

# 2024 NASPEs AWARD

## *Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

Nominations from dues-paying states are considered for eligibility. Nominated leaders and programs should have a positive effect on the administration of state human resource programs. A state's central human resource department or line agency human resource operations may administer nominated programs.

Programs and projects must have been operational for at least six months and must be transferable to other states. Selection criteria are based on the questions asked on the award application. Included in this packet are the specific criteria for each award and their categories. Nominations are encouraged in all areas of human resource management administration.

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### **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

Program Title: Governor's Office Academy of Leadership                      State: IL

Contact Person: Dr. Victoria (Vicki) Davis

Contact's Title: Deputy Director, Office of Operational Excellence

Agency: IL Department of Central Management Services

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Telephone: 21-494-6401

E-mail: Vicki.Davis@Illinois.gov

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### **NOMINATOR INFORMATION**

Nominator: Sarah Kerley                      Title: Chief Administrative Officer

State: IL                      Agency: IL Department of Central Management Services

Telephone: 312-718-1317

E-mail: Sarah.Kerley@Illinois.gov

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#### **ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:**

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet • Conform to all copyright laws

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### **DETAILS**

Please attach a one-page summary of the program. Provide a narrative answer for each of the questions. You are limited to four pages (based on regular 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper double-spaced in 12-point font). The four-page limit does not include the one-page summary.

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

The Governor's Office Academy of Leadership (G.O.A.L.) is an exciting program open to mid-level merit compensation leaders in executive branch agencies under the Office of the Governor. These leaders are the backbone of State government and play critical roles in providing stability through transitions and maintaining the operations that serve the State's mission. The G.O.A.L. program provides an opportunity to develop leadership skillsets, build long-term relationships across agencies, and broaden perspectives to lead effectively in a diverse and changing environment.

Over the course of 11 months, 30 fellows form a learning cohort, meeting for a day and a half per month in-person and again virtually, covering topics to include: Monthly topics Include: Public Service Leadership; Fostering Inclusive Cultures; Creating & Communicating Purpose, Vision and Strategic Direction; Building High Performing Teams; Leading in Times of Crisis; Political Savvy and Working Effectively with the Media, Legislators, and the Public; and Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving. Fellows work together to put their training to the test. Working in teams, they pitch and plan projects with real world operational impacts which are then presented to Agency Leaders and the Governor's Office at the end of the program.

More information about G.O.A.L. can be found at the [G.O.A.L. website](#).

2. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

The first cohort kicked off in March 2023, running to completion in December 2023. The second cohort began in February 2024 and will run for 11 sessions.

3. Why was this program created? (What problem[s] or issues does it address?)

This program has been created for the purpose of advancing excellence in public service leadership. Leaders in public service organizations share many traditional roles and responsibilities with business leaders, but there are some significant differences: Public Service leaders are the stewards of citizen trust, and their overarching purpose is to provide for the common good, applying fiscal responsibility but not exclusively focused on a financial bottom line. The motivation that calls leaders to public service and the unique and tremendous responsibility they are entrusted with shapes how they lead and innovate to provide for the public welfare.

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### *Innovative State Human Resource Management Program*

CMS's broader, enterprise-wide professional development efforts are in the early/developmental stage. However, the need to train the next generation of leaders could not wait. Governor Pritzker's administration tasked CMS – the operational engine of State government overseeing enterprise human resources and continuous improvement/operational excellence work – to plan and implement an ambitious leadership program for the State's workforce. CMS's Development Steering Committee, with the support of the Governor's Office, leveraged leaders from a broad spectrum of State service (for example, Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Management and Budget, Department of Human Rights Deputy Director, CMS Assistant Director, Governor's Chief Equity Officer) for the evaluation and selection team. Under the direction of Director Raven DeVaughn and Deputy Director for the Office of Operational Excellence Dr. Vicki Davis, CMS gathered experts from industry leaders, academics, agency leaders, and others to provide a robust and immersive leadership training program.

#### 4. Why is this program a new and creative method?

The inter-agency cohort model is a creative approach to leadership training. Agencies have historically shared resources among their individual leadership teams, which limits the amount of perspectives to which candidates are exposed and thus stunts growth. With each session one and a half days long and alternating between Springfield and Chicago, the 30-person cohort was able to connect on a deeper level both in the classroom and outside of it. The program also provided fellows with tangible professional takeaways. Each participant has new headshots taken at the start of the program. Continuing education credits are also available. The fellows were "badged" through the University of Illinois – Springfield, allowing them to advertise their newly earned competencies to broad audiences. Fellows were also evaluated with the Strengths Deployment Inventory and the Hogan Assessments.

Another novel aspect of this program was the degree of interaction with elected officials and agency heads. Governor Pritzker has personally kicked off both cohorts and was joined by the Lt. Governor at the inaugural event. Networking sessions included nearly all Executive Branch Agency Heads, as well as other executive leaders, e.g. Chiefs of Staff, Chief Fiscal Officers, etc. The training topics included things often avoided in the government space, like developing political savvy.

Finally, this program was more than just intellectual training. Instead, fellows were also afforded the opportunity to put their training to work through an end-of-cohort project. The program culminates with a team project having operational impacts (reduce expenses, add revenue, increase efficiencies, introduce innovation, address inequities, etc.), to be worked outside of sessions, and presented to Agency Leaders and Governor's Office Staff at the program conclusion.

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5. What was the program's startup costs? (Provide detailed information about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology, and staff already in place.)

There were no start-up costs. The development was all done internally with existing staff.

6. What are the program's operational costs?

For the first cohort, the total cost was just under \$59,000. Spending was generally broken out as follows:

- \* Speakers - \$25,500
- \* Books - \$1,000
- \* Networking event - \$6,500
- \* Supplies - \$2,500
- \* Travel for staff - \$3,500
- \* Assessments - \$19,000

7. How is this program funded?

General revenues.

8. Did this program originate in your state?

9. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?

If yes, how does this program differ?

During development, Dr. Davis researched a number of other State leadership programs, including talking to representatives from Tennessee, California, and Pennsylvania. G.O.A.L. is different due to its cohort nature, the manner and method of meeting (both length of engagement and the nature of meetings (both in-person and virtual)), involvement of the Governor, involvement of the program alumni in the later cohort, and the internal creation by a steering committee made up of State leaders (not a university or a consulting group).

10. How do you measure the success of this program?

Despite being operational for just over one year, 9 of the graduated 27 inaugural fellows have been promoted since starting the G.O.A.L. program!

11. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

The second cohort is just underway. However, the program team engaged in significant after-action assessment and sought feedback from the inaugural fellows. As a result, the program was extended an additional month to now cover 11 months' worth of topics. The inaugural cohort fellows have been tapped to assist with training, provide guidance for making the most of the program, and providing expanded networking opportunities.

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**“The G.O.A.L. program is a true gem within state government. Not only did it provide the opportunity to increase my knowledge on critical leadership topics, but it also gave me the space to take those lessons (and helpful tips from leaders) and implement them in real time, then come back and share lessons learned with others who were doing the same.”**



**“G.O.A.L. also provided a rare opportunity to interact with remarkable leaders from other state agencies. Building relationships with peers enabled us to share lessons learned with one another and create strong networks to better accomplish tasks that require cross-agency collaboration.”**

