



# NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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**National Academy of Public Administration Releases New Book:  
“Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century SES: Ensuring Leadership Excellence  
in Our Federal Government”**

*Book Unveiled at Panel Discussion on Senior Executive Service in Government*

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) today unveiled its new book, *Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century SES: Ensuring Leadership Excellence in Our Federal Government*. The book was released at a joint event with Booz Allen Hamilton that featured a panel discussion on the future of the federal government’s elite career executive corps.

“We are pleased to launch this unique book, which relays a positive message about the dedicated public servants of the Senior Executive Service (SES) by addressing both the need for and the value of a career SES,” said Terry Gerton, President and CEO of the Academy. “It is written predominately by political appointees, who emphasize how important their career SES staff was to the accomplishment of their agencies’ missions, and how committed those political leaders were to the growth and development of their SES team.

“This insightful book also offers a coherent approach for reform that will improve the professional development, and therefore the relevance, of the SES,” said Gerton. “It should be of great value to the new Administration as it thinks its way through its policy agenda; to members of Congress who passionately want to remake the civil service and particularly the SES component; and to OPM and OMB as they consider the tactics of a reform plan.”

*Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century SES* is an unprecedented collection of perspectives on the SES from 24 of the nation’s most respected public sector leaders. The book was edited by Dr. Ronald Sanders, Academy Fellow and Vice President at Booz Allen Hamilton, with assistance from Dr. Elaine Brenner and Frederick Richardson.

“Largely invisible to the citizens they serve, members of the Federal government’s Senior Executive Service (SES) oversee hundreds of federal programs and operations that are vital to the nation, and they must do so with competence, and without bias of any kind,”

said Dr. Sanders. “So it is no exaggeration to suggest that we all depend on how those executives are developed, selected, deployed, and retained. Unfortunately, that’s something that hasn’t changed significantly since the SES was conceived back in the last century, and that’s problematic enough in and of itself.

“However, with 65% of the current senior executive corps eligible to retire, the future of the SES is literally at risk,” said Dr. Sanders. “In my view, it is imperative that we modernize the policies and practices that shape it if we expect our career executives to be prepared for 21st century government, and this book, a compilation of insights from some of the public sector’s most respected leaders, is intended as a blueprint for that modernization.”

*Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century SES* consists of six sections, each containing 4-5 chapters authored by public sector leaders, the editor’s concluding commentary, and several recommendations:

- The Challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Government
- Reexamining the Institutional Role of the SES
- Leadership Qualities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Developing the Next Generation of the SES
- Revitalizing the Federal Senior Executive Corps
- The Way Ahead

At the event, the panel discussion of the SES was moderated by Terry Gerton and Dr. Sanders, and panelists included Carolyn Colvin, former Acting Commissioner of the U.S. Social Security Administration; Michele Flournoy, former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; General Michael Hayden (retired, USAF), former Director of the CIA and former Director of the National Security Agency; and Clay Johnson III, former Deputy Director of Management at the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

To view the book, please visit [www.napawash.org](http://www.napawash.org)

#### **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 Booz Allen Hamilton**

Booz Allen Hamilton (NYSE: BAH) has been at the forefront of strategy and technology for more than 100 years. Today, the firm provides management and technology consulting and engineering services to leading Fortune 500 corporations, governments, and not-for-profits across the globe. Booz Allen partners with public and private sector clients to solve their most difficult challenges. To learn more, visit [BoozAllen.com](http://BoozAllen.com).

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