

CPAE SPEAKER HALL OF FAME

Long-form news release · Draft 1 · July 30, 2026

Before this goes anywhere

Two paragraphs are still yours to write. They are highlighted in yellow in the release below. Everything else is fact-checked against the NSA record and the existing site copy.

Target send date: late August 2026. Allison Massari's ceremony was July 29 and her release went out August 26, so a four-week gap is normal, not late.

The last page is notes for you only. Delete it before this goes to branding or to Carla.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keynote Speaker and Author Jess Pettitt Inducted into the CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame

The National Speakers Association's lifetime achievement honor goes to five speakers a year. Fewer than 250 people have received it since 1977.

EUREKA, CA (August [X], 2026) — Jess Pettitt, MEd, MBA, CSP, has been inducted into the CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame®, the National Speakers Association's highest and most selective honor. She is one of five speakers in the class of 2026.

The Council of Peers Award for Excellence is not applied for and not campaigned for. Speakers are evaluated by other speakers across five categories: message, presentation, experience, professionalism, and collateral material. Fewer than 250 people have received the award since the National Speakers Association established it in 1977. It is the closest thing the speaking profession has to an Oscar, and it is held for life.

Pettitt was inducted on July 27, 2026, joining a roster that includes Ronald Reagan, Colin Powell, Zig Ziglar, Norman Vincent Peale, and Les Brown.

[JESS] Your line from the acceptance speech goes here. One or two sentences, in quotation marks. Pick the part that got the room, not the part that sounded most important.

For nearly two decades, Pettitt has worked with businesses, educational institutions, nonprofits, and associations on the problems leaders do not put on the agenda: the culture that stopped matching the values statement, the team that stopped telling the truth upward, the manager everyone works around instead of with. She has reached more than half a million people across North America under a banner she has carried the entire time: Tough Subjects ... Better Connections.

She came to the work sideways. Before the keynotes, Pettitt was a stand-up comic in New York City. The timing stayed. So did the willingness to say the thing the room is already thinking, which is most of what her clients are actually paying for.

Pettitt is the author of *Good Enough Now* (2017) and *Almost Doing Good* (2025). Her third book, *Doing Good Better*, is forthcoming, completing a trilogy whose through line she states plainly: doing the best you can with what you have some of the time, because it is better than nothing never.

The CPAE joins her Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation, held by a small fraction of professional speakers worldwide. Fewer than one percent of speakers hold both.

[JESS] The thank-you paragraph goes here. Name the people you want named. The meeting planners who booked you early, the clients who kept calling you back, the NSA chapter people, Loren, whoever belongs in it. This is the paragraph people will forward to each other, so it should sound like you and not like a press release.

About Jess Pettitt

Jess Pettitt, MEd, MBA, CSP, CPAE, is a keynote speaker, facilitator, and author who helps organizations have the conversations they have been avoiding. A member of the CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame® and a Certified Speaking Professional, she is the author of *Good Enough Now* and *Almost Doing Good*, with *Doing Good Better* forthcoming. She works with leaders on workplace culture, leadership alignment, and the practical business of keeping a team honest with itself. She is based in Eureka, California.

Contact

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Hall of Fame page: <https://jesspettitt.com/hall-of-fame/>

Official CPAE press materials: nsaspeaker.org/newsroom-presskit-cpae

Style note: the award must be written as "CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame®" on first reference.

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Notes for Jess

Delete this page before the release goes to branding or to Carla.

Word count

Roughly 640. Allison's ran about 700. You are in range.

What I deliberately left out

No "soul-stirring," no "life-changing force," no "ignites an inner fire." Allison's release runs on that register because it fits her material. It would sound like a costume on you. Yours is drier and it lands harder for it.

What I deliberately put in

The stand-up comedy paragraph. It is the most memorable fact in the whole document and it is the one a journalist will pull. It also does quiet work: it explains why a culture consultant is funny, which is the thing people cannot place about you until someone tells them.

The trilogy line is doing double duty

It is your credo and it is the book's tagline, so every place this release gets reprinted is a free mention of Doing Good Better.

No book launch, no webinar, no dates

On purpose. This is a news release and news releases carry news. The moment it asks for something it stops getting picked up. The invitation to the webinar series is a separate letter to your own list, written in first person, and it goes out when you have dates.

Distribution reality

Allison's went out on MultiVu, which is PR Newswire, which is paid. You do not have that. Yours goes through Carla's channels, your own list, LinkedIn, and the stylized PDF linked from the Hall of Fame page. That reaches a narrower audience but a warmer one, and warm is what converts.