



SAMUEL J. HEYMAN

SERVICE *to* AMERICA MEDALS

**2020 VIRTUAL PROGRAM
PRE-SHOW CONVERSATION & WATCH PARTY TOOLKIT**

INTRODUCTION

TIMELINE

Oct. 4

Send reminder email and include streaming link and information

Oct. 5: 7 p.m. EDT

Log on and set-up your video conference

Oct. 5: 7:30 p.m. EDT

Pre-show conversations begin

Oct. 5: 7:55 p.m. EDT

Pre-show conversations can conclude if you would like your guests to watch the program on their own.

If watching together, begin sharing your screen with the livestream

Thank you for your interest in hosting a Sammies pre-show conversation. This year has created many unique challenges, including changing our event to a virtual program. It is our hope that these half-hour long pre-show conversations will offer viewers the networking opportunity we usually provide at the gala. Whether you choose to live stream the full Sammies program with your group, or conclude your session after the pre-show conversation to allow guests to watch the main program on their own, we hope this conversation guide enables you to connect with each other and the unique Sammies stories. This toolkit will provide you with invitation information, technology instructions, conversation guidance, digital assets and fun cocktail recipes.

If you have any questions or need clarity or assistance, please contact Nola Tolsma at sammies@ourpublicservice.org.

Enjoy the show!
The Sammies team

INVITATIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS

Collect RSVPs for the pre-show conversation via your direct email, but also request that all guests register for the Sammies program using the online form. This will sign them up to receive important streaming information and reminders.

Upon receiving RSVPs, please send a confirmation email to those attending.

Download a [Word Version of both emails](#)

INVITATION TEXT

Dear [XX]:

Each year, the Partnership for Public Service recognizes the work and accomplishments of our nation's exceptional public servants through the Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals, or the Sammies. Known as the "Oscars of the federal government," the Sammies honor federal employees for their outstanding contributions to the health, safety and security of our nation.

#Sammies2020 will air on Monday, Oct. 5 from 8 to 9:00 p.m. EDT, and will feature a variety of special guests, including Kumail Nanjiani, Samantha Bee, Mayim Bialik, Adam Conover, Aisha Tyler, Kristen Bell and Nick Kroll.

I'm writing to invite you to a special pre-show conversation I am hosting at 7:30 with [XX group]. We'll be discussing the Sammies winners and the value of public service before tuning in to the Sammies program at 8 p.m. I hope you'll be able to join us.

Please reply to this email to confirm your interest in joining a pre-show Sammies party. I will send you a Zoom or Teams link so that you can join the conversation. Also, please [REGISTER HERE](#) to receive program updates and info about watching the Sammies program.

Insert signature

CONFIRMATION TEXT

Dear [XX]:

Thank you for your interest in joining a pre-show Sammies party. Please note the following:

Our call will start promptly at 7:30 p.m. EDT, 30 minutes before the program. Information about how to join the conversation is below and you can join by video or phone.

[Insert the link to join the watch party]

If you haven't already, please [REGISTER HERE](#) to receive information on how to watch the Sammies. The program will commence immediately following our conversation.

Have some fun by downloading coloring sheets for your children, using a Sammies background on our call, and promoting Sammies on social media using items in our [digital toolkit](#).

Insert signature

TECHNOLOGY

CHOOSING BETWEEN MICROSOFT TEAMS AND ZOOM

The Sammies team recommends using Microsoft Teams or Zoom for these conversations

	MICROSOFT TEAMS	ZOOM
Has a dial-in number	Yes	Yes
Has an app for mobile use	Yes	Yes
Can connect via browser versus app	Yes	Yes
All participants can be seen on the screen	Speaker view for nine participants only	Yes + speaker view
Admins can mute participants	Yes	Yes

TECHNOLOGY (CONT.)

FACILITATOR BEST PRACTICES

1. Please download the Zoom or Teams app; using the web browser version will not offer as many options.
2. Please test your app ahead of time to be sure your video and audio settings are properly connected.
3. This is also a casual environment. Please do not be concerned about family members or pets passing through or making noises.
4. Remain muted unless you are asking or responding to a question – this will enable participants to clearly hear the speaker.
 - If you are experiencing an audio delay, you may wish to call in via phone rather than using your computer audio.
 - If you are using the computer to watch and are joining via phone to listen in, make sure to mute your computer speakers and yourself in the app so the only audio connection is through your phone.
5. Plan to monitor the chat function. Some questions, comments or answers can be read out loud.
6. *TEAMS*: When you open the meeting, some participants may receive a notification. Be mindful of this when opening meetings early and participants start joining.
7. *TEAMS*: The default meeting option allows everyone to take control as a presenter, creates a sound notification when participants join or leave a meeting, and makes everyone wait in the lobby until the administrator admits them. You can adjust this in the meeting options link on the calendar invitation.

RESPONSES TO COMMON PARTICIPANT ISSUES

- I'm sorry to hear you are experiencing audio difficulties; you may wish to call-in via phone rather than using your computer audio. You can do that by hovering your mouse over the meeting to pull up the toolbar, clicking the three dots and selecting "show meeting details" to pull up the call-in options on the right.
- I'm sorry to hear you are unable to see the speakers; you may wish to check if you are using an unsupported web browser. Microsoft Teams works best on Chrome and Edge.
- We may have muted you to reduce background noise. If you are using computer audio, you can unmute yourself through the computer. If you are using the phone you can mute and unmute your line by pressing *6.

