



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**WASHINGTON COALITION FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT  
ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS FOR 2016 TOP RECOGNITION AWARDS**

Nominations are now open for The Washington Coalition for Open Government's 2016 top annual recognition awards to be presented later this year to individuals or groups who have made outstanding contributions to the cause of open government in Washington.

Named for one of the primary authors of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, **The James Madison Award** honors an individual or organization whose long-term commitment to the First Amendment and to open government has been demonstrated through exemplary words or deeds. It is one of the highest honors WCOG bestows to honor transparency advocates. **The James Andersen Award** honors an individual or organization that has made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Washington Coalition for Open Government. It is named after James Andersen, retired chief justice of the Washington Supreme Court and a founding member of the coalition. Both awards

will be presented publicly in September.

**The 2016 Ballard/Thompson Award** is designed to recognize a member or members of the state legislature demonstrating outstanding dedication to the cause of open government during the legislative session. The award is named in honor of former Speaker of the House Clyde Ballard (R) and former state Senator and Chief Clerk of the House Alan Thompson (D), both founding members of WCOG. Provided there is a recipient who meets the award criteria, it will be presented at the Capitol during the 2016 legislative session.

The deadline for 2016 nominations for all awards is May 31. Full criteria, nomination forms and lists of past recipients are available online at [www.washingtoncog.org](http://www.washingtoncog.org). The Madison and Andersen awards will be presented at the 2016 Annual Madison Andersen Awards Breakfast on Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Washington Athletic Club, along with **The Kenneth F. Bunting Award**, presented to honor journalists who have used transparency laws or exposed secrecy in government. Provided there is a Ballard/Thompson recipient that award will be presented at the Capitol during the 2016 legislative session.

The Washington Coalition for Open Government is a statewide nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that advocates for the people's right to access government information and for the principle that transparency and public participation are building blocks of good government. Membership in the coalition is open to all citizens who want to promote and protect open government.

For more information, contact Washington Coalition for Open Government, 6351 Seaview Avenue NW, Seattle, WA 98107-2664 or on the web at [www.washingtoncog.org](http://www.washingtoncog.org) or call (206) 782-0393.