

THE 2026 POLLIE AWARDS

# WINNERS BOOK



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#2026POLLIES



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# THE 2026 POLLIE AWARDS

# WINNERS BOOK



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# Congratulations

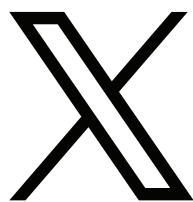
to all of this year's honorees

Winners Book Printed Courtesy of:

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AAPC gratefully acknowledges the 214 judges who participated in the 2026 Pollie Awards. These judges are essential to the success and integrity of the Pollie Awards program and we are truly appreciative of their time and efforts. To all of our judges, thank you! Without you, the Pollie Awards would not be possible.

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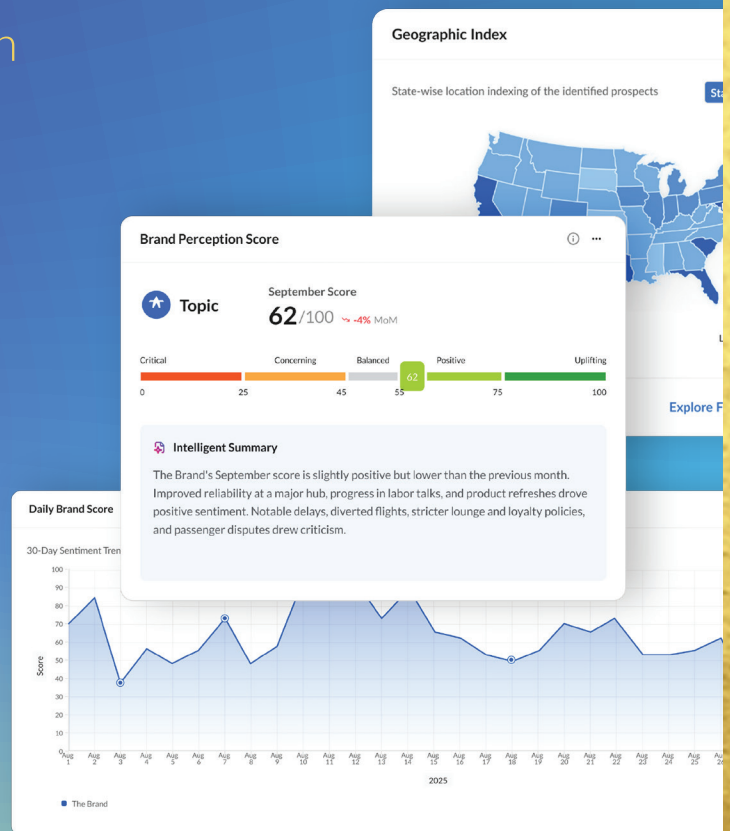


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# Pollie Contest Winners

Each election cycle brings new challenges, and new opportunities for creativity and strategic precision in political communications. This year's Pollie Awards entries reflect an industry that continues to adapt and innovate in a rapidly evolving campaign landscape.

Across digital platforms, television, grassroots organizing, and emerging media and technology, the work recognized this year demonstrates how powerful ideas and dynamic strategy can shape conversations and mobilize voters when it matters most.

The Pollie Awards honor the professionals and teams who transform strategy into impact. From bold creative concepts to data-driven outreach, AAPC proudly congratulates the 2026 Pollie Award winners for their creativity, strategic excellence, and measurable impact on the 2025 election cycle.

# Winners

## Overall Campaign Series - Candidate Division

### A02 Television/Video Series

**Gold**  
Big win in Big Apple  
FIGHT

**Bronze**  
Katie Brennan for Assembly - Entire Campaign  
The Adwell Group

### A04 Best Use of Opposition Research Series

**Gold**  
ACLU Virginia - State Legislative & AG  
Nesbitt & Parrinello

**Silver**  
Obby Thanks Trump  
Metric Strategies

**Bronze**  
The "AOC of Tennessee" Exposed And  
The Research That Stopped Her  
Fulcrum Intel | Main Thing  
Strategies | Storytellers

### A05 Best Field/GOTV Series

**Gold**  
Toby Doeden Statewide Bus Tour  
Southeastern Strategies

**Silver**  
Win Together San Antonio  
Echo Canyon Consulting

**Bronze**  
Strickland for Senate Special Election Field  
Red Dog Strategies, Inc

### A06 Best Fundraising Series

**Gold**  
Jack's Digital Engine  
Campaign Engine

**Silver**  
Foxy Fundraising: How Deja Foxx Raised  
\$1 Million and Changed the Country  
Goodman Campaigns

**Bronze**  
Boosted Authentic Social Media as  
a Dynamic Fundraising Program  
Liftoff Campaigns

### A07 Best Dialing & Texting Tools Series

**Gold**  
Keep Calm and Carry the Supermajority  
CampaignHQ

**Silver**  
Montville VBM  
Ascent Strategic & Campaign Engine

**Bronze**  
Electing Reproductive Freedom  
Champions in NJ and PA  
Winning Connections

### A08 Best Radio/Digital Audio Series

**Silver**  
Keep Us Safe  
Erikka J

### A09 Best Independent Expenditure Series

**Gold**  
Don't Rank Evil Andrew for Mayor  
Greenpill

**Silver**  
HD-30  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

**Bronze**  
Georgia PSE  
CN4 Partners

### A10 Best in Show Series

**Gold**  
Katie Brennan for Assembly - Entire Campaign  
The Adwell Group

**Silver**  
Zohran's New York  
FIGHT

**Bronze**  
James Solomon for Mayor - Entire Campaign  
The Adwell Group

## Overall Campaign Series - Non-Candidate Division

### A11 Direct Mail Series

**Gold**  
VA-02 Social Pressure Mail on Medicaid  
Berni Consulting on behalf of American  
Bridge Education Foundation

**Silver**  
Yes on 409  
HighGround Inc

**Bronze**  
YES Campaign  
AGENCY

### A12 Television/Video Series

**Silver**  
"Big Pharma Invades Our Lives"  
Connector, Inc.

### A13 Digital/Online Series

**Gold**  
HSAA: In Their Shoes  
Metric Strategies

**Silver**  
"Big Pharma Invades Our Lives"  
Connector, Inc.

**Bronze**  
"Passing the One Big Beautiful Bill"  
PLUS Communications

### A15 Best Radio/Digital Audio Series

**Gold**  
No on 2A: Defeating Pueblo's  
Government Utility Takeover  
Nuckels Media Partners

### A18 Best Ballot Initiative Series

**Gold**  
Prop 50 - "For All 50 States"  
Bearstar Strategies

**Silver**  
Validators Series  
J&Z Strategies

**Silver**  
No on 2A: Defeating Pueblo's  
Government Utility Takeover  
Nuckels Media Partners

**Bronze**  
YES Campaign  
AGENCY

### A19 Best Organizational/ Issue Advocacy Series

**Gold**  
"Big Pharma Invades Our Lives"  
Connector, Inc.

**Silver**  
Construction Workers' Stories  
J&Z Strategies

**Bronze**  
Motorcade for Trade  
Coolidge Consulting

### A20 Best PAC/Trade Association Series

**Gold**  
PSAC Members Mobilize  
Metric Strategies

**Silver**  
Ensuring Support for Hemp Takes Root  
Parthenon Strategies

**Bronze**  
Don't Ban Pets  
Pet Advocacy Network

## Direct Mail - Candidate Division

### B02 For U.S. House of Representatives

**Gold**  
Juan Ciscomani: Protecting Social  
Security and Medicare  
Caliber Contact



# THE 2026 POLLIE AWARDS

## Silver

**Bilingual Trifold Bio**  
Convergence Targeted Communications

## Bronze

**Logo & Branding**  
Valkyrie Strategies

## B03 For Governor

### Gold

**Best Direct Mail Piece - Candidate Division - Direct Mail Series - Steve Hilton for Governor - Rockwell Solutions**  
Rockwell Solutions

## B04 For State Legislature

### Gold

**The Assemblywoman Who Stole Our School Funding**  
Napolitano Consulting

### Silver

**Help**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Bronze

**Tired of Lies**  
Red Horse Strategies

## B06 For Mayoral

### Gold

**Mamdani for NYC**  
Moxie Media

### Silver

**These guys**  
Red Horse Strategies

### Bronze

**Kate Bradshaw for Mayor of Bountiful Mailer**  
Landslide Political

## B07 For Local/Municipal/Regional

### Gold

**Democrats Trust Rolando Escalona**  
MDW Communications

### Silver

**Fight**  
Convergence Targeted Communications

### Bronze

**Life... is not a game**  
New Way Strategies/CT Business Link

## B08 For PAC/Super PAC

### Gold

**Voter Alert! Ty Hankerson**  
North Shore Strategies

### Silver

**Georgia PSE**  
CN4 Partners

### Bronze

**Vote YES, Not Yass**  
North Shore Strategies

## B09 For Organization

### Gold

**Painting the Pines**  
Napolitano Consulting

### Silver

**Housing**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Bronze

**Right**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

## B10 Bilingual/Multilingual/ Foreign Language

### Gold

**Juggling Emilio**  
MDW Communications

### Silver

**Shekar Krishnan for City Council**  
Trip Yang Strategies

### Bronze

**Shekar Krishnan for City Council**  
Trip Yang Strategies

## B11 Early Voting/Absentee Ballot/Vote-by-Mail

### Gold

**Jimmy Patronis GOTV - When the President Calls**  
Caliber Contact

### Silver

**Prairie Village Convenience**  
Echo Canyon Consulting

### Bronze

**Vote Mikie Sherrill For NJ Gov- Where Workers Lead The Way Forward**  
Trip Yang Strategies

## B12 Best Use of Humor

### Gold

**Valentine**  
TJP Strategies

### Silver

**Call It**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Bronze

**The Assemblywoman Who Stole Our School Funding**  
Napolitano Consulting

## B13 Best Use of Negative or Contrast

### Gold

**Everything**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Silver

**In Love**  
First Edition Strategies

## Bronze

**Valentine**  
TJP Strategies

## B14 Best Use of Illustration or Photography

### Gold

**Call It**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Silver

**Warning**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Bronze

**The Assemblywoman Who Stole Our School Funding**  
Napolitano Consulting

## B15 Best Use of Social Pressure

### Bronze

**Dear Voter**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

## B16 Best Use of Targeting

### Gold

**Democrats Write In Matt Long**  
Red Maverick Media

### Silver

**Jumaane Williams - A Independent Public Advocate for the People**  
Trip Yang Strategies

### Bronze

**Letter**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

## B17 Best Use of Slate Mail

### Gold

**PATH**  
Red Horse Strategies

### Silver

**Kitchen Table**  
Zenith Strategies

### Bronze

**Vote Mikie Sherrill For NJ Gov- Where Workers Lead The Way Forward**  
Trip Yang Strategies

## B18 GOTV

### Gold

**Painting the Pines**  
Napolitano Consulting

### Bronze

**Coach**  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

# Winners

## B20 Independent Expenditure Campaign - U.S. House of Representatives

### Gold

Jimmy Patronis GOTV - When the President Calls  
Caliber Contact

### Silver

The Experience to Take on Trump  
Mammen Group Inc.

### Bronze

What's It Going to Take to Stop MAGA?  
Mammen Group Inc.

## B21 Independent Expenditure Campaign - For Governor

### Gold

Vote Mikie Sherrill For NJ Gov- Where Workers Lead The Way Forward  
Trip Yang Strategies

### Silver

Real Fighter  
The Dover Group

### Bronze

"YIMBY" Direct Mail  
Vision Media Marketing Inc.

## B22 Independent Expenditure Campaign - State Legislature

### Gold

Call It  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Silver

Corporate  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Bronze

Paper Thin  
Convergence Targeted Communications

## B23 Independent Expenditure Campaign - For Down-Ballot Statewide

### Gold

Georgia PSE  
CN4 Partners

## B24 Independent Expenditure Campaign - Mayoral

### Gold

Mamdani for NYC  
Moxie Media

### Silver

Valentine  
TJP Strategies

### Bronze

Part-Time Mayor Emilio  
MDW Communications

## B25 Independent Expenditure Campaign - Local/Municipal/Regional

### Gold

Villains  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### Silver

What happened 30 years ago?  
CN4 Partners

### Bronze

Voter Alert! Ty Hankerson  
North Shore Strategies

## Direct Mail - Non-Candidate Division

### B26 GOTV

#### Silver

Everybody Votes x Black Men  
Vote Wisconsin Turnout  
Four Lions Media

### B27 Best Use of Social Pressure

#### Gold

Better Boundaries Social Pressure Mail Slate  
Landslide Political

#### Silver

Yes  
Bergmann Zwerdling Direct

### B30 For National

#### Gold

Defending American Manufacturing  
Pitch & Run

#### Silver

Planned Parenthood: Facing a Threat Too Dangerous to Ignore  
MissionWired

### B32 For PAC/Trade Association

#### Gold

Yes on A & B: Cartoon Mailer  
Spencer Hagaman

#### Silver

Scratcher  
BerlinRosen Campaigns

#### Bronze

Vote Yes On Measure A  
Valkyrie Strategies

### B33 For Local

#### Gold

Yes on A & B: Cartoon Mailer  
Spencer Hagaman

#### Silver

Clarity at the Doorstep: A Voter Education Publication That Delivered Results  
edVANTAGE

### Bronze

Invest In Who We Are Claremore  
Amber Integrated

## Direct Mail - Open Division

### B34 Best Use of Research

#### Gold

Unrig Our Economy - Eggs  
The Pivot Group

#### Silver

CA Realtors - Dirty Water  
Caliber Contact

#### Bronze

CA Realtors - Self Serving Paloma Aguirre  
Caliber Contact

## Television - Candidate Division

### C01 For U.S. Senate

#### Gold

"Grace"  
FP1 Strategies

### C02 For U.S. House of Representatives

#### Gold

Christian Menefee for Congress - "Crib"  
The Adwell Group

#### Silver

Rough Ride  
Beacon Media

#### Bronze

American Liberty Foundation - "Tough, Tested, Ready"  
Content Creative Media

### C03 For Governor

#### Gold

Abigail Spanberger for Governor, "Halls"  
A|L Media Strategy

#### Silver

"New Heights"  
TSGco

#### Bronze

They Call Him Click  
RMC-Revolutionizing  
Microtargeted Campaigns

### C04 For State Legislature

#### Gold

NJ LD11 "Lemonade"  
A|L Media Strategy

#### Silver

Earliest Donors  
First Edition Strategies



## THE 2026 POLLIE AWARDS

**Bronze**  
Strickland for Senate  
Eleven Public Affairs

### C05 For Down-Ballot Statewide

**Gold**  
Susan Crawford for Wisconsin and Democratic Party of Wisconsin, "Knee Pad Brad"  
Nuckels Media Partners

**Silver**  
"How Corrupt"  
GMMB

**Bronze**  
Jill Underly for Wisconsin State Superintendent, "Kindergarten Predator"  
Nuckels Media Partners

### C06 For Mayoral

**Gold**  
James Solomon for Mayor - "Model"  
The Adwell Group

**Silver**  
Spiro For Mayor "My Dad"  
DSB&P Political - 5 Stones - Cory Adair, Candace Cooksey and Bob Kish

**Bronze**  
Zohran for NYC  
FIGHT

### C07 For Local/Municipal/Regional

**Gold**  
Katie Brennan for Assembly - "Power"  
The Adwell Group

**Silver**  
Our Guy Girmay  
Upper Left Strategies & KMM Strategies

**Bronze**  
Nuestros Ninos  
Red Horse Strategies

### C08 For PAC/Super PAC

**Gold**  
Make Oklahoma Great Again - "Banana Chuck"  
Content Creative Media

**Silver**  
"What Happened to Thomas Massie?"  
FP1 Strategies

**Bronze**  
"Burn"  
FP1 Strategies

### C10 Bilingual/Multilingual/ Foreign Language

**Gold**  
Fighter  
Conexión

### C11 Best Use of Humor

**Gold**  
Susan Crawford for Wisconsin and Democratic Party of Wisconsin, "Knee Pad Brad"  
Nuckels Media Partners

**Silver**  
"Fundraising"  
Sena Kozar Strategies

**Bronze**  
Rough Ride  
Beacon Media

### C12 Best Use of Negative or Contrast

**Gold**  
Profiting Off of Us  
First Edition Strategies

**Gold**  
Zohran for NYC  
FIGHT

**Silver**  
"Bon Voyage"  
Sena Kozar Strategies

**Bronze**  
Abigail Spanberger for Governor, "Raise Costs"  
A|L Media Strategy

### C13 Best Use of Personality or Celebrity

**Gold**  
Surviving the NYC Mayoral Race  
FIGHT

**Silver**  
They Call Him Click  
RMC-Revolutionizing  
Microtargeted Campaigns

### C14 Best Use of Testimonial

**Gold**  
Thomas Massie for Congress - "Just Getting Started" (60-second TV ad)  
Content Creative Media

**Silver**  
Jay Jones for Attorney General, "Stand Strong"  
A|L Media Strategy

**Bronze**  
"Vinnie"  
Sena Kozar Strategies

### C15 Independent Expenditure Campaign - U.S. Senate

**Gold**  
TCM Wesley Hunt Negative "No Show"  
Convergence Media

**Silver**  
TCM Ken Paxton Negative "Paying the Price"  
Convergence Media

### C16 Independent Expenditure Campaign - U.S. House of Representatives

**Gold**  
Luchadora's Big Win  
FIGHT

**Silver**  
"Burn"  
FP1 Strategies

**Bronze**  
Valley Kids  
Armour Evans Media

### C17 Independent Expenditure Campaign - For Governor

**Gold**  
Who New Jersey Trusts  
76 Words

**Silver**  
Make Oklahoma Great Again - "Banana Chuck"  
Content Creative Media

**Bronze**  
"Bold Action"  
Sena Kozar Strategies

### C18 Independent Expenditure Campaign - State Legislature

**Gold**  
Whole Lotta Money  
BrabenderCox

### C19 Independent Expenditure Campaign - For Down-Ballot Statewide

**Gold**  
Dangerous Decisions  
TAG Strategies

### C20 Independent Expenditure Campaign - Mayoral

**Gold**  
Big Papi  
MZL Media LLC

**Silver**  
Leadership Matters - "Portrait"  
The Adwell Group

**Bronze**  
Harrell IE Debate  
CN4 Partners

### C22 Best Use of Targeting

**Gold**  
Traditional TV Missed 57% of Our Voters  
National Media Insights

**Silver**  
Susan Crawford for Wisconsin and Democratic Party of Wisconsin - Targeting "Knee Pad Brad"  
Nuckels Media Partners

