



ADMINAWARDS™ **GUIDE**

Your Complete Guide to the **Administrative Profession's Highest Honor**



**“Just because Administrative Professionals are behind the scenes,
doesn’t mean they should be invisible”**

- SUNNY NUNAN, FOUNDER, ADMIN AWARDS

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

This guide is your roadmap to the Admin Awards, the nation's only public recognition program for Administrative Professionals. You'll discover why this program matters, how it works, and the many ways you can participate. Get ready to celebrate excellence and elevate the role of Administrative Professionals everywhere.

INSIDE



PART 1

ABOUT THE ADMIN AWARDS

- The Vision
- The Legacy of Southwest Airlines' Colleen Barrett
- Admin Awards by the Numbers
- Who Participates
- The 'Admin Awards Effect'

PART 2

DATES & LOCATIONS

PART 3

HOW IT WORKS

- An Experiential Recognition Program
- 4 Ways to Participate
- Award Categories

PART 4

THE EXPERIENCE

- The 'Good as Gold' Gala Evening At a Glance
- The Evening's Elements in Pictures
- What to Expect at the Admin Awards in Videos

PART 5

COSTS & ROI

- Ticket Options
- Return on Investment

PART 6

GALLERY

- The Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Galas in Pictures

ABOUT THE ADMIN AWARDS

THE ADMIN AWARDS

Celebrating the Best in the Administrative Profession Since 2012

The Admin Awards is the world's first public recognition program that celebrates the vital contributions of Administrative Professionals.

Founded in 2012 by the daughter of a lifelong Executive Secretary, the Admin Awards has become the ultimate honor for Administrative Professionals across the U.S.

Far more than a single event, it's a dynamic recognition program that begins with a nomination and culminates in an extraordinary, five-star 'Good as Gold' Dinner Gala. Hosted in six regions nationwide, the Gala not only honors all Nominees and announces the Finalists and Winners but is also attended by senior executives and business leaders, who come together to recognize the invaluable impact of their Administrative teams.

The Admin Awards is more than a moment - **it's a movement dedicated to celebrating the vital contributions of their Administrative Professionals**



THIS IS PERSONAL.

The Admin Awards wasn't born from a clever idea or a market opportunity—it was personal. Sunny Nunan grew up watching her mom, Jeannette Castellano, an Executive Secretary, serve with passion, dedication, and heart. Her mom was never “just an assistant”—she was a driving force, someone people relied on and deeply valued, right up to her retirement just shy of her 80th birthday.

Despite her mom's vital role, Sunny saw an absence of meaningful recognition for Administrative Professionals like her, who quietly hold organizations together which inspired the creation of the world's first public recognition program from Administrative Professionals.

In 2012 in Dallas, Texas she launched the Admin Awards.

What began as a heartfelt mission has since blossomed into the Administrative Profession's highest honor—affectionately known as the “Academy Awards for Admins.”

Thousands of nominees, hundreds of winners, and a growing national presence later, the Admin Awards remains committed to its mission: to elevate those who don't seek applause but deserve it and ensure that **those who lead from behind will never be overlooked again.**

Watch a short interview with Sunny [here](#).



JEANNETTE CASTELLANO, RETIRED EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND SUNNY NUNAN, FOUNDER OF THE ADMIN AWARDS



CONTINUING THE LEGACY OF COLLEEN BARRETT.

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.

Colleen became the first woman to serve as President of a major airline and received the 2017 Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy, the highest honor in the aerospace industry.

Since Colleen's passing The Colleen Barrett Institute, which 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*



GET TO KNOW COLLEEN BARRETT THROUGH THE SOUTHWEST AIRLINES
COLLEEN BARRETT INSTITUTE AT [COLLEENBARRETT.COM](https://colleenbarrett.com)

ADMIN AWARDS BY THE NUMBERS

13 YEARS OF CELEBRATING ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE

3,500+ NOMINATING COMPANIES

600+ WINNERS HONORED

10,000+ NOMINATIONS RECEIVED

10 HOST CITIES

42,000+ EVENT ATTENDEES

107 FORTUNE 500 COMPANY PARTICIPATION



TRUSTED BY THE BEST

The Admin Awards is trusted by organizations of every size and stature, including the country's top brands who share in the belief that public recognition of Administrative Professionals is long overdue. View a list of participating companies by region [here](#).

