



# 2018 GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Gold Medal Ceremony (June 21, 2018)

#### How is the Gold Medal Ceremony organized?

The Gold Medal Ceremony is in the [Kennedy Caucus Room](#) of the [Russell Senate Office Building](#) on Capitol Hill. Three ceremonies will be held throughout the day in order to accommodate guests. The ceremonies are divided by state. Once we notify medalists of their appropriate ceremony time in May, we will work with Congressional Offices to confirm your Representative's attendance.

On the day of the ceremony, Gold Medalists are asked to check in for their ceremony 45 minutes before the scheduled start time, allowing National Staff time to prepare the Gold Medalists for the presentation. Guests will be able to check in and enter the room 15 minutes before start time. The ceremony includes a color guard presentation, invocation, speakers, and a brief introduction of each Gold Medalist as they receive their medals.

#### When will I learn my ceremony time?

Medalists are notified of their ceremony time in May, once all RSVPs are submitted. Medalists are assigned to a ceremony by state affiliation.

#### 10:00 a.m. | Ceremony One

Arizona, Georgia, Guam, Idaho, Illinois, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

#### 12:30 p.m. | Ceremony Two

California, Delaware, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, and Texas.

#### 3:00 p.m. | Ceremony Three

Connecticut, Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

#### Can I request a specific ceremony time?

No. We do not take requests for specific ceremony times. While we understand that a specific ceremony time may be preferred, we must be conscious of Congressional Offices schedules as well as other Gold Medalists from your state.

#### Can I contact my Congressional Office to let them know about my award?

Yes. You may reach out to your Congressional Office. However, this often leads to confusion within the offices regarding the event. We ask that you allow us to contact your Congressional Offices about your attendance. If the office wants to reach out to you directly, we will release your contact information. It is imperative that we have your accurate contact information, including a means for contacting you while you are in Washington, DC, as schedules may change and you may need to be notified of changes while you are here.

#### What happens if my Member of Congress cannot attend?

We make every attempt to have your Representative present for the presentation. If they cannot make the presentation, we will ask another Member of Congress to step in for the presentation.

**When do Gold Medalists and guests need to check in?**

Medalists are asked to arrive 45 minutes before their assigned ceremony time. The check in table is directly outside of the Kennedy Caucus Room in the Russell Senate Office Building. Upon arrival you will confirm your guest count, receive your guest tickets, t-shirt, Gold Medal box, and photography information. You should have at least one family member or guest with you at check in so they can take your personal items as well as their tickets. Medalists will then be moved to the auditorium for a run through and guests will move to the proper holding space. Guests will only be allowed in 15 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.

**Will there be a photographer at the ceremony? Can my family take a picture of my presentation?**

Photos will be taken of each Gold Medalist as they are presented. Each Gold Medalist will receive either an electronic download of their presentation photo following the Gold Medal Ceremony. If you would like additional photos, please contact our photographer (information to be provided on day of ceremony). As we will be providing a photo of the presentation, we ask that family members and guests not attempt to take their own photo. Flash photography and maneuvering for a personal picture may interfere with our professional photographer and may obstruct the view of other families.

**Where are the group photos taken? What if the location changes?**

Group photos of the entire 2018 Gold Medal class will be taken at 4:45 p.m. on Thursday, June 21st at the [Capitol Reflecting Pool](#) located west of 1st Street NW, in between Maryland and Pennsylvania Avenues.

Immediately following the third ceremony, Gold Medalists will be led to group photos. Gold Medalists from the first two ceremonies should meet the group at the photo location (with your Gold Medal) no later than 4:40! Please look for Congressional Award staff who will have signs.

A large group shot will be taken of all Gold Medalists followed by smaller group shots based on partnerships (Air Force, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H, etc.) If you have an affiliation with any of our partners, please feel free to join the group picture for that organization.

If there is a need to change the location (weather), we will notify Gold Medalists via the email address included on the RSVP form as soon as changes are made. We do not expect any changes but do need accurate contact information in the event of a change of location.

**What is the dress code for the ceremony?**

Please keep in mind that the Gold Medal Ceremony is a business formal event. Business attire should be worn by all participants (coat and tie for men, business suit/dress for women). Formal gowns or prom dresses will not be appropriate. Participants are encouraged to make conservative clothing choices. Please do not wear flip flops or tennis shoes for the ceremony (although you may bring for walking shoes). Also, young ladies should keep a conservative heel height as you will be walking.

**How do we get to the ceremony? Can we drive to Capitol Hill?**

The main entrance of [Russell Senate Office Building](#) is located at Constitution Avenue, NW and Delaware Avenue, NE. You will be required to go through security once you enter the building. Please allow 15-20 minutes to enter. There will be staff members holding signs after you pass through security to direct families to the check in area.

Before your visit, please consult the [list of prohibited items](#) in the U.S. Capitol Complex.

Parking is VERY limited on Capitol Hill. We recommend taking Metro (DC's subway system) into the city for the day of the ceremony. The Russell Senate Office Building is a 7 minute walk from Union Station on the Red Line and a 13 minute walk from Capitol South on the Blue/Orange/Silver Lines. Please visit [www.wmata.com](http://www.wmata.com) for details about Metro. You may also look into other ground transportation options like taxis, uber, etc.

## **Call for Photos**

We will be highlighting 2018 Gold Medalists during the months leading up to the Gold Medal Ceremony as well as organizing a presentation to be played prior to each ceremony. If you would like to participate, submit your pictures by email to [gold@congressionalaward.org](mailto:gold@congressionalaward.org) by June 16, 2018.