CONVERSATION GUIDE

These questions should guide your conversation. Use your best judgment about pacing, participation and how many questions you can ask in the time frame. Depending on the size of your group, feel free to ask all attendees to participate or preselect a small panel for discussion purposes, depending on the group size.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- What was your first experience with public service?
- The Partnership's Public Service Leadership Model identifies two core values in strong government employees: a commitment to the public good and a desire to serve as stewards of the public trust. What skills do you think a good public servant must possess to act on these values?
- Who is one public servant who has inspired you or continues to inspire you?
- Which Sammies story inspired you most?
- Was there work you learned about from the Sammies stories that you didn't know was happening in government? Like what?
- How do you think the country can inspire more young people to serve in government?
- What advice would you offer a young person considering a career in government today?
- What do you see as the greatest challenges facing the federal workforce today?
- What skills do effective government leaders share with those working outside the public sector? Where do they differ?
- What benefits do you think cross-sector partnerships bring to government?

TARGETED QUESTIONS

- What benefits can a strong government bring to the private, academic or other sectors?
- How difficult is it to jump from working outside government to working in the public sector? How about vice versa?
- Have you had experience collaborating with federal leaders and employees? If so, what impressed and/or surprised you about those collaborations?
- Why did you decide to pursue a career in public service?
- What are some of the most important lessons you've learned during your career in public service?
- What are one or two things you're most proud of regarding your federal service?

DIGITAL ASSETS

In your confirmation email, share the Sammies [digital toolkit](#) with your guests so they can access fun backdrops and wallpapers, games and activities for children, social media share graphics and posts, postcards and more.

As the host, please use one of the video conference backgrounds for your watch party and promote the Sammies program on social media.

Video Conference background #1



Social media profile frame



Video Conference background #2



Facebook graphic #1



Facebook graphic #2



SAMMIES SIGNATURE COCKTAILS

At your discretion, you can share these Sammies-themed cocktail recipes with your guests before your watch party.

SAMMIES SALADITO

Ingredients:

2 Limes
Tequila (for best results, use a mezcal!)
Blue Curaçao
Cherries
Cayenne pepper
Salt
Ice

INSTRUCTIONS (ONE SERVING):

In a shaker, combine:

- 1 handful of ice
- 2 oz ounces of lime juice (2 limes worth)
- 2 ounces silver tequila

Shake for about 30 seconds (don't shake too long, or you'll have ice chips!)

With your lime rinds, coat your rim with lime juice. Then roll the rim in salt.

Pour your shaken tequila and lime juice over ice.

Gently pour about .5 ounces of Blue Curaçao down the side of your drink! This will sink to the bottom.

Drop two cherries in, sprinkle cayenne pepper on top and enjoy!

STAR SPANGLED SANGRIA

Ingredients:

White wine (pinot grigio or sauvignon blanc are best, but really any semi-sweet will work)
Peach schnapps
Sprite
White grape juice
Strawberries
Blueberries
Apples

In a large pitcher, combine your bottle of wine, 4-6 ounces of peach schnapps (more=sweeter), one 8-12 ounce can of Sprite (again, more=sweeter), and as many strawberries, blueberries and star-cut apples as you can fit! For best results, chill for 60 minutes before serving.

SAMMIES SPRITZ (ALCOHOL FREE)

Ingredients:

Lemonade
Sprite
Lime
Strawberries
Blueberries

Slice two strawberries and layer the bottom of your glass, leaving a center slice aside for your garnish. Then add a couple ice cubes.

Combine a splash of lemonade and the juice from your lime in a shaker with ice. Shake for about 30 seconds, no more, and pour over your ice cubes. Top your drink off with Sprite and drop in a few blueberries – these should float!

Make a small slit down the center of your strawberry slice and place it on the rim of your glass as a garnish. Enjoy!

WHAT SHOULD I WEAR? SHOULD I BREAK OUT MY BLACK TIE ATTIRE?

We encourage all hosts and producers to look polished and professional. Business or business casual should do it; no need to be more formal than that. Remember, you are representing the Partnership.

HOW MANY PEOPLE SHOULD ATTEND OUR WATCH PARTY?

Watch parties will vary in size, depending on the community. There's no right or wrong size as long as you have a plan to engage the group in conversation.

HOW SHOULD I FORM OUR GROUP'S PANEL? WHAT SHOULD THE CONVERSATION LOOK LIKE?

Feel free to ask all attendees to participate or preselect a small panel to discuss, depending on your group's size.

POST-SHOW FOLLOW-UP

All guests who register via the online form will receive an official post-show email. However, we recommend you send a personalized recap and thank-you email on Oct. 6.

THANK YOU

Thank you for making our first Sammies pre-show conversations and watch parties possible!

If you have any questions, or need clarity or assistance, please contact Nola Tolsma at sammies@ourpublicservice.org.