Participation by Company Size



107 Fortune 500 Companies have participated in the Admin Awards since 2012 in 10 cities across the U.S.

THE 'ADMIN AWARDS EFFECT'

Since 2012, participants in the Admin Awards have shared the transformative impact of public recognition of Administrative Professionals through the Admin Awards.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL

- Feels seen and validated
- Inspired to do even better
- Career now has a future
- Increased compensation
- Increase in strategic impact
- Decrease in executive support ratios

*"I now believe this career has a future."
Executive Assistant, Starbucks*

THE ORGANIZATION

- Improved Admin morale
- Increased productivity
- Improved retention
- Elevated team performance
- Recruitment advantage
- Enhanced DEI reputation

*"The Admin Awards completely transformed our Admin culture."
Analog Devices*

THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSION

- Increases visibility of the role
- Elevates perception of the role
- Challenges outdated stereotypes
- Increases demand for the role
- Increases compensation
- Inspires career pathing in the profession

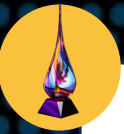
*"The Admin Awards is the best thing that's ever happened to the Administrative Profession."
Lori Seamons, Grainger*



DATES & LOCATIONS

WHERE & WHEN

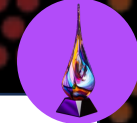
THE ADMIN AWARDS WILL HOSTS 6 REGIONAL EVENTS IN 2025. CHOOSE THE PROGRAM IN THE LOCATION NEAREST YOU OR YOUR COMPANY'S HQ.



Silicon Valley & San Francisco Bay Area Region

Gala: April 21, 2025
Marriott Waterfront Burlingame

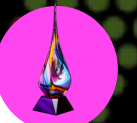
Nominations deadline:
March 15



Chicago & Midwest Region

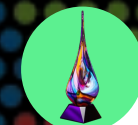
Gala: May 16, 2025
Sheraton Grand Hotel Chicago

Nominations deadline:
April 1



Boston & New England Region

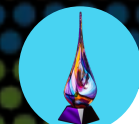
Gala: November 2025
Location TBD



Washington, D.C. & Mid-Atlantic Region

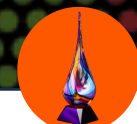
Gala: Aug. 22, 2025
Waldorf Astoria D.C.

Nominations deadline:
July 12



Dallas Fort Worth & Southwest Region

November 2025 – Location TBD



Houston & Gulf Coast Region

April 3, 2025 – Hilton Americas Houston

Nominations deadline:
March 3

FUTURE REGIONS

New York City & Northeast Region

Atlanta & Southeast Region

Mountain West Region

Southern CA Region

HOWWIT WORKS

THE ADMIN AWARDS IS AN EXPERIENTIAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM.

The Admin Awards is designed to celebrate the best of the administrative profession. From nominations to the grand celebration, every step is built to honor, inspire, and elevate Admins and their contributions. **That's why it's critical that participants fully commit to the Admin Awards experience before submitting nominations, ensuring attendance at the iconic Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Dinner Gala.**

★ STEP 1 – SAVE THE DATE

Put the Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Dinner Gala data on your company's calendar now!

98% of Nominee are accompanied by their executives and many organizations bring their leadership teams to celebrate their Administrative Professionals.

★ STEP 2 – SUBMIT NOMINATIONS

Recognize Administrative Professionals through one or more of the Admin Award categories.

Nominations can be submitted by executives, coworkers, clients, etc. and self-nominations are also accepted. Unlike most corporate award programs, we do not charge a fee to nominate.

★ STEP 3 – SECURE 'GOOD AS GOLD' DINNER GALA TICKETS

Grab tickets early for best available seating at the Good as Gold Gala, a five-star event experience!

Individual tickets and table sponsorships are available to meet any budget.



"The Admin Awards is brilliant! Absolutely brilliant!"
Keith Krach, Chairman, DocuSign

4 WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ADMIN AWARDS

Whether you're recognizing a standout individual, a top-performing team, or your entire admin staff, here's how to join the celebration of administrative excellence and honor the best in the Administrative Profession.

1 Nominate an Individual

In one or more of the Admin Award Categories. This is how the vast majority of companies participate in the program.

2 Nominate a Team

For small Admin teams that work together around a common goal or objective, the Team Achiever Award is a great way to recognize the collective achievements of your team!

3 Nominate Your Company

For the Founder's Award if you demonstrate the criteria that creates a great work environment for Administrative Professionals

4 Celebrate Your Team

New to the Admin Awards? Many first-time participants choose to skip nominations in their first year and instead bring their Admin team to the 'Good as Gold' Gala as a memorable reward and morale boost.



AWARD CATEGORIES

Created to reflect the unique talents of the diverse community of Administrative Professionals, The Admin Awards offers distinct award categories, including our program's most prestigious award, The Colleen Barrett Award for Administrative Excellence. In addition, the Founder's Award honors an organization that creates an exceptional work environment for Administrative Professionals through visionary initiatives and specific "best in class" attributes.



Learn how to craft a winning nomination and view samples of real winning nominations [here](#).

THE EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE THE ULTIMATE CELEBRATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXCELLENCE

The Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Gala is more than an event—it's a transformative celebration that honors every Nominee, builds company pride, and inspires leadership teams to rally around the unsung heroes of their workplace: Administrative Professionals.

Here's what makes the Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Dinner Gala unforgettable:

- VIP red-carpet experience for all Admins including a high-value commemorative gift
- The cocktail reception featuring the Nominee's 'Andy Warhol Wall of Fame' and photo opps
- Ballroom doors open and the celebration takes off!
- Finalists and Winners are revealed during award presentations throughout the evening
- Admin-only prize drawings throughout the evening including the \$40,000 Grand Prize from Aurora Expeditions!
- Admin Awards long-standing traditions including Years of Service Acknowledgments, the Nominee's Music Video Tribute, Good as Gold Best Outfit Theme & Team Spirit Contests

It's an evening filled with inspiration, recognition, and pride - and the magic only happens for Nominees who attend. This is your time to shine—don't miss it!



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.



VIP CHECK IN FOR ALL ADMINS

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.



THE 'GOOD AS GOLD' DINNER GALA

A five-star, high-energy unforgettable night of recognition, excitement, and inspiration.

ADMINAWARDS
GOOD AS GOLD
GALA



THE NOMINEE'S MUSIC VIDEO TRIBUTE

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!



🕒 Music Video Tribute Overview – Under 2 minutes

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Throughout the evening Finalists and Winners are revealed in lively award presentations filled with excitement and heart!



PRIZE DRAWINGS INCLUDING THE \$40,000 GRAND PRIZE FROM AURORA EXPEDITIONS!

All attending Admins are entered into exciting prize drawings throughout the evening valued at \$500+, including the show-stopping \$40,000 Grand Prize to the destination of your choice from Aurora Expeditions!



BEST 'GOOD AS GOLD' THEME OUTFIT

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



TEAM SPIRIT CONTEST

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



TEAM SPIRIT CONTEST




EXPERIENCE THE ADMIN AWARDS NOW IN VIDEO.

The 'This is Why' Video



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

 2 minutes

'What to Expect at the Admin Awards'



Admin Awards Founder walks you through the Admin Awards 'Good as Gold' Dinner Gala experience from start to finish.

 5 Minutes, 30 seconds

COSTS & ROI

WHAT DOES IT **COST** TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ADMIN AWARDS PROGRAM? **YOU DECIDE!**

Nominating and the tremendous impact of that nomination is always free, but the true essence of the Admin Awards lies in attending the 'Good as Gold' Gala. This experiential recognition program is designed to celebrate Administrative Professionals live, in a way that words alone can't capture. The cost to participate in the Administrative Profession's highest honor and most celebrated event is rolled into the purchase of tickets. With options for companies of every size—whether you're purchasing individual tickets, table sponsorships, or premier sponsorships—we make it easy for everyone to participate and experience this extraordinary night firsthand!

ELEMENT	COST
<p>Nominations</p> <p>We know we're leaving money on the table, but we think its worth it so you can invest in making your 'Good as Gold' Gala experience a memorable, recognition filled experience for your team!</p>	Free
<p>Individual Gala Tickets</p> <p>Be a part of the celebration by purchasing individual tickets to the Admin Awards – where excellence is honored and unforgettable moments are made.</p>	\$330 - \$375
<p>Silver, Gold & Platinum Table Sponsorships</p> <p>Upgrade to a table sponsorship for prime seating together for your team, Nominee recognition plaques, branded table signage and exclusive advertising in the Admin Awards Finalists & Winners Publication.</p>	\$5,950 - \$12,950
<p>Premier Recognition & Retention Sponsorships</p> <p>Gain a competitive edge in recruiting and retention, boost internal nominations, and enjoy unmatched corporate visibility in all Admin Awards marketing. Premier Sponsorships ensure sustainability of the Admin Awards while providing maximum impact for organizations that want to lead in employee recognition.</p>	\$12,500+

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.**

RECOGNITION WORKS

Retention

Employees that don't feel valued or recognized for their contributions are twice as likely to **quit within a year.**

Gartner

The cost to replace an Administrative Professional is conservatively estimated at **70% +** of their annual salary.
SHRM

At an average annual salary of \$80k, retaining just 3 Admins through the Admin Awards recognition program saves organizations over **\$168,000** in replacement costs.

Productivity Gains

Employees that feel truly valued are as much as **43% more** productive.

Haas School of Business at Berkley University Study

In a recent study by the Admin Awards & The Beacon Institute for Administrative Excellence, **72% of Admins reported serving two or more executives.** Recognition for that support is more critical than ever to keep productivity – and morale up.



CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE. INSPIRE GREATNESS.

Thank you for exploring the 2025 Admin Awards Guide! Here's a quick recap of what we covered and how you can take the next steps to get involved.



♥ Key Takeaways

The Admin Awards is the only national recognition program for Administrative Professionals.

The Admin Awards is all about the 'Good as Gold' Gala experience which celebrates excellence, inspires morale, and drives retention and engagement.

You can participate by nominating individuals, teams, or organizations.

Next Steps

Nominate Someone Outstanding

Submissions are free and easy.

Visit adminawards.com/nominate-now

[Nominate Now!](#)

Learn More About Our Sponsorship Options

We'd love to partner with you.

[Contact Us](#)

CLICK [HERE](#) TO VIEW THE PHOTO

GALLERY





BRING THE ADMIN AWARDS TO YOUR CITY

Contact us to explore bringing the Admin Awards to your city

[CONTACT US](#)

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.