## **Unable to attend the Gold Medal Ceremony?**

**If I am NOT attending the ceremony in Washington, DC, do I have to send in my RSVP and Biography?**

Yes. We ask that you complete your RSVP even if you are not planning on attending the ceremony. We also request information from you regarding your choice of presentation if you cannot attend, your t-shirt size, and contact information. The Gold Medal Biographies appear in the program, allowing an opportunity for all Gold Medalists to share their accomplishments in earning The Congressional Award. The program is shared with Congressional Offices, press, and all Gold Medalists. If we do not receive your biography, only your name will be printed in the program.

If we do not hear from you by the due date (May 1) we will make attempts to confirm your attendance. This takes resources away from the ceremony as well as planning local presentations. Please be considerate and RSVP on time.

**If I request a LOCAL presentation, what can I expect?**

Following the Gold Medal Ceremony, if you have not already had your local presentation, we will notify your local Congressional Office regarding your award. Local presentations most often occur in local Congressional District Offices, allowing families and medalists an opportunity for an intimate meeting with their Member of Congress. In July, you will receive a Gold Packet from the National Office, including your t-shirt and program. If you have questions about your local presentation, please contact us. If you move or change your contact information before your presentation is scheduled, please let us know.

**If I request my medal to be MAILED to me, what can I expect?**

We will send your Gold Packet in July, including your Gold Medal and any of your lower levels, t-shirt, and program. If you move, we request that you update your contact information with us. If you decide that you would actually like a local presentation, please let us know.

**Can I come to next year's Gold Medal Ceremony if I can't make this one?**

Probably not. You may request a deferral via email ([gold@congressionalaward.org](mailto:gold@congressionalaward.org)) before April 10, 2018. We only offer deferrals to those who have extenuating circumstances that would not allow them to travel to Washington, D.C. for the appropriate ceremony. Deferrals have been granted in the past for military deployments and personal health issues. If you need to request a deferral, please submit your request via email before April 10, 2018, and include the reason for deferral. We cannot accept deferral requests if you simply want to change the year of your presentation, for high school graduations, or if you have a sibling that you would like to wait for. We will respond to your deferral request by April 20, 2018.

## **Photo at Nationals Park (June 22, 2018 | 11:30 a.m.)**

### **Where is Nationals Park?**

[Nationals Park](#) is located at 1500 S. Capitol St SE, Washington, DC 20003. To get to the park, we recommend taking Metro to the Navy Yard-Ballpark on the Green Line. The ballpark is a short two block walk from the metro exit. Parking will not be available at the stadium during the photo.

Gold Medalists will meet Congressional Award National Staff at 11:30 a.m. at the entrance to the ballpark on First Street SE. We will promptly begin to enter the stadium at 11:45 a.m. as a group, so if you are not present unfortunately there is NO way to enter the stadium as it will be closed to the public at this time.

### **What do I wear to the group photo at Nationals Park?**

All Gold Medalists should wear their 2018 Gold Medal T-Shirt and their Gold Medal which will be provided to them at the ceremony the day prior. As Gold Medalists will be entering the stadium, they are required to go through security so please only bring the essentials and leave your bags with your parents as they will not be allowed in the stadium during the group photo. Also, please do NOT wear cleats as you will not be allowed onto the field (women, please do not wear heels).

### **Why are my family members not allowed in the stadium for the photo?**

As Nationals Park will still be closed to the public during the photo, only Gold Medalists will be allowed to enter for the photo. Parents will need to wait on the sidewalk outside of the ballpark. This is due to limited space on the diamond.

## **Nats Game (June 22, 2018 | 7:05 p.m.)**

### **How many guests can I bring to the game? Can I request extra tickets for additional guests?**

Each Gold Medalist is entitled to three complimentary tickets for the game (one for themselves and two for their guests). You may purchase additional tickets through this [custom Washington Nationals link](#) (tickets will be available for purchase through June 1). All Gold Medalists will be in the same few sections in the stadium and we will do our best to seat the purchased tickets near the complimentary tickets but it is not guaranteed.

Each complimentary ticket will come with a \$25 food/beverage credit to be used throughout the stadium.

### **How will I get my tickets?**

All Gold Medalists attending the ceremonies will receive their tickets during ceremony check in on Thursday, June 21. The tickets will be in hard copy form so you will be responsible for them once they're handed out.

### **What do I wear to the baseball game at Nationals Park?**

All Gold Medalists should wear their 2018 Gold Medal T-Shirt and their Gold Medal which will be provided to them at the ceremony the day prior.

### **How do I get to Nationals Park? Can I drive?**

Nationals Park is located at 1500 S. Capitol St SE, Washington, DC 20003. To get to the park, we recommend taking Metro to the Navy Yard-Ballpark on the Green Line. The ballpark is a two block walk from the metro.

If you are driving, street parking is extremely limited and it is recommended that you look into [parking at the stadium](#). We will not provide parking, so it is up to you and your family to look into parking options.

### **What to expect at the game?**

During the Nationals game there will be a time when Congressional Award Gold Medalists will be asked to stand for recognition. The exact time is still being determined.

Gold Medalists will be responsible for themselves and their guests during the game. There is no scheduled programming that you need to be aware of. Enjoy yourself and remember you are representing The Congressional Award!