# Winners

## Bronze

Transforming Linear Campaigns with Addressable Technology  
Comcast Advertising and National Media

## Television - Non-Candidate Division

### C23 Bilingual/Multilingual/Foreign Language

#### Silver

Novo Casa Paulista - A maior mudança da história  
Lua Propaganda

#### Bronze

"Fuera de Control" (ft. Alex Padilla)  
Bearstar Strategies

### C24 For National

#### Gold

Living Room  
Connector, Inc.

#### Silver

"Big & Bold"  
PLUS Communications

#### Bronze

Home Invader  
Connector, Inc.

### C25 For Statewide

#### Gold

Maine Yes on 2  
Frame Strategies

#### Silver

Maine No on 1  
Frame Strategies

#### Bronze

Stick it to Trump  
FIGHT

### C26 For Local

#### Gold

NO on 2A, "Cuckoo"  
Nuckels Media Partners

#### Silver

YES for Des Moines Public Schools, "Kids"  
Nuckels Media Partners

#### Bronze

Lotto  
Red Horse Strategies

## Television - Open Division

### C27 Best use of CTV targeting

#### Gold

Abigail Spanberger for Governor, "Stand With Her"  
A|L Media Strategy

## Silver

We Cracked CTV's Black Box  
National Media Insights

## Bronze

Katie Brennan for Assembly - "Expert"  
The Adwell Group

## Digital - Candidate Division

### D01 Digital Advertising - U.S. Senate

#### Gold

Who is Dave P?  
Harris Media Group

#### Silver

"Tailgate"  
Watershed Strategy

#### Silver

Jasmine Crockett for Senate - "New Star"  
The Adwell Group

#### Bronze

"Garbage Day"  
TSGco

### D02 Digital Advertising - U.S. House of Representatives

#### Gold

Walk These Streets  
Four Lions Media

#### Silver

Cien Por Ciento  
Conexión

#### Bronze

Christian D. Menefee for Congress - "Receipts"  
VoteShift

### D03 Digital Advertising - For Governor

#### Gold

The Devil Went Down to Augusta  
Harris Media Group

#### Silver

Erin Stewart For Governor Kickoff Video  
Erin Stewart Campaign Kickoff Video

#### Bronze

Democratic Governors Stand Up To President Trump: A Standout Digital Ad Campaign  
MissionWired

### D04 Digital Advertising - State Legislature

#### Gold

A Major Upset In The Heartland  
Foundation Blue Media

#### Silver

NJ LD16 "Ring"  
A|L Media Strategy

## Bronze

Texas is at a Crossroads  
RMC-Revolutionizing  
Microtargeted Campaigns

### D05 Digital Advertising - For Down-Ballot Statewide

#### Gold

Independent Expenditure for Georgia Public Service Commission  
Corsair Campaigns

#### Silver

Saritha For New York  
OnMessage Inc.

#### Bronze

Jay Jones for Attorney General, "Too Weak"  
A|L Media Strategy

### D06 Digital Advertising - For Mayoral

#### Gold

Pulling Off The Upset In St. Paul, Minnesota  
Foundation Blue Media

#### Silver

Chores  
VoteShift

#### Bronze

Adrienne Adams for Mayor - "Mother's Day"  
The Adwell Group

### D07 Digital Advertising - Local/Municipal/Regional

#### Gold

Zabar's  
Red Horse Strategies

#### Silver

Montgomery County Democratic Committee, "The Stakes"  
Nuckels Media Partners

#### Bronze

Leader - Nicole Aloise  
Versus Media Group

### D09 Digital Advertising - Best Use of Targeting

#### Gold

42% of Swing Voters Hide Online. We Found Them.  
National Media Insights

#### Silver

Flipping the Streaming Battlefield in TN-07  
Smart Media Group

#### Bronze

IBEW's "Union Buster Brad"  
Targeting Wisconsin  
Nuckels Media Partners



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### D10 Digital Advertising - Best Use of Digital Advertising for Acquisition

#### Gold

Activating Ads to Acquire Arizona and America  
Goodman Campaigns

#### Silver

Jasmine Crockett for Senate - "New Star"  
The Adwell Group

### D11 Website - U.S. Senate

#### Gold

Mike Rounds for U.S. Senate - Website  
Push Digital, Push Digital Group

#### Silver

Meet Fred  
RMC-Revolutionizing  
Microtargeted Campaigns

### D12 Website - U.S. House of Representatives

#### Gold

Jack for New York  
SBDigital

### D13 Website - For Governor

#### Gold

The Digital Front Door: VivekForOhio.com  
Targeted Victory

#### Silver

Larry Rhoden for Governor - Website  
Push Digital, Push Digital Group

#### Bronze

John Rose for TN Governor Website  
ColdSpark

### D14 Website - State Legislature

#### Gold

Dennis Geesaman Campaign Website  
RMC-Revolutionizing  
Microtargeted Campaigns

#### Silver

KatzTaxFacts.com  
Napolitano Consulting

### D15 Website - For Down-Ballot Statewide

#### Gold

Georgia PSE  
CN4 Partners

#### Silver

Andrea Joy Campbell for Massachusetts  
SBDigital

#### Bronze

JayJonesTexts.com  
Republican Attorneys General Association

### D16 Website - Local/Municipal/Regional

#### Gold

Tiffany Moore Russell for

Orange County Mayor  
MDW Communications

### D17 Bilingual/Multilingual/Foreign Language

#### Gold

Toxic  
Convergence Targeted Communications

### D18 Best Use of Social Media

#### Bronze

Rogers For Senate - Launch Teaser  
Convergence Media

### D19 Best Use of Video

#### Gold

"Garbage Day"  
TSGco

#### Silver

"Grace"  
FP1 Strategies

#### Bronze

Republican Kidnappers  
Progress Action Fund

### D20 Best Use of a Meme

#### Gold

Emilio Gonzalez for Mayor Meme  
Five Seasons Media

### D21 Best Viral Campaign

#### Gold

Jasmine Crockett for Senate - "New Star"  
The Adwell Group

#### Silver

Bobby Cole Launch  
CN4 Partners

#### Bronze

Republican Kidnappers  
Progress Action Fund

### D22 Best Use of Email Marketing (Non-Fundraising)

#### Silver

Seven Wins from Team Monica's First Term  
Evinco Strategies

### D23 Best Use of Humor

#### Gold

"Name that Nancy"  
FP1 Strategies

#### Silver

Emilio Gonzalez for Mayor -  
Cracker Barrel Meme  
Five Seasons Media

#### Bronze

Dough, Not Donuts  
The Dover Group

### D24 Best Use of Negative or Contrast

#### Gold

"Name that Nancy"  
FP1 Strategies

#### Silver

Jill Underly for Wisconsin State  
Superintendent, "Kindergarten Predator"  
Nuckels Media Partners

