

## Press Release

**For Immediate Release:**

**11/29/07**

**Contact: Lisa Nisenfeld, SWWDC Executive Director, 360-567-1073**

[lnisenfeld@swwdc.org](mailto:lnisenfeld@swwdc.org)

### **Governor's Best Practice Award presented to Clark County WorkSource Partnership**

A model public/private partnership linking local employment priorities with the skills of people with disabilities is one of six projects statewide to receive a 2007 Governor's Award for Best Practices in Workforce Development. The award announcement came November 15 at the Workforce Training and Educating Coordinating Board's annual Leadership Conference in Tacoma.

The partnership consists of Clark County's WorkSource partners, led by the Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), Arbor E&T, Washington Employment Security Department (ESD), Columbia River Mental Health, the Department of Social and Health Services' Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and other community partners.

Lynnae Ruttledge, director, Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, nominated the project for the award. She stated in her nomination that the project reflects "the innovative and efficient services at WorkSource-Vancouver. She also said tight budgets have not negatively impacted the culture of innovation, which is deeply integrated in practices and values.

Since its inception in 2003, the project has consistently exceeded its goals. The overall goal of the project was to "reach and more effectively service customers with disabilities and to provide skilled workers to employers." To measure results, the SWWDC asked WorkSource -- Vancouver to increase the number of people with disabilities enrolled and placed in appropriate employment by 10% over the previous year.

"We are absolutely thrilled with the results of this creative partnership. It demonstrates how a focused and committed team and community can reach a traditionally hard-to-serve population, benefitting both an untapped pool of job seekers as well as employers," said Lisa Nisenfeld, SWWDC Executive Director.

**--MORE--**

ph 360.567.1070  
fax 360.567.1054  
[www.swwdc.org](http://www.swwdc.org)

In 2003, WorkSource Vancouver had served only 103 individuals with disabilities, placing 38% in jobs. In just the first six months of project implementation, WorkSource-Vancouver served 575 individuals with disabilities, with 77% having secured employment. In addition, during this same period, the number of employer job orders generated by the Business Services Unit and filled by people with disabilities increased 445%.

Additional 2007 Governor's Best Practice Awards are as follows:

- The Automotive Training and Career Opportunities Partnership at Shoreline Community College
- Brownfields Job Training Partnership: Clover Park Technical College
- The Center of Excellence for Energy Technology at Centralia College and IBEW Local 77
- Intervention for Retention: Progression to Graduation: The Northwest Workforce Development Council and The Sedro Woolley School District
- Pizza, Pop, and Power Tools; Spokane Public Schools Career and Technical Education

### **Photo Identification**

Back Row: Karen Ramage, Jerry Petrick, Barbara Reed, Keith McPhun, Robert Gaffney, Paