

Robert M. Gates

ElectionWatch 2022

Robert Gates served as the 22nd secretary of defense (2006 – 2011). He is the only secretary of defense in US history to be asked to remain in office by a newly elected President. Dr. Gates served eight US presidents across both parties.

On Gates's last day in office, President Barack Obama awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian honor.

Before becoming secretary of defense in 2006, Gates was the president of Texas A&M University, one of the nation's largest universities. Prior to assuming the Texas A&M presidency on August 1, 2002, he served as interim dean of the George Bush School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M from 1999 to 2001.

Gates joined the Central Intelligence Agency in 1966 and spent nearly 27 years as an intelligence professional. During that period, he spent nearly nine years on the National Security Council at the White House, serving four presidents of both political parties.

Gates served as director of Central Intelligence from 1991 until 1993. He is the only career officer in CIA's history to rise from entry-level employee to director. He served as deputy director of Central Intelligence from 1986 until 1989 and as assistant to the president and deputy national security adviser at the White House from January 20, 1989 until November 6, 1991, for President George H.W. Bush.

Gates has been awarded the National Security Medal, the Presidential Citizens Medal, has three times received the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal and has three times received CIA's highest award, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal.

He is the author of four books, *Exercise of Power: American Failures, Successes, and a New Path Forward in the Post-Cold War World*, published in 2020, *A Passion For Leadership: Lessons on Change and Reform from Fifty Years of Public Service*, published in 2016, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, published in 2014 and *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War*, published in 1996.



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Gates currently is a partner in the consulting firm, Rice, Hadley, Gates & Manuel, LLC, with former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and former National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley. He is a member of the NCAA Board of Governors, currently serving as one of its five independent members. Additionally, he is a member of the national executive board of the Boy Scouts of America, where he served as president of the National Eagle Scout Association from 1996 – 2006 and National President of the Boy Scouts of America from 2014 – 2016. He has also served on the board of directors of Starbucks, the board of directors and executive committee of the American Council on Education, the board of directors of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.

A native of Kansas, Gates received his bachelor's degree from William & Mary, his master's degree in history from Indiana University, and his doctorate in Russian and Soviet history from Georgetown University. In 1967, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the US Air Force and served as an intelligence officer at Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri.

In February 2012, Gates was installed as chancellor of William & Mary. He is the first William & Mary alumnus in the modern era to serve as chancellor.

In May of 2018, Gates succeeded General Colin Powell as National Chairman of the Eisenhower Fellowships.



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