#### Bronze

"Repeating"  
Sena Kozar Strategies

### D25 Best Use of Social Media - Digital Acquisition Campaign

#### Gold

Authentic Boosted Social as  
an Acquisition Tool  
Liftoff Campaigns

### D26 Web Video

#### Gold

Oysterman makes Splash in Maine  
FIGHT

#### Silver

WE HAVE BIGGER PLANS FOR DETROIT  
Crescendo Creative + FIGHT

#### Bronze

Paige Against the Machine  
FIGHT

### D27 Digital Creative - Stand Alone

#### Bronze

Jasmine Crockett for Senate - "New Star"  
The Adwell Group

### D28 Digital Creative - Full Set

#### Bronze

Abigail Spanberger for Governor  
A|L Media Strategy

### D29 Independent Expenditure Campaign - U.S. Senate

#### Gold

Majority Forward Iowa "Worried"  
A|L Media Strategy

### D30 Independent Expenditure Campaign - U.S. House of Representatives

#### Gold

"What Happened to Thomas Massie?"  
FP1 Strategies

#### Silver

"Burn"  
FP1 Strategies

# Winners

## D31 Independent Expenditure Campaign - For Governor

### Gold

Everytown for Gun Safety - Daughter :30 (VA Gov.)  
GMMB

### Silver

"Name that Nancy"  
FP1 Strategies

### Bronze

A Different Leader - Mikie Sherrill for Governor  
Versus Media Group

## D32 Independent Expenditure Campaign - State Legislature

### Gold

Everytown for Gun Safety - Happened :30 (VA State Legislature)  
GMMB

### Silver

Lily Gives a Damn  
COMPETE

### Bronze

Rhino  
Ravenna Strategies

## D33 Independent Expenditure - For Down-Ballot Statewide

### Gold

Georgia Conservation Voters - Public Service Commission  
Yosemite Consulting

### Silver

Personal Profit  
The New Media Firm

### Bronze

Fighter  
COMPETE

## D34 Independent Expenditure Campaign - Mayoral

### Gold

Harrell IE Debate  
CN4 Partners

### Silver

Big Papi  
MZL Media LLC

### Bronze

Pulling Off The Upset In St. Paul, Minnesota  
Foundation Blue Media

## D35 Independent Expenditure Campaign - Local/Municipal/Regional

### Gold

"Always"  
Watershed Strategy

### Silver

Thriving Together - "Trust"  
The Adwell Group

### Bronze

Real Time, Real Truth  
Old Town Media and Resonance Campaigns

## Digital - Non-Candidate Division

### D36 Digital Advertising - Ballot Initiative

#### Gold

Texans for Proposition Four  
Drive Public Affairs, PDG

#### Gold

A YIMBY Bridge for a NIMBY City  
Ascend Digital Strategies

#### Silver

Ride Safe  
FSSG

#### Bronze

Wake Up, America  
LaMont Digital

### D37 Digital Advertising - Issue Advocacy

#### Gold

"Max Profitrexil"  
PLUS Communications

#### Silver

Award Show  
Connector, Inc.

#### Bronze

"Cole"  
Watershed Strategy

### D38 Website

#### Gold

Richard Nixon Foundation Website Rebuild  
Winning Tuesday

#### Silver

COLOR 2025 Ballot Guide  
Sisneros Strategies and COLOR Latina

#### Bronze

Yes on 409  
HighGround Inc.

### D39 Best Use of Social Media

#### Gold

@GavinNewsom Best Use of Social Media  
LaMont Digital

#### Silver

Proposition 50 Campaign Best Use of Social Media  
LaMont Digital

### D40 Web Video - Ballot Initiative

#### Gold

Invest In Who We Are Claremore  
Amber Integrated

#### Silver

Ride Safe  
FSSG

#### Silver

Victory for Whitehouse ISD  
Mayes Media Group

#### Bronze

We Decide  
J&Z Strategies

### D41 Web Video - Issue Advocacy

#### Gold

Driving Real Policy Impact Through Digital Video  
BASK Digital Media

#### Silver

America the Beautiful  
Gutsy Media, ASO Communications, National Education Association

#### Bronze

California Republican Party - AB379 Digital Advocacy  
Praetorian Public Relations

### D42 Digital Creative - Stand Alone

#### Gold

America the Beautiful  
Gutsy Media, ASO Communications, National Education Association

#### Silver

Award Show  
Connector, Inc.

### D43 Digital Creative - Full Set

#### Gold

"Big Pharma Invades Our Lives"  
Connector, Inc.

#### Silver

Pigs  
Corsair Campaigns

### D44 Best Use of Email Marketing (Non-Fundraising)

#### Gold

HEU Bargaining Email Program  
Metric Strategies

#### Bronze

CRNA-PAC Annual Report  
Sagac Public Affairs



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## Digital - Open Division

### D45 Best Influencer / Organic Social

**Gold**

**Movement-Making Media: Social Growth That Changed the Race**  
Orion Digital Media

**Silver**

**Up In Arms: A Plea to the Common Sense of Everyday Americans (People Power Initiatives)**  
DSPolitical and Erikson Communication Group

**Bronze**

**Prop 50 Influencer Campaign**  
LaMont Digital

## Dialing & Texting Tools - Open Division

### E01 Autodial/Live

**Gold**

**SEIU and Rideshare Drivers are a Sure Bet!**  
The Sexton Group

**Silver**

**No Party, No Problem**  
CampaignHQ, Story Group

**Bronze**

**Dialing Out the Drama**  
CampaignHQ, Tuesday Associates

### E02 Telephone Town Hall Call/Forum Call

**Gold**

**Press 1 for the Runoff**  
CampaignHQ, Hein Strategies

**Silver**

**Mobilizing a City: How Two High-Impact Telephone Town Halls Helped Power Andrew Knack's 2025 Mayoral Victory**  
Strategic Communications Inc.

**Bronze**

**Voices From the Hollers**  
CampaignHQ

### E03 Best Use of Mobile Application/Technology

**Gold**

**Getting indicted by Donald Trump and raising \$400k in 24 hours**  
Goodman Campaigns

**Silver**

**Campaign Leaderboard**  
Victory Insights

**Bronze**

**FUSE: Powerful, Personalized GIFs at Scale**  
Prompt.io

### E04 Best Use of SMS

**Gold**

**Powering Through Election Day: \$1.1M Raised in 20 Days**  
MissionWired

**Silver**

**Texting to the Rescue: Identifying Supporters of a Solar Project in Rural Virginia**  
Calvert Street Group

**Bronze**

**Sweating Like a Pig at a Bacon Festival**  
TAG Strategies

### E05 Best Use of MMS

**Gold**

**Montville VBM**  
Ascent Strategic & Campaign Engine

**Silver**

**A Movement United: The Kirk Response**  
Texting For Less

**Bronze**

**Gravy Train With Biscuit Wheels**  
TAG Strategies

### E06 Best Use of Peer to Peer Texting

**Gold**

**Montville VBM**  
Ascent Strategic & Campaign Engine

**Silver**

**Cutting Through the Crowd**  
Campaign Headquarters

**Silver**

**TEXTbook Turnaround**  
CampaignHQ

**Bronze**

**Clutching Their Pearls**  
TAG Strategies

## Radio & Digital Audio - Candidate Division

### F01 For Federal/Statewide

**Gold**

**"From Day One"**  
TSGco

### F02 For State/Local

**Gold**

**Something Wicked in Pennsylvania**  
Priorities USA Action and People Power Pennsylvania

**Silver**

**Across The Aisle**  
NYS Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee/Mark Guma Communications

**Bronze**

**Virginia Tech Radio Ad**  
The Dover Group

### F03 For PAC/Super PAC

**Gold**

**"What Happened to Thomas Massie?"**  
FP1 Strategies

### F04 Bilingual/Multilingual/Foreign Language

**Gold**

**Miami Mayor Radio Campaign**  
Red Bridge

**Silver**

**Susan Crawford for Wisconsin and Democratic Party of Wisconsin, "Corte Suprema"**  
Nuckels Media Partners

### F05 Best Use of Humor

**Gold**

**The Justice Project, "Polka Radio"**  
Nuckels Media Partners

### F06 Best Use of Negative or Contrast

**Gold**

**The Justice Project, "Please Please Please"**  
Nuckels Media Partners

**Silver**

**Keep Us Safe**  
Erikka J

**Bronze**

**"What Happened to Thomas Massie?"**  
FP1 Strategies

### F07 Independent Expenditure Campaign

**Gold**

**"What Happened to Thomas Massie?"**  
FP1 Strategies

**Silver**

**The Justice Project, "Please Please Please"**  
Nuckels Media Partners

## Radio & Digital Audio - Open Division

### F08 Best Use of Radio/Digital Audio

**Gold**

**Kill Bill**  
Jamestown Associates

**Silver**

**No on 2A, "insanity"**  
Nuckels Media Partners

**Bronze**

**HSA: Health Care Short-Staffing**  
Metric Strategies

# Winners

## F09 Best Use of Podcast Sponsorship or Appearance

### Gold

A Podcast Plot Twist That Helped Win the Impossible  
Trilogy Interactive

### Silver

Border Security Alliance - Podcasts  
Echo Canyon Consulting

### Bronze

This Is Gavin Newsom  
LaMont Digital

## Fundraising - Open Division

### G01 Best Use of Direct Mail

#### Gold

Popcorn Fundraising Letter  
Amber Integrated

#### Silver

911 Memorial and Museum Direct Mail  
Parkside-Suite 1504

#### Bronze

What's scarier than Halloween?  
Mayes Media Group

### G02 Best Use of Email

#### Gold

Leidos PAC (LPAC) "Settlers of Leidos" Email  
Leidos PAC (LPAC) Campaign

#### Silver

CRNA-PAC Targeted Summer Email Campaign  
Sagac Public Affairs

#### Bronze

NACSPAC - "Fueled by You" Email Campaign  
Sagac Public Affairs

### G03 Best Use of Social Media

#### Gold

Please Stop Sending Us Money  
Spruce Street Compliance

#### Silver

Headshots & Handshakes  
Voltage Campaigns

#### Bronze

Boosted Authentic Social Media as a Dynamic Fundraising Program  
Liftoff Campaigns

### G04 Best Use of Website/Landing Page

#### Gold

NRCC Christmas Slot Machine  
Targeted Victory

#### Silver

Steve Hilton For Governor  
Convergence Media

### G05 Best Use of Phones/SMS

#### Gold

Crane For Congress, ICE Clean the Streets Text  
Targeted Victory

#### Silver

Oh! The fundraising text did the math for me. NYC turns my \$10 into \$90? Sure, I'll give again.  
Goodman Campaigns

#### Bronze

DonorDex  
Victory Insights

### G06 For Independent Expenditure Committees

#### Gold

Go Birds, Vote Yes. How to use the Superbowl Champs to raise for an obscure PAC raising for judicial yes/no elections.  
Goodman Campaigns

## Fundraising - Non-Candidate Division

### G07 For Non-Profit Organization/Trade Association

#### Gold

NACSPAC - "Fueled by You" Email Campaign  
Sagac Public Affairs

#### Silver

CRNA-PAC Targeted Summer Email Campaign  
Sagac Public Affairs

#### Bronze

911 Memorial and Museum Direct Mail  
The Parkside Group

## Print & Products - Open Division

### H01 Full Page

#### Gold

California's Crappiest Law  
Employment Policies Institute

#### Silver

Suzette Valladares for Senate 2028  
Elizabeth Hanretty Graphic Design

#### Bronze

Shekar Krishnan for City Council  
Trip Yang Strategies

### H02 Less Than Full Page

#### Gold

Novo Casa Paulista - A maior mudança da história  
Lua Propaganda

#### Silver

Better Woolwich  
Napolitano Consulting

### H03 Insert

#### Gold

Medford First  
Napolitano Consulting

### H04 Billboard

#### Gold

Democratic Party of Wisconsin, "Knee Pad Brad at the Brewers Stadium"  
Nuckels Media Partners

#### Silver

Costs More Dough  
GPS Impact

#### Bronze

Yes on 409  
HighGround Inc.

### H05 Door Hanger

#### Gold

Trump Graham Door Hanger  
First Tuesday Strategies

#### Silver

No on Prop 50: Fairs, Farms & Family Fund  
Elizabeth Hanretty Graphic Design

#### Bronze

Better Lumberton  
Napolitano Consulting

### H06 Logo & Branding

#### Gold

Angus King III Branding  
AGENCY

#### Silver

Leidos PAC (LPAC) "Settlers of Leidos" Branding  
Sagac Public Affairs

#### Bronze

Marisol Garcia for NEA Vice President Branding  
The Colibri Collective

### H07 Most Original/Innovative Collateral Material

#### Gold

Daniel  
VoteShift

#### Silver

Leidos PAC (LPAC) "Settlers of Leidos" Materials  
Sagac Public Affairs

#### Silver

On the Table: Every Bottle Back  
Cornerstone Solutions

#### Bronze

Battle-Tested. Nevada Strong.  
RMC-Revolutionizing  
Microtargeted Campaigns



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## H08 Non-Mail Brochure

**Gold**  
COLOR 2025 Ballot Guide  
Sisneros Strategies and COLOR Latina

**Silver**  
Hemp Industry Awareness for GR Efforts  
Platform Communications

**Bronze**  
CRNA-PAC Annual Report  
Sagac Public Affairs

## H09 Yard/Outdoor Sign

**Gold**  
Save Paris Mountain Yard Sign  
First Tuesday Strategies

**Silver**  
Crossed the line  
New Way Strategies/CT Business Link

**Bronze**  
Yes for West-MEC  
HighGround Inc.

## H10 Best Merchandise

**Gold**  
Daniel  
VoteShift

**Silver**  
Department of War Merchandise Campaign  
Targeted Victory

**Bronze**  
Alligator Alcatraz  
Ascent Strategic & Campaign Engine

## Field - Open Division

### I01 Paid Field Program

**Gold**  
Strickland for Senate Special Election Field  
Red Dog Strategies, Inc

**Silver**  
Reclaiming Passaic County Through  
Targeted Field Operations  
Hamilton Campaign Network

**Bronze**  
Winning Partisan Voters for  
Nonpartisan Elections  
Fox Bryant LLC

### I02 Field Program - Statewide

**Gold**  
Protect Utah Workers Field Program  
Landslide Political

**Silver**  
Toby Doeden Statewide Bus Tour  
Southeastern Strategies

### I03 Field Program - Local

**Gold**  
Transformative Latino Engagement  
in Union County, NJ  
Sisneros Strategies

**Silver**  
Win Together San Antonio  
Echo Canyon Consulting

**Bronze**  
Winning Partisan Voters for  
Nonpartisan Elections  
Fox Bryant LLC

### I04 GOTV

**Gold**  
Loveland's Gone To Poo - GOTV  
My Campaign Creative

**Silver**  
Transformative Latino Engagement  
in Union County, NJ  
Sisneros Strategies

**Bronze**  
Reclaiming Passaic County Through  
Targeted Field Operations  
Hamilton Campaign Network

### I05 Ballot Access - Petition Collection

**Gold**  
Protect Utah Workers Field Program  
Landslide Political

### I06 Absentee/Early Voting Program

**Gold**  
Montville VBM  
Ascent Strategic & Campaign Engine

### I07 Voter Registration Program

**Gold**  
Registering the Next Generation of Voters  
Cornerstone Solutions

### I10 Best Use of Analytics

**Gold**  
Cracking The Code of The New GOP Coalition  
Pulse Decision Science

**Silver**  
PeoplePulse: Advocacy Organization  
Building Combining AI, Machine Learning,  
Qualitative and Survey Research  
Pulse Decision Science

### I11 Best Use of Organizing and Mobilization Technology

**Gold**  
Campaign Leaderboard  
Victory Insights

**Silver**  
From Recruitment to GOTV: A  
Unified Organizing Platform  
www.rightinsight.org

**Bronze**  
Voter to Voter  
The Voter Network

## Field - Non-Candidate Division

### I12 Grassroots Program - Issue Advocacy

**Gold**  
No Place to Hide: Patch Throughs  
That Cornered Congress  
CampaignHQ

**Silver**  
More Than Just Sunlight:  
Educating and Engaging a Virginia  
Community to Win Approval  
Calvert Street Group

**Bronze**  
You Broke It, You Fix It  
Berman and Company

## Student - Open Division

### J01 Best Campaign Plan

**Gold**  
Zach McKay for Florence City Council  
First Tuesday Strategies

## Technology, Data & Analytics - Open Division

### K01 Best Use of Technology Innovation

**Gold**  
Households Don't Vote. People Do.  
National Media Insights

**Silver**  
Next-Gen AI Polling Dashboards  
co/efficient

**Bronze**  
Statewide Cross-channel Media  
Plan for Yes on Prop 50  
Polaris Campaigns

### K02 Best Use of Data & Analytics in Campaign Strategy (Non-Fundraising)

**Gold**  
Campaign Leaderboard  
Victory Insights

**Silver**  
STUDY: Cutting CTV Waste Through  
Smarter Exchange Strategy  
IMGE

**Bronze**  
Mikie Sherrill For Governor  
MV Digital Group

# Winners

## K03 Best Use of Data & Analytics - Fundraising

**Gold**  
DonorDex  
Victory Insights

**Silver**  
Data-Driven Donor Intelligence That Transformed Fundraising Outcomes  
Right Insight

**Bronze**  
Propensity Scoring  
DonorBureau

## Polling - Candidate Division

### L01 Polling for U.S. Senate

**Gold**  
Three Moves Ahead: A Polling Program Built to Win the Runoff  
co/efficient

**Silver**  
Cracking The Code of The New GOP Coalition  
Pulse Decision Science

### L02 Polling for U.S. House of Representatives

**Gold**  
Cracking The Code of The New GOP Coalition  
Pulse Decision Science

**Silver**  
Fitz the Narrative: Debunking Bad Polling in PA-01  
co/efficient

### L03 Polling for Governor

**Gold**  
Low Name ID, High Upside  
co/efficient

### L04 Polling for State Legislature

**Gold**  
The Adults In The Room: Stopping Candidates Through Precision Polling  
co/efficient

**Silver**  
South Jersey Assembly Campaigns 2025  
TargetSmart

### L05 Polling for Local/Municipal/Regional

**Gold**  
Pennsylvanians for Judicial Fairness  
Global Strategy Group

**Silver**  
Middlesex County Democrats 2025 Mobilization Survey  
StimSight Research

### L06 Polling for PAC/Super PAC

**Gold**  
The IE Decision Engine: A Statewide Senate Poll with Interactive Trend Dashboard, Verbatims, and Media Intelligence  
co/efficient

