

**THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

*Presents the*

# **2023 FREEDOM AWARD**



*To*

**The Honorable Cheryl L. Johnson,  
36th Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives**

*Tuesday, February 13, 2024  
National Statuary Hall  
United States Capitol*

**Speaker Mike Johnson**  
*Honorary Host*



**THE U.S. CAPITOL HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
WISHES TO THANK**

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
56th Speaker of the House

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
55th Speaker of the House

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
52nd Speaker of the House

The Honorable Troy Carter  
U.S. Representative (D-LA 2)

The U.S. Capitol Police  
Chaplain Margaret Grun Kibben, DMin

## **Program**

### ***Prayer***

Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, DMin  
*Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives*

### ***Presentation of the Colors and Pledge of Allegiance***

*U.S. Capitol Police Ceremonial Unit*

### ***Opening Remarks***

The Honorable Jane L. Campbell  
*President and CEO, U.S. Capitol Historical Society*

### ***Congratulatory Remarks***

The Honorable Troy Carter  
*Representative (D-LA 2nd District)*

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
*55th Speaker of the House*

## ***2023 Freedom Award Presentation***

### ***Remarks***

The Honorable Cheryl L. Johnson

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
*52nd Speaker of the House*

### ***Closing Remarks***

The Honorable Jane L. Campbell

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### ***Reception to follow***



## **The Honorable Cheryl L. Johnson**

### **36th Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives**

Cheryl L. Johnson presided over the U.S. House of Representatives during the weeklong Speaker vote series. She was sworn in as Clerk of the House for the 117th Congress by Speaker Nancy Pelosi on January 3, 2021 and reappointed by Speaker Kevin McCarthy to serve as Clerk in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress on January 7, 2023. Ms. Johnson is the 36th individual to serve as Clerk and previously served during the 116th Congress.

Before becoming Clerk, Ms. Johnson worked for nearly 20 years in the House followed by 10 years at the Smithsonian Institution. Most recently, Ms. Johnson served as Director of the Smithsonian's Office of Government Relations. In that role, she worked with Smithsonian leadership and the Board of Regents to build and maintain strong relationships with Congress, specifically with the congressional committees with jurisdiction over Smithsonian programs and appropriations. She also developed strategic legislative objectives, policies, and funding opportunities for the Smithsonian.

In her time on Capitol Hill, Ms. Johnson was the Chief Education and Investigative Counsel for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, where she served as a principal policy advisor and spokesperson for the Committee. Ms. Johnson also served as Director and Counsel for the Committee on House Administration's Subcommittee on Libraries and Memorials. In this capacity, she worked with the Subcommittee chair to exercise oversight and legislative responsibility over the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian.

Ms. Johnson earned her bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communication from the University of Iowa and her law degree from Howard University. She is also a graduate of the senior management program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Born in New Orleans, she lives with her husband in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

## Past Freedom Award Recipients

**2022:** The United States Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia

**2021:** Senators Amy Klobuchar and Roy Blunt, and Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, Congressional Electoral College Tellers

**2020:** Dr. Carla Hayden, 14th Librarian of Congress

**2018:** The Architect of the Capitol (organization)

**2017:** Lin-Manuel Miranda, playwright

**2016:** David McCullough, historian

**2014:** Congressman John Lewis

**2013:** The Honorable William S. Cohen, Congressman, Senator, and 20th Secretary of Defense; and The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta, Congressman, 33rd Secretary of Commerce, and 14th Secretary of Transportation

**2012:** Ken Burns, documentary filmmaker

**2011:** Senator Daniel Inouye and Congressman John Dingell

**2010:** Cokie Roberts, journalist and author

**2009:** Senator George McGovern and Senate Historian Emeritus Richard A. Baker

**2008:** The Honorable Howard H. Baker, Jr., Senate Majority Leader and U.S. Ambassador to Japan

**2007:** The Honorable Tom Foley, 49th Speaker of the House of Representatives and U.S. Ambassador to Japan

**2005:** Congressman Lee H. Hamilton, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and The Center for Congress at Indiana University

**2004:** Dr. Robert V. Remini, Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois at Chicago

**2003:** Jim Lehrer, journalist

**2002:** U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress

**2001:** The Honorable Corinne "Lindy" Claiborne Boggs, Congresswoman and U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See

**2000:** The Honorable Clarence "Bud" Brown, Congressman and 2nd President of the U.S. Capitol Historical Society

**1998:** Officer Jacob "J.J." Chestnut and Special Agent John M. Gibson, U.S. Capitol Police (presented posthumously)

**1997:** C-SPAN and its founder, Brian Lamb

**1996:** Senator Bob Dole and Congressman Sonny Montgomery

**1995:** The Honorable George M. White, 9th Architect of the Capitol

**1994:** Senator George J. Mitchell and Congressman Robert H. Michel

**1993:** Gilbert M. Grosvenor, National Geographic Society

## **The Freedom Award**

The U.S. Capitol Historical Society created its Freedom Award to recognize outstanding efforts in the advancement of greater public understanding of and appreciation for freedom, democracy, and civic engagement as represented by the U.S. Capitol and Congress. First presented on September 17, 1993, the eve of the 200th anniversary of the laying of the U.S. Capitol cornerstone by George Washington, the award is named for the statue that graces the Capitol dome.

## **The United States Capitol Historical Society**

Founded on July 31, 1962, and chartered by Congress in 1978, the United States Capitol Historical Society is a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit educational organization that focuses on the rich heritage of the U.S. Capitol Building and the U.S. Congress.

Convinced that an appreciation of history was inextricably linked with good citizenship, U.S. Capitol Historical Society Founder Congressman Fred Schwengel (IA) envisioned the new society as becoming a history teacher to the nation. His wish was for every person to “catch something of the fire that burned in the hearts of those who walked and talked in these halls.”

The U.S. Capitol Historical Society is the most recognized organization on the study and public outreach of the Capitol and Congress. Its programs range from scholarly conferences to research fellowships, programs for students of all ages, teacher workshops, tours, public lectures, commemorative events, and the contribution of art, artifacts, and documents to the Capitol Collections.



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[www.CapitolHistory.org](http://www.CapitolHistory.org)