

American Geographical Society Honors GPS Pioneer and Trimble Founder Charlie Trimble with O.M. Miller Cartographic Medal

Recognizes Charlie Trimble's role in transforming GPS from an experimental technology into the foundation of modern geospatial innovation

NEW YORK and WESTMINSTER, Colo., Aug. 13, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- The [American Geographical Society \(AGS\)](#) and [Trimble](#) today announced that company founder Charlie Trimble has been selected to receive the Society's O.M. Miller Cartographic Medal. One of the Society's highest honors, the medal recognizes individuals whose contributions have significantly advanced cartography and the geographic sciences.

"Charlie Trimble helped transform GPS from an emerging technology into one of the defining innovations in modern geography," said Lee Schwartz, CEO of the American Geographical Society. "His early vision for the commercial potential of precise positioning laid the foundation for modern mapping, navigation and countless industries that rely on geographic intelligence. Charlie is an exceptionally deserving recipient of the O.M. Miller Cartographic Medal."

In the late 1970s, few believed GPS would become commercially viable. While GPS was still an experimental military program, Charlie envisioned a future where precise positioning could solve real-world problems. That conviction led him to found Trimble in 1978 and, six years later, sell the world's first commercially viable GPS receiver.

"Growing up, Sputnik sparked my fascination with science and engineering, and years later, GPS represented one of those rare technologies with the potential to fundamentally change the way people worked," said Charlie Trimble. "Bringing that vision to life took an extraordinary team, and it's been incredibly rewarding to see the impact GPS has had across so many industries. I'm deeply honored by this recognition."

Under Trimble's leadership, the company continued to pioneer GPS innovations, including Real-Time Kinematic (RTK) positioning, enabling centimeter-level accuracy for surveying and mapping while expanding the use of GPS across industries such as construction, agriculture and transportation.

"Charlie had the courage to invest in GPS long before the world understood its potential," said Rob Painter, president and CEO of Trimble. "He saw an opportunity where others saw uncertainty and helped turn an experimental satellite system into technology that transformed industries. That willingness to take risks, innovate and think decades ahead continues to define Trimble today."

Mr. Trimble will receive the medal on September 15, 2026, during the AGS Globe Signing Ceremony at the Explorers Club in New York City. Registration is open for the globe signing and medal ceremony here: tinyurl.com/globesigning.

About the American Geographical Society

The [American Geographical Society \(AGS\)](#) is a 21st-century learning society dedicated to the advancement of geographic thinking, knowledge and understanding across business, government, academe, social sectors, and most importantly, with teachers and students. The vision of AGS is to be the foremost champion of geography for the benefit of society. The mission of AGS is to convene a diverse global community of innovators, thinkers, and practitioners; create and curate geographical knowledge, learning and exploration; and advance geographic knowledge and technologies to address society's challenges and opportunities. Established in 1851, AGS is the oldest professional geographical organization in the United States and is recognized worldwide as a pioneer in geographical research and education. AGS seeks to engage the American public, from its youngest to its oldest citizens, with new and amazing ways to understand and characterize our changing world. The Society maintains its headquarters in New York City.

About Trimble

Trimble is a global technology company that connects the physical and digital worlds, transforming the ways work gets done. With relentless innovation in precise positioning, modeling and data analytics, Trimble enables essential industries including construction, geospatial and transportation. Whether it's helping customers build and maintain infrastructure, design and construct buildings, optimize global supply chains or map the world, Trimble is at the forefront, driving productivity and progress. For more information about Trimble, visit: www.trimble.com.

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