## Polling - Non-Candidate Division

### L07 Polling for Ballot Initiative

**Gold**  
Save Maine Absentee Voting Campaign  
Global Strategy Group

**Silver**  
Continuous, representative data in CA  
National Media Insights & Tenetic

### L08 Polling for Issue Advocacy

**Gold**  
Testing a Billion-Dollar Public Investment: An NFL Franchise Stadium Deal  
co/efficient

**Silver**  
"Delivering Opportunity. Strengthening America"  
TSGco

**Bronze**  
PeoplePulse: Advocacy Organization Building Combining AI, Machine Learning, Qualitative and Survey Research  
Pulse Decision Science

## Artificial Intelligence - Open Division

### M01 Best Use of AI for Creative - Direct Mail

**Gold**  
Yes on A & B: Cartoon Mailer  
Spencer Hagaman

**Silver**  
AI Amy  
Elizabeth Doyel Just Be Strategic

**Bronze**  
The Assemblywoman Who Stole Our School Funding  
Napolitano Consulting

### M02 Best Use of AI for Creative - Television

**Gold**  
PBM Fat Cats  
Berman and Company

**Silver**  
Ghost :30  
BrabenderCox

**Bronze**  
Epifania Pan  
Easy Code / Gerez

### M03 Best Use of AI for Creative - Digital

**Gold**  
"Name that Nancy"  
FP1 Strategies

**Silver**  
ePermit Shuffle  
Harris Media Group

**Bronze**  
Ghost :30  
BrabenderCox

### M04 Best Use of AI in Polling & Public Opinion Research

**Gold**  
Two-Way AI: Turning Numbers Into Insight and Words Into Data  
co/efficient

**Gold**  
Redefining Public Opinion Through AI Intelligence  
EyesOver US

**Silver**  
Continuous Feedback Loop  
National Media Insights & Tenetic

**Bronze**  
AI-Polling  
Victory Insights

### M05 Best Use of AI-Driven Data Analytics

**Gold**  
We Cracked CTV's Black Box  
National Media Insights

**Silver**  
Continuous Feedback Loop  
National Media Insights & Tenetic

**Bronze**  
The Future of Political Campaign Excellence  
EyesOver US

### M06 Best AI-Enhanced Voter Engagement Strategy

**Gold**  
Building Street-Level Campaign Strategy From Millions of AI-Analyzed Voter Conversations  
Peerly Inc.

## Miscellaneous - Open Division

### N01 Best New and Unusual Tactic

**Gold**  
Mikie Sherrill For Governor  
CinqDI, USA Today



# THE 2026 POLLIE AWARDS

**Silver**

**Who is Dave P?**  
Harris Media Group

**Bronze**

**Hot Girls for Zohran**  
Hot Girls Organize

**N02 Best Media Buying Plan that Moved the Needle**

**Gold**

**Georgia Conservation Voters - Public Service Commission**  
Yosemite Consulting

**Silver**

**Statewide Cross-Channel Media Plan for Yes on Prop 50**  
Polaris Campaigns

**Bronze**

**"Big Pharma Invades Our Lives"**  
Connector, Inc.

**N03 Best Unused Idea**

**Gold**

**"Stories"**  
Sena Kozar Strategies

**Silver**

**NV Energy Heist**  
SBDigital

**Bronze**

**Influencer Board of Advisors**  
Direct Persuasion

**N04 Best in Show - International**

**Gold**

**CUPE Air Canada Strike Campaign**  
POINT BLANK

**Silver**

**Ford High**  
Point Blank

**Bronze**

**Rising Sun**  
BuzzMaker

## Americas & U.S. Territories

**OO1 Digital / Social Media Campaign**

**Gold**

**"Spot It" Series**  
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario with The NOW Group

**Silver**

**Government of Mexico - Fentanyl Kills You**  
Heurística Comunicación, Alfredo Santoscoy  
Comunicación Social del Gobierno de México

**OO2 Campaign Video (TV Spot or Web Video)**

**Gold**

**Novo Casa Paulista - A maior mudança da história**  
Lua Propaganda

**Silver**

**Paraná o supermercado do mundo**  
Lua Propaganda

**Bronze**

**Education Works**  
Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation with The NOW Group

**OO3 Best Outdoor Advertising Campaign**

**Gold**

**Government of Mexico - Fentanyl Kills You**  
Heurística Comunicación, Alfredo Santoscoy,  
Comunicación Social de Gobierno de México

**Silver**

**Hire more teachers**  
BC Teachers' Federation with The NOW Group

**Bronze**

**smaller classes, BIG DIFFERENCE**  
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario with The NOW Group

# Congratulations to all of our 2026 winners!

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# Congratulations, Pollie Award Winners!

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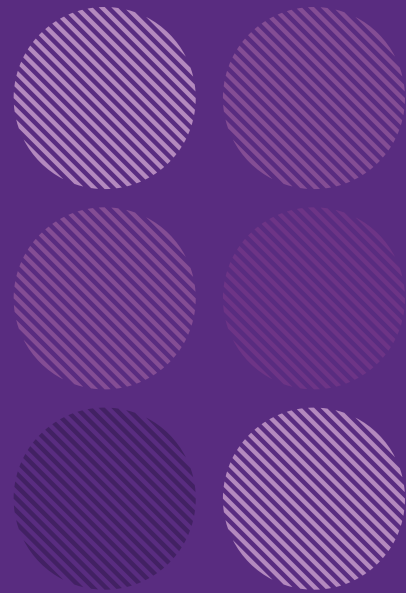
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# 40 UNDER FORTY



The AAPC is dedicated to fostering the next generation of political professionals and is proud to recognize leaders and innovators in the political business community (including media, advertising, polling and public affairs) who are making a mark in their organizations and their professions and whose conduct has been consistent with the Professional Code of Ethics of the AAPC.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*AAPC thanks the 40 Under 40 Committee and our judges for volunteering their time to help make the 40 Under 40 Awards possible!*



**BRENDA GIANINY**  
40 Under 40 Co-Chair, AAPC  
AXIS RESEARCH



**ZANDRIA HAINES**  
40 Under 40 Co-Chair, AAPC  
MOXIE MEDIA

### REPUBLICANS

- MARK HARRIS**  
COLDSPARK
- SEAN PHILBIN**  
SMART MEDIA GROUP
- ADAM WISE**  
NATIONAL MEDIA INSIGHTS
- JACKIE HUELBIG MCLAUGHLIN**  
BASIS TECHNOLOGIES
- BECKI DONATELLI**  
CAMPAIGN SOLUTIONS
- JOANNA BURGOS**  
COMPEL
- TRACY DIETZ**  
DONORBUREAU
- NICK EVERHART**  
CONTENT CREATIVE MEDIA
- MEGHAN COX**  
IMPACT ADVOCACY GROUP
- RYAN HORN**  
BULLHORN COMMUNICATIONS

### DEMOCRATS

- LARRY HUYNH**  
TRILOGY INTERACTIVE
- KELLY GIBSON**  
BRYSON GILLETTE
- TARYN ROSENKRANZ**  
NEW BLUE INTERACTIVE
- GILLIAN ROSENBERG ARMOUR**  
AGENCY
- RAGHU DEVAGUPTAPU**  
TKO POLITICAL
- ROSA MENDOZA**  
GLOBAL STRATEGY GROUP
- TERRENCE WOODBURY**  
HIT STRATEGIES



DEMOCRATS



**SARAH ANDREWS**  
EMPOWER STRATEGIES



**MICHAEL MCLAUGHLIN**  
FOUR LIONS MEDIA



**EMMA BROWN**  
GIFFORDS



**ANSLEY MENDELSON**  
CN4 PARTNERS



**ATANU CHAKRAVARTY**  
ARC INITIATIVES



**EMILY PARÉS**  
EMILYS LIST



**MICAELA CHAVEZ**  
TKO POLITICAL



**DREW PRESTRIDGE**  
PRESTRIDGE POLITICAL



**KATIE DRAPCHO**  
GLOBAL STRATEGY GROUP



**CHRIS SCOTT**  
INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT



**BRAD ELKINS**  
THEMATIC CAMPAIGNS



**ADRY SOTOLONGO**  
GROSSMAN SOLUTIONS



**RHIANNA GESCH**  
THE STRATEGY GROUP



**RYAN THOMPSON**  
BLIZZARD TXT



**MONICA HUEGEL**  
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC.



**CAMILLE TORRES**  
THE ADWELL GROUP



**JARED KAMRASS**  
TECHNICOLOR CAMPAIGNS



**ADRIAN VALDOVINOS**  
LA MACHINE CONSULTING



**RACHEL KING**  
MOXIE MEDIA



**ANDY VAN WYE**  
THE PIVOT GROUP



40 UNDER FORTY

REPUBLICANS



**MORGAN BONWELL**  
RIGHT STRATEGIES



**JUSTIN KEMP**  
FRONTLINE STRATEGIES



**BRENT BROOKS**  
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE



**KLARKE KILGORE**  
REPUBLICAN ATTORNEYS  
GENERAL ASSOCIATION



**CHASEN BULLOCK**  
CALIBER CONTACT



**RYAN LYK**  
WINRED



**JOSEPH DESILETS**  
GUIDANT POLLING AND STRATEGY



**LUKE MARTZ**  
RIVERFRONT STRATEGY GROUP



**RYAN DOLLAR**  
NRCC



**ANDREA POLLOCK**  
ARENA



**DEE DUNCAN**  
FOUNDATION STRATEGIES



**RYAN SMITH**  
RAPID LOOP COMPANIES



**NAJI FILALI**  
PERCIPIENT STRATEGIES



**DAVID TOPPING**  
FULCRUM INTEL



**MIKE HAHN**  
FRONTLINE STRATEGIES



**DUSTIN TROPP**  
REPUBLICAN JOBS



**KRISTIAN HEMPHILL**  
GRASSROOTS TARGETING



**SAVANNAH VIAR MARTIN**  
BLACK ROCK GROUP



**JIMMY KEADY**  
JLK POLITICAL STRATEGIES



**KYLE YADON-SMITH**  
SENATE LEADERSHIP FUND

# The Political Advertising Playbook

Learn how to plan, prepare, and implement political campaigns that reach the right voters.



