, **Cisco Systems**
Brad Childers – President & CEO, **Archrock, Inc.**
Brian Ellis - CRO, **Realtor.com**
Sharon Grehan – Chief Learning & Development Officer, **Gilead**
Aart de Geus – Executive Chair, **Synopsys**
Parker Harris – Co-Founder, **Salesforce**
Mark Hawkins – Former President & CFO, **Salesforce**
Janet Hayes - CEO, **Crate & Barrel**
Mark Hoplamazian – President & CEO, **Hyatt Hotels Corporation**
Cathy Hughes – Founder & Chairperson, **Urban One**
Kim Keck – President & CEO, **Blue Cross Blue Shield Association**
Herb Kelleher – Co-Founder & Former Chairman, **Southwest Airlines**
Gary Kelly – Former CEO, **Southwest Airlines**
Chris Kennedy – Former Chairman, **Joseph P. Kennedy Enterprises**
Dara Khosrowshahi – CEO, Uber
Keith Krach – Former Chairman & CEO, **DocuSign**
Enrique Lores – President & CEO, **HP Inc.**
Sharon Mandell – Chief Information Officer, **Juniper Networks**
Ken May - CEO, **Topgolf**
Gabriel Barbier-Mueller, CEO, **Harwood International**
Vasant (Vas) Narasimhan – CEO, **Novartis**
Antonio Neri – President & CEO, **Hewlett Packard Enterprise**
Micky Pant – Former CEO, **Yum (KFC)**
A**aron Powell** - CEO, **Pizza Hut**
Chuck Robbins – Chair and CEO, **Cisco Systems**
Sree Sreedhararaj – Former Chief Technology Officer, **Sephora**
Kyle Stanzel – Chief Operating Officer, **Houston Methodist West Hospital**
Mark Templin – President & CEO, **Toyota Financial Services**
Alexandra Valsamakis – Chief Medical Officer, **Roche Molecular Diagnostics**
Wayne Zahner – Chief Financial Officer**, The Recording Academy / GRAMMY'S**



DATES & LOCATIONS

2026 Regions, Dates & Deadlines

The Admin Awards will operate programs in six regions in 2026. Choose the Admin Awards program area closest to your company's headquarters, branches or remote employees.

Houston & Gulf Coast Region, May 1
Royal Sonesta, Houston Galleria
Nominations Deadline: March 20

Chicago & Midwest Region, June 12
JW Marriott, Chicago
Nominations Deadline: May 1

Washington DC & MidAtlantic Region, Aug. 14
Waldorf Astoria, Washington D.C.
Nominations Deadline: July 10

Silicon Valley & San Francisco Bay Area Region, Sept. 2
SFO Marriott Waterfront, Burlingame
Nominations Deadline: July 22

Boston & New England Region, Oct. 1
Venezia Ballroom, Boston
Nominations Deadline: Aug 20

Dallas Fort Worth & Southwest Region, Nov. 13
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dallas
Nominations Deadline: Oct 1

2026 In Development Markets: NEW!
Los Angeles & Southern CA | 2027 Gala

For the most updated information visit adminawards.com



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HOW IT WORKS

How the Admin Awards Works

The Admin Awards begins with a nomination and culminates at the Admin Awards “Good as Gold” Gala, the defining moment of the program where nominees are publicly recognized and Finalists and Winners are revealed live.

Companies Nominate Their Admins or Administrative Teams

- Organizations submit nominations in the Admin Awards region of their choice in one or more of the Admin Awards categories, recognizing Administrative Professionals whose contributions create meaningful impact.
- All Nominees must be present at the Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Gala to advance in the competition.

Independent Judges Review All Nominations

- Every nomination is reviewed by an independent Board of Judges composed of former Admin Awards winners, executives, and the Colleen Barrett Institute.
- There is no public voting.
- Finalists and Winners are selected based on merit and demonstrated impact presented in written nominations.

The Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Gala Recognition Experience

- Nominees and their executives and coworkers attend the five-star rated Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Gala. Friends and family are also welcome and do attend.
- Every Nominee is honored, and the Finalists and Winners are revealed live throughout the evening.
- Every attending Admin enjoys many long-standing traditions of the Admin Awards including a red-carpet experience, high-value commemorative gift and a chance to win extraordinary prizes throughout the evening.

