



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**City of Duncanville and City of Lancaster City Managers to be Inducted into the National Academy of Public Administration's 2021 Class of Academy Fellows**

The National Academy of Public Administration today announced that 39 leaders in the field of public administration have been selected for the 2021 Class of Academy Fellows. Induction of the new Fellows will occur during the annual [Academy Fall Meeting](#), which will take place virtually and in-person at five host sites across the country November 3-9.

"I am very pleased to welcome the Academy's 2021 class of Fellows," said Terry Gerton, President, and CEO of the Academy. "Our distinguished Fellows are nationally recognized for their expertise in the field of public administration and this year's incoming class is no exception. As government at every level continues to manage the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in addition to addressing public concerns regarding equity, the environment, the nation's fiscal health and others, we welcome our new Fellows' perspective as we work collaboratively to find intergovernmental solutions to the [Grand Challenges in Public Administration](#)."

Two Best Southwest City Managers, Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides, City of Duncanville, and Opal Mauldin-Jones, City of Lancaster, were named in the announcement as 2021 Class of Academy Fellows inductees. The two City Managers will collaborate with 37 other Fellows to innovate and address the 12 Grand Challenges in Public Administration, which includes items such as *Modernize and Reinvigorate the Public Service, Foster Social Equity, and Connect Individuals to Meaningful Work*.

"The inclusion of Opal Mauldin-Jones and myself as part of the 2021 Class of Academy Fellows is a remarkable opportunity for the two of us to bring our unique experiences, knowledge, and connections to our communities to this collaboration," said Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides. "I am excited to see what the Academy Fellows will be able to accomplish as we work together to address each of the 12 Grand Challenges and move our cities and our nation forward toward a brighter and more inclusive future."

Opal Mauldin-Jones added, "It is an honor to be voted a 2021 Academy Fellow. It is unprecedented to have two City Managers from the same region. I am looking forward to this opportunity to serve my community and profession at this level".

The National Academy of Public Administration helps government leaders solve their most critical management challenges. Since 1967, their congressionally chartered non-partisan non-profit Academy has provided expert advice to government leaders in building and managing more effective, efficient, equitable, accountable, and transparent organizations. The National Academy of Public Administration's national network of over 850 Fellows includes former cabinet officers, Members of Congress, governors, mayors, state legislators, prominent scholars, business executives, and public administrators.

Selection of the Academy's new Fellows follows a rigorous review of the individual's contributions to the field of public administration and policy. A Fellows Nominating Committee, selected by the Academy's Board Chair, makes its recommendations to the full Fellowship, which then votes on those individuals nominated to be a Fellow. The Committee was co-chaired by Academy Fellows Katherine Siggerud, Former Chief Operating Officer, U.S. Government Accountability Office, and Kendra Stewart, Professor and Director Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Center for Livable Communities, College of Charleston.

"The National Academy of Public Administration's selection of Mrs. Ferrell-Benavides for the 2021 Class of Academy Fellows fills the Duncanville City Council and me with a great sense of pride," said Duncanville Mayor Barry L. Gordon. "This induction into the prestigious group of public administrators is a well-deserved and appropriate recognition of both her and Opal Mauldin-Jones' hard work and professional accomplishments."

Lancaster's Mayor, Clyde C. Hairston, also chimed in on this achievement, adding, "We are thrilled with the announcement of both Opal Mauldin-Jones and Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides on being selected into the 2021 Class of Academy Fellows. Being selected into this program is certainly no easy task, and this shows the hard work and dedication our City Managers have for the community, the profession, and the Best Southwest."

The 2021 class joins more than 940 Academy Fellows – including former cabinet officers, members of Congress, governors, mayors, state legislators, prominent scholars, business executives, non-profit leaders, and public administrators.

Supported by a full-time professional staff, Fellows bring their insights, experience, successes, and lessons learned straight to the National Academy of Public Administration's clients through independent thought leadership, in-depth studies and analyses, advisory services and technical assistance, congressional testimony, forums, and conferences.

**About the National Academy of Public Administration:**

Chartered by Congress to provide non-partisan expert advice, the Academy is an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organization established in 1967 to assist government leaders in building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. Learn more at [www.napawash.org](http://www.napawash.org)

**About the City of Duncanville:**

Duncanville is a city in southern Dallas County, Texas, in the United States. Duncanville's population was over 40,000 as of the 2020 Census. The City is part of the Best Southwest Partnership that includes Cedar Hill, DeSoto, and Lancaster. [www.duncanville.com](http://www.duncanville.com)

**About the City of Lancaster:**

Lancaster is a 33.150 square mile, 2019 All-America city located within Southwest Dallas County, Texas, United States. Lancaster's population is 41,275 as of the 2020 census. Founded in 1852 as a frontier post, Lancaster is one of Dallas County's earliest settlements. The City of Lancaster is part of the Best Southwest Partnership, including Lancaster, Cedar Hill, DeSoto, and Duncanville. [www.lancaster-tx.com](http://www.lancaster-tx.com)

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