US midterm... and digital advertising... across all industries... that 2026 will see... growth in political and spend.  
Political advertising playbook... how digital marketers... can, prepare, and implement... strategic campaigns that reach... right voters, in 2026 and beyond.



## US Midterm Election 2026 Forecast

US Advertising Spend and Digital Spend  
In Billion USD, 2020-2024



## The 2026 Political Advertising Playbook

Learn how digital marketers can plan, prepare, and implement political campaigns that reach the right voters, in 2026 and beyond.

With the next US midterm election coming soon and digital advertising spend increasing across all industries, it's expected that 2026 will see growth in political and s... playb...



# Campaign Excellence

AWARDS 2026

## HONORING EXCELLENCE IN CAMPAIGN STRATEGY AND MANAGEMENT

The Campaign Excellence Awards are a longstanding tradition of the AAPC and recognize those individuals who have significantly contributed to the success of a candidate or public affairs campaign and whose conduct has been consistent with the Professional Code of Ethics of the AAPC.

### 2026 Campaign Excellence Committee

*AAPC thanks the 2026 Campaign Excellence Committee for volunteering their time to help make the Campaign Excellence Awards possible!*

#### Democrats

**KELLY GIBSON**  
BRYSON GILLETTE

**DANIELLE CENDEJAS**  
THE STRATEGY GROUP

**RICK RIDDER**  
RBI STRATEGIES & RESEARCH

**GILLIAN ROSENBERG ARMOUR**  
AGENCY

#### Republicans

**MARK HARRIS**  
COLDSPARK

**KYLE ROBERTS**  
SMART MEDIA GROUP

**BRENDA GIANINY**  
AXIS RESEARCH

**MIKE SHIELDS**  
CONVERGENCE MEDIA

**The Campaign Excellence Awards are the American Association of Political Consultants' highest recognition for strategic achievement in campaigns and public affairs.**

Presented annually at the Pollie Conference, they honor the individuals and teams whose work exemplifies the craft at its best: disciplined research, creative problem-solving, smart resource deployment, and the ability to perform under pressure.

The 2025 cycle produced a remarkable class of winners who shared a common thread: they succeeded not by outspending the opposition, but by out-thinking it. Whether securing the release of American hostages held abroad, passing Iowa's largest-ever school bond with a 74% supermajority, or growing the electoral power of young voters who showed up as a decisive and organized force, these campaigns won by doing the fundamentals exceptionally well: understanding their voters, staying on message, and executing with discipline when it mattered most.

## **PUBLIC AFFAIRS CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR**

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### **Bring Them Home**

*OnMessage Public Strategies*

OnMessage Public Strategies served as the primary public affairs consultant for the Hostage and Missing Families Forum, representing nearly all families of hostages held by Hamas in Gaza. The campaign was built around a single, disciplined message, "Bring Them ALL Home NOW," executed across two fronts: an aggressive media effort spanning television, digital, print, and audio, and a relentless in-person engagement campaign that secured hundreds of meetings for hostage families with government officials from congressional staff all the way to the President of the United States. The campaign's human-centered approach sustained political pressure through a prolonged and evolving crisis, and by October 8, 2025, one day after the two-year anniversary of the attacks, the last hostage had returned home.

## **BALLOT MEASURE CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR**

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### **Yes for Des Moines Schools**

*Path to Victory, Nuckels Media Partners, and AGENCY*

The "Yes for Des Moines Schools" campaign backed a \$265 million bond proposal for the Des Moines Public School District, the largest school bond in Iowa history, in a state that requires a 60% supermajority for passage. Early research led the team to reshape the original proposal, scaling it back and centering it on broadly supported priorities like career and technical education and expanded preschool access.

Five weeks before Election Day, the campaign faced a severe disruption when the district superintendent was arrested by federal immigration authorities, triggering polling declines and donor hesitation. The team executed a rapid pivot to an aggressive grassroots and direct mail strategy. Despite the crisis, nearly 30,000 voters turned out and the bond passed with approximately 74% support, well above the required threshold.

### FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR

---

#### **Cassi Fenili, Patrick Guarasci/G Strategies, Path to Victory, GMMB, and Brandt McCool/Assemble**

*Susan Crawford for Wisconsin Supreme Court*

The 2025 Wisconsin Supreme Court race became the most expensive judicial election in American history, surpassing \$100 million, roughly double the previous record of \$56 million, set in Wisconsin in 2023. Judge Susan Crawford faced over \$55 million in spending from Elon Musk alone, the largest single-donor expenditure ever in a judicial race.

Amid this environment, the campaign built a disciplined fundraising operation that raised \$33.6 million. When Musk entered the race with high-profile tactics including \$1 million prize giveaways to Wisconsin voters, the team leveraged the moment to drive grassroots momentum, generating 36,000 online donations in a single week. Crawford won by 10 points, 54%-46%, flipping counties that had backed Trump in 2024 and preserving the court's 4-3 liberal majority through at least 2028.

### DOWN-BALLOT CAMPAIGN MANAGER OF THE YEAR – STATE/LOCAL

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#### **Elle Bisgaard-Church, Campaign Manager**

*Zohran for NYC*

As campaign manager for Zohran Mamdani's New York City mayoral campaign, Elle Bisgaard-Church built one of the most consequential grassroots operations in modern municipal politics, transforming a state assemblymember with sub-1% name recognition into the mayor-elect of the nation's largest city.

Operating outside the traditional Democratic establishment, she integrated communications, fundraising, field, and endorsements into a unified campaign. Viral digital content drove both name recognition and small-dollar fundraising, amplified by New York City's 8-to-1 public matching funds. The campaign's volunteer field program, the largest in NYC history, with nearly 100,000 volunteers, proved decisive. Mamdani won the June primary by 12 points over Andrew Cuomo and carried the November general election with 50.8% of the vote, producing the city's highest mayoral turnout since 1969 with more than 2 million ballots cast.

### CAMPAIGN MANAGER OF THE YEAR – FEDERAL/STATEWIDE

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#### **Alex Ball, Campaign Manager**

*Mikie Sherrill for Governor*

The 2025 New Jersey gubernatorial race was widely seen as a national bellwether for the 2026 midterms. As campaign manager, Alex Ball guided Mikie Sherrill through a competitive six-way Democratic primary despite being outspent by as much as 7-to-1 in the final month. Message discipline and strategic resource allocation produced a double-digit primary victory.

In the general election, Ball led a coordinated statewide campaign focused on economic concerns, particularly energy costs and affordability, against Trump-endorsed Republican Jack Ciattarelli. Polls had pointed to a potential toss-up, but Sherrill won by 14.4 points, the strongest Democratic gubernatorial margin in New Jersey since 2017. She was sworn in as the state's first Democratic woman governor in January 2026.

## **MOST VALUABLE PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

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### **Morris Katz, Fight Agency**

*Zohran for NYC*

Morris Katz served as the creative engine behind Zohran Mamdani's 2025 New York City mayoral campaign. Recognizing Mamdani's potential when he polled below 1%, Katz shaped the campaign's strategic and creative direction from the outset as a partner at Fight Agency.

His work spanned message development, debate preparation, digital strategy, media buying, and ad production. A breakout television ad during the New York Knicks' playoff run, tying civic optimism to a shared cultural moment, helped accelerate name recognition across a fragmented media landscape. The campaign's approach to reaching younger voters proved particularly effective: millennials cast 29% of all votes in the November general, a larger share than any other generation. Mamdani ultimately drew more than 1 million votes in the general election.

## **POLLSTER OF THE YEAR**

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### **Angela Kuefler**

*Spanberger for Governor & Mikie Sherrill for Governor*

Angela Kuefler of Global Strategy Group served as lead pollster for two of 2025's most consequential races: Mikie Sherrill in New Jersey and Abigail Spanberger in Virginia, both of whom made history as the first women elected governor of their respective states. Kuefler has worked with both candidates since 2018, bringing nearly a decade of institutional knowledge to each race. In New Jersey, her qualitative research identified deep voter frustration with a 20% utility rate hike, which shaped Sherrill's state of emergency proposal and anchored paid media. In Virginia, she guided a disciplined strategy through a multimillion-dollar negative ad onslaught. Both candidates dramatically outperformed polls: Sherrill won by 14.4 points; Spanberger by 15.4.