The Admin Awards was intentionally built around a shared recognition experience. Attendance at the Gala is therefore required for nominees who wish to advance in the competition.

Watch the Admin Awards in video to see the Good as Gold Gala on the next page.



Experience the Admin Awards - ‘This is Why’ Video



A short highlights video from the Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Gala experience.

2 minutes

3 Ways to Nominate

Nominate an Individual
Submit a nomination in one or more Admin Award categories. This is how the vast majority of companies participate and recognize the outstanding contributions of Administrative Professionals.

Nominate Yourself
Administrative Professionals may submit a self-nomination to share the achievements and contributions they are most proud of. Self-nominations often spark additional nominations from leaders and colleagues.

Nominate an Administrative Team
For Administrative teams that work closely together toward a shared goal or objective, the Team Achiever Award recognizes the power of collaboration and the collective impact of the team.



How Nominations Work

The Admin Awards begins with a nomination and culminates at the Admin Awards Good as Gold Gala, where nominees are publicly honored and Finalists and Winners are revealed live.

Submit a Nomination

Nominations are submitted online at adminawards.com. The form takes just a few minutes to complete and there is no login. Nominations may be submitted by executives, colleagues, peers, clients, or vendors. Self-nominations are welcome as well.

Nominee Notification

Once a nomination is submitted, the nominee is notified and receives a unique supporting nomination ("Fan Club") link that can be shared with colleagues, leaders, and peers who wish to submit additional nominations.

Supervisor Notification

If the nominator is not the nominee's direct supervisor, the system also notifies the nominee's supervisor that their Administrative Professional has been nominated and encourages them to submit a nomination of their own. A nomination from the leader they support is considered an important part of the nomination process.

Nominee Acceptance

Nominees are then invited to accept their nomination, verify their information, and submit a short Nominee Statement highlighting their contributions and achievements.

Nominations Portal

Our Nominations Portal allows nominees and nominators to log in anytime to view nominations, track supporting nominations, and manage submissions in one place.

