



TOMMY G. THOMPSON
CENTER ON PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

UNIVERSITIES OF WISCONSIN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 10, 2025

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**Tommy G. Thompson Distinguished Public Leadership Award
to be given to Paul Farrow and Tia Nelson**

MADISON—The [Tommy G. Thompson Center on Public Leadership](#) is delighted to announce that Paul Farrow and Tia Nelson will be honored as the 2024-2025 Tommy G. Thompson Distinguished Public Leadership Award recipients. The ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 29, at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Room 412 East.

Consistent with Tommy's legacy, the Tommy G. Thompson Distinguished Public Leadership Award seeks to recognize Wisconsinites who have committed themselves to public service, worked tirelessly to advance sound public policy, and exhibited virtuous leadership. The award honors leaders who have exercised sound judgment, displayed an entrepreneurial spirit, and served as exceptional role models for others in public service.

Paul Farrow has served as the Waukesha County Executive since 2015. He was previously elected to the Wisconsin State Assembly in 2010 and to the Wisconsin State Senate in December 2012, serving as the Assistant Majority Leader in 2014. Shortly after beginning his tenure as County Executive, he led a group of private- and public-sector partners in establishing the Waukesha County Center for Growth. In 2021, Farrow began serving as the Chairman of the Finance Committee for the Republican Party of Wisconsin and was later elected to fill out the current term as State Chairman for the party, through December 2022. He continues to serve on the Executive Committee as immediate past chair. He also continues a family legacy of political action as the son of former Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor Margaret Farrow. Paul Farrow lives in Pewaukee, Wisconsin, with his wife, Amy; they have two adult sons.

Tia Nelson is internationally recognized as a champion for conservation and environmental stewardship. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in Wildlife Ecology and subsequently worked for Governor Tony Earl, and Representative Jeff Neubauer, before moving to Washington, D.C., where she spent 17 years at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in the Government Relations Division, the Latin American Division, and later as Director of TNC's Global Climate Change Initiative. She received EPA's Climate Protection Award for this work. Tia returned home to Wisconsin in 2004 to serve as Executive Secretary to the Wisconsin Board of Commissioners of Public Lands. She left state service in 2015 to become Managing Director of the Outrider Foundation's Climate Change program and retired in 2021. She currently does volunteer work, serves on ecoAmerica's Board of Directors, and as an Ambassador for Wisconsin's Greenfire.

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"The mission of the Tommy G. Thompson Center on Public Leadership is the facilitation of research, teaching, outreach, and needed policy reforms regarding effective public leadership that improves the practice of American government. The Center shall endeavor to carry out its mission throughout all the universities of the system."