## **INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR**

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### **Georgia Public Service Commission Special Election**

*Allie Brown and the Georgia Conservation Voters Action Fund*

The Georgia Conservation Voters Action Fund, led by Allie Brown, delivered one of the biggest upsets of the 2025 cycle, flipping both contested seats on the Georgia Public Service Commission for the first time since 2000. Both Democratic candidates carried approximately 63% of the vote, ousting Republican incumbents and becoming the first Democrats to win statewide non-federal office in Georgia since 2006. GCV AF's nearly \$2.5 million in statewide persuasion mail anchored a broader soft-money coalition totaling over \$7 million. The campaign focused on a single resonant message: rising electricity bills. Georgia Power had raised rates six times since 2023, and that kitchen-table framing drove the largest Democratic statewide margins in Georgia in over two decades.

### DOWN-BALLOT CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

---

#### **Eileen Higgins for Mayor**

The Eileen Higgins for Mayor campaign ended Miami's nearly 30-year Republican run at City Hall, electing the city's first Democratic mayor since 1997 and its first woman mayor, in a city where Trump won Miami-Dade County in 2024. Higgins defeated Trump-endorsed Republican Emilio Gonzalez 59%-41% in the December runoff.

The campaign, managed by Christian Ulvert of EDGE Communications, built a broad and politically complex coalition in a majority-Hispanic city that had trended sharply Republican in recent cycles. Higgins won by centering the race on affordability, housing, and quality-of-life issues while drawing a sharp contrast with the Trump administration's immigration agenda. The 18-point margin, in a market where Republicans had invested heavily, signaled a meaningful shift heading into the 2026 midterms.

### MAJOR CAMPAIGN OF THE YEAR

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#### **Spanberger for Governor**

The Spanberger for Governor campaign delivered the most commanding statewide Democratic victory of 2025, winning Virginia's gubernatorial race by 15.4 points over Republican Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears, the largest Democratic gubernatorial margin in the state in nearly a decade. Abigail Spanberger became the first woman elected governor of Virginia.

The campaign built its message around economic security, housing costs, healthcare, and everyday expenses, connecting with suburban and exurban swing voters in a state where Democrats had faced setbacks in 2021. Spanberger won 99% of 2024 Harris voters while Earle-Sears captured only 93% of Trump voters, a persuasion edge that proved decisive. Total votes for the Democratic gubernatorial candidate increased by 24% over 2021, while Republican votes fell by 13%.

# Congratulations to all of our Campaign Excellence winners!



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## Save the Date POLLIES 27!

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PHOENIX, AZ

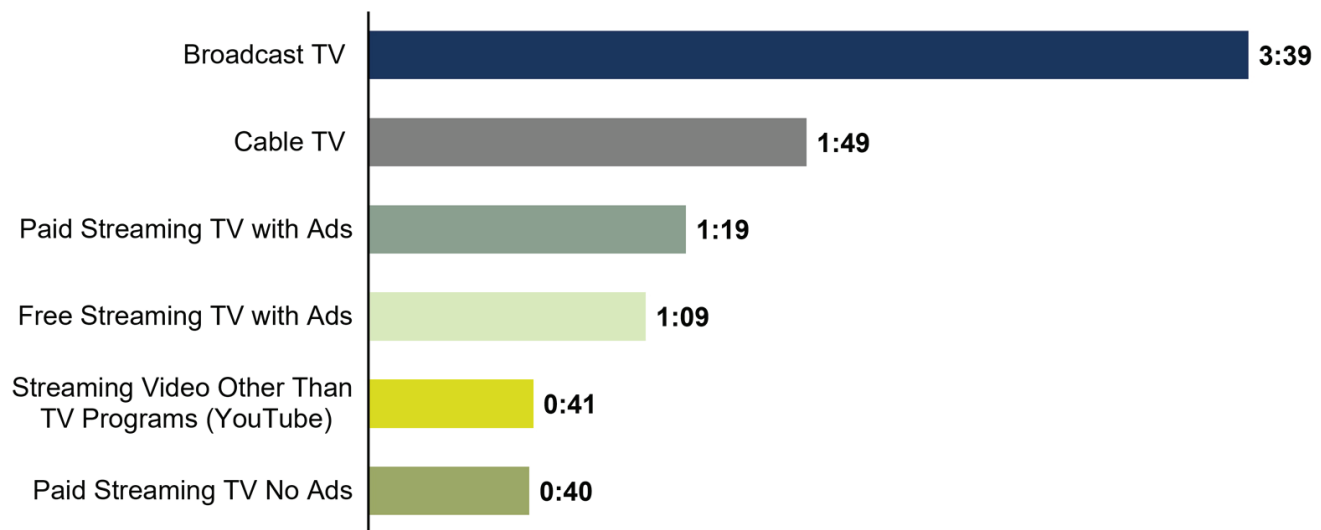


# LOCAL BROADCAST TV WINS ELECTIONS



## Of All Video Platforms, Voters Spend the **Most Time** with **Broadcast TV**

Daily Time Spent Yesterday on a TV  
A18+ Registered Voters  
(In Hours:Minutes)



Source: 2026 GfK/NIQ TVB Media Comparisons Study, M-S 4A-2A. Persons 18+ Registered to vote: Yes.



TVB is the not-for-profit trade association representing  
America's local broadcast TV industry.

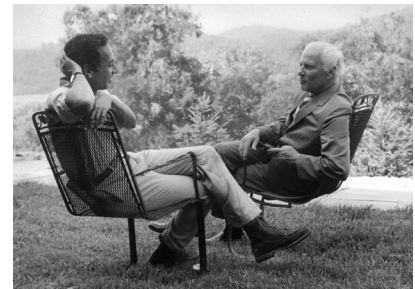


# Trailblazers

## Charles Guggenheim (1924-2002)

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Political Media Pioneer & Four-Time  
Oscar Winner



Charles Guggenheim (1924-2002) was a true pioneer of political media and one of the founding architects of modern campaign advertising. In 1956, he produced the first political commercial ever aired on television, fundamentally changing how candidates communicate with voters. Over his career he worked on four presidential campaigns and hundreds of gubernatorial and senatorial campaigns, becoming one of the most trusted media strategists in Democratic politics. He pioneered the use of documentary filmmaking techniques to produce personal, emotional candidate biographies, an innovative approach designed to persuade voters and his creative genius extended beyond politics, earning him 12 Academy Award nominations and four Oscars.



## Lisa MacLean

---

Political Direct Mail Trailblazer  
*Founder, Moxie Media*

Lisa MacLean is the Founder of Moxie Media, the first female-founded political direct mail firm in the United States, established in 1999. One of the most experienced political direct mail consultants in America, she and her firm have helped elect candidates and advance state ballot initiatives for more than a quarter-century. An acclaimed industry leader and innovative strategist, Lisa was awarded a Powerful Ideas Transformational Talent & Leadership Award as the 2023 Direct Mail Consultant of the Year. Through Moxie Media, she has expanded power and opportunity for those who have been left out or left behind by harnessing proven strategy and bold design to help win elections and policy change at every level of government. Her pioneering work has opened doors for non-traditional players in political consulting and set new standards for creative excellence in direct mail strategy.

The AAPC's Trailblazer Award honors an individual or company recognized for pioneering innovation in campaign technology or tactics. This year's recipients are known for original development, creative application, and leadership in advancing political and public affairs consulting.



## Becki Donatelli

---

Digital Fundraising Innovator  
*Founder, Campaign Solutions*

R. Rebecca "Becki" Donatelli was the president and founder of Campaign Solutions/Connell Donatelli and Right Country Lists, celebrating 25 years in the digital space as the first person to write the software to raise political money on the internet. Virtually every online innovation for over twenty years came out of her team at Campaign Solutions and Connell Donatelli before she sold the company to Push Digital Group in 2022. As chief internet consultant to John McCain's two presidential races, she directed the online campaigns that brought the internet to the forefront of politics and public affairs, breaking fundraising records in 2008 by raising \$100 million for McCain-Palin—the first Republican campaign to reach that milestone. Beginning her political career as the youngest staffer on the Reagan 1976 campaign, she brought decades of experience to revolutionizing political fundraising. The Non-Profit Times named her one of the top "12 most powerful women in direct response marketing." She is a former President of the American Association of Political Consultants and continues to serve on the AAPC Foundation Board as immediate past Chair, recognizing her transformational impact on how campaigns connect with supporters and raise funds in the digital age.

# Congratulations to this year's award winners.

At DIRECTV Advertising, we're proud to help power political campaigns through D2 Media Sales and DIRECTV Elect with scale, precision, and premium viewing environment needed to connect with audiences that matter the most.

Here's to the teams raising the bar for political advertising.

## Let our campaigns power yours.