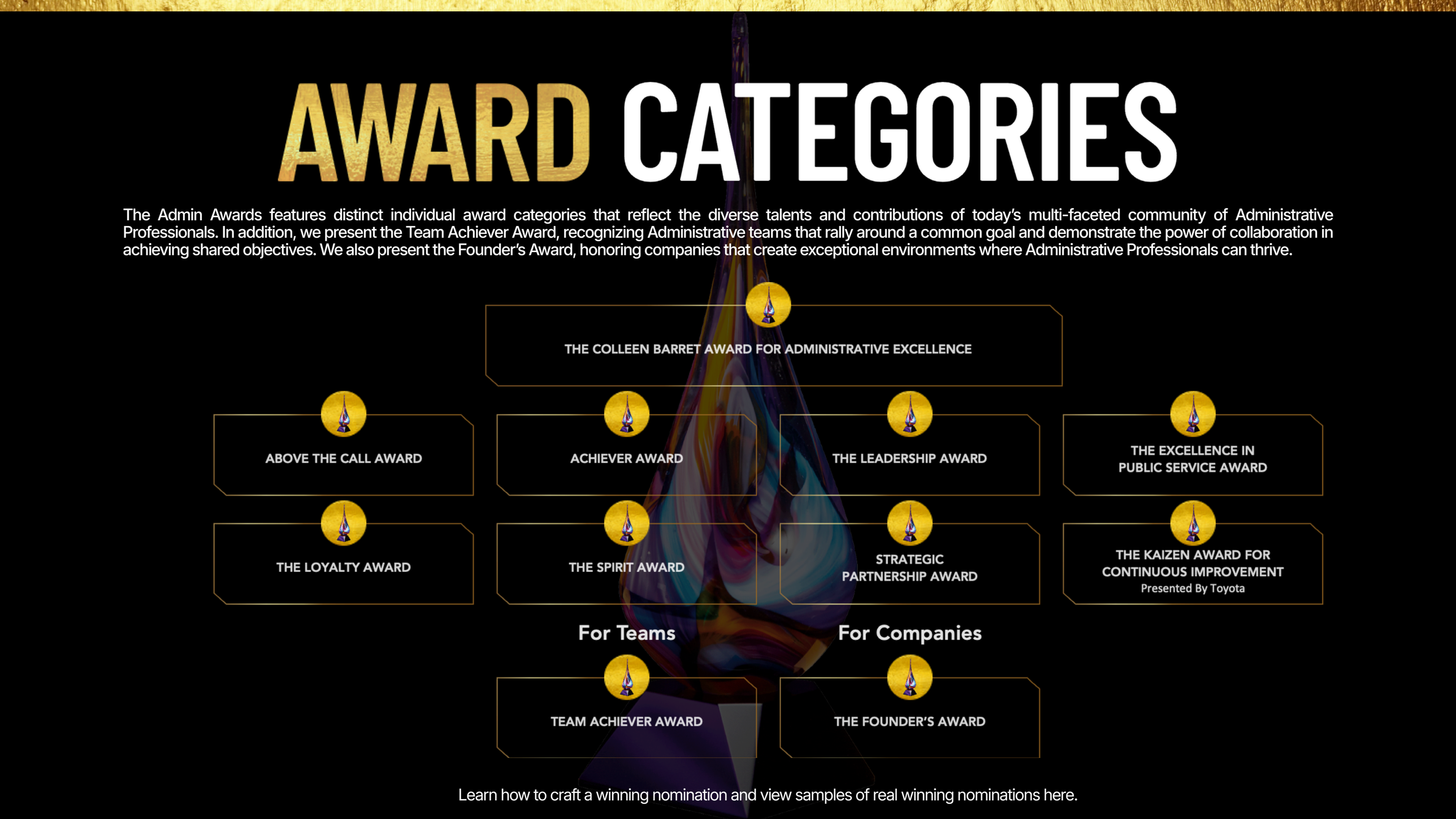
Nominee Preparation Call

All nominees are invited to attend a Nominee Preparation Call held via Zoom approximately one month prior to the Gala. During this call, we review the nomination process, judging timeline, and what to expect at the Good as Gold Gala.



AWARD CATEGORIES

The Admin Awards features distinct individual award categories that reflect the diverse talents and contributions of today's multi-faceted community of Administrative Professionals. In addition, we present the Team Achiever Award, recognizing Administrative teams that rally around a common goal and demonstrate the power of collaboration in achieving shared objectives. We also present the Founder's Award, honoring companies that create exceptional environments where Administrative Professionals can thrive.



Learn how to craft a winning nomination and view samples of real winning nominations here.


THE EXPERIENCE

The Admin Awards ‘Good as Gold’ Gala Evening at a Glance

ADMIN AWARDS® GOOD AS GOLD GALA

THE EVENING AT A GLANCE

6-6:45 PM	Guest Arrival, Cocktail Reception
6:45 PM	Ballroom Doors Open
7:05 PM	Nominee Video Tribute Reveal & Opening Remarks
7:25 PM	Dinner Break
7:45-9:30 PM	Years of Service Acknowledgements Award Presentations Prize Breaks Good as Gold Best Outfit & Team Spirit Competition



Arrival, Check In & Cocktail Reception

Nominees are welcomed with custom lanyards, a spot on the vibrant 'Andy Warhol Wall of Fame,' and a lively cocktail reception. They enjoy photo opportunities and celebratory moments with their leaders, colleagues, friends, and family fan clubs.













Admin VIP Check In

Every Administrative Professional attending the Admin Awards is welcomed with the same enthusiasm as the Nominees. Upon arrival, they experience the red-carpet treatment and receive a high-value commemorative gift to mark the occasion.

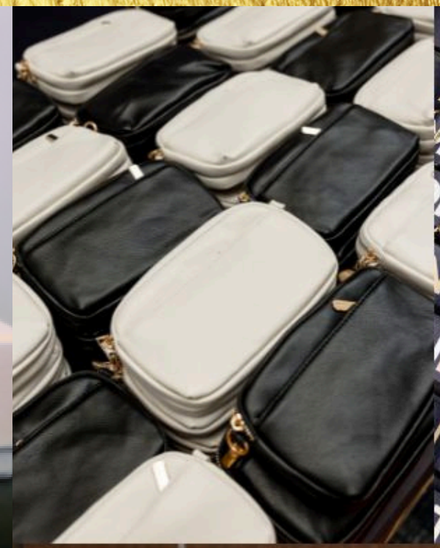






Admin Gifts for All Attending Admins











Good as Gold Dinner Gala

The Admin Awards ‘Good as Gold’ Dinner Gala is an electric celebration of the spirit and signficance of the Administrative Profession and those who serve in it.



Good as Gold Dinner Gala

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The Nominee's Music Video Tribute Tradition

Every Admin Awards Gala kicks off with an unforgettable music video tribute! Leaders, colleagues, friends, and family join forces to lip sync, dance, and celebrate Nominees with a song tailored just for them!



Years of Service Acknowledgments

Every attending Administrative Professional is invited to stand as the Emcee begins calling out years of service until the final professional remains standing and receives the evening's first prize, the Years of Service Prize.



Award Presentations

Throughout the evening, Finalists and Winners are revealed live in each award category. Winners deliver inspiring remarks while the executives they support join them on stage to celebrate and share their gratitude.





















Prize Drawings

All attending Admins are entered into 14+ exciting prize drawings throughout the evening valued at $500 or more!













Good as Gold Best Outfit Tradition + Contest

Admins, executives and guests arrive in their best gold-themed attire for a chance to win the ‘Good as Gold’ outfit contest!













Good as Gold Best Outfit Tradition + Contest











Team Spirit Tradition + Competition

Companies compete for the best 'Team Spirit' prize through creative displays of excitement for their Nominees!













Team Spirit Tradition + Competition









Team Spirit Tradition + Competition









COSTS & ROI

What Does it Cost to Participate in the Admin Awards?

The Admin Awards was created to ensure that recognizing Administrative excellence is accessible to everyone, while the celebration itself remains a world-class recognition experience.

Submitting a nomination is always free. Companies participate in the Good as Gold Gala at a level that fits their team, whether through individual tickets, table sponsorships, or premier sponsorships.

Nominations Fee: $0
Recognizing an Administrative Professional's contributions should never have a barrier to entry. Submitting a nomination is always free.

Individual Gala Tickets: $325 – $375
Join the celebration by purchasing individual tickets to the Admin Awards Good as Gold Gala, where Administrative excellence is honored and unforgettable moments are shared.

Silver, Gold & Platinum Table Sponsorships: $5,950 – $12,950
Table sponsorships provide prime seating for your team, Nominee recognition plaques, branded table signage, and advertising in the Admin Awards Finalists & Winners Publication.

Sponsorships for Rewards & Recognition: $12,500+
Supporting and Premier Sponsorships offer organizations expanded visibility across Admin Awards programming while reinforcing a strong culture of employee recognition. These partnerships help sustain the Admin Awards while delivering meaningful brand presence and engagement opportunities.

Important: Participation level, sponsorship, or ticket purchases have no influence on the outcome of the competition. All nominations are reviewed independently by the Admin Awards Board of Judges and winners are selected solely on merit and demonstrated impact.

The Admin Awards exists to elevate the Administrative profession. Sponsorships ensure this mission can continue. For sponsorship inquiry email info@adminawards.com.



The Business Case for Recognition

Investing in the Admin Awards goes beyond recognition - it delivers measurable benefits for your organization, from higher retention to improved productivity. Here's how meaningful recognition translates into measurable ROI for your company.

Employees that don't feel valued are 2x as likely to quit within a year (Gartner)

Employees that feel truly valued are 43% more productive (Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley)

The cost to replace an Admin is conservatively estimated at 70% of their one-year salary

Retention Cost Savings Scenario:
If Admin Awards participation saves a company 3 Admins, making $80k/year, savings = $168,000

If we save one Admin? Savings = $56,000



The Admin Awards Effect



The Profession

Through recognition and publicly sharing the achievements of Administrative Professionals, a role once taken for granted is now being celebrated, elevated, respected, better compensated, and recognized as a true career path in the modern workplace.

The Organization

Participation drives stronger retention, higher productivity, and better-performing teams who benefit from a healthy, recognition-rich Admin culture

The Individual

Nominees see their work, impact, and future differently. They recognize this as a career to be proud of, with a path that can be both deeply fulfilling and financially rewarding.

CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE PHOTO

GALLERY















Helpful Links

Nominate Now

How to Craft a Winning Nomination

Tickets + Tables

Participating Companies











Bring the Admin Awards to Your City

The Admin Awards continues to grow across the United States, bringing its mission of recognition and celebration to new regions.

Each expansion is carefully planned to ensure the program's success & lasting impact in the administrative community.

To explore how to bring the program to your city, send us a note.

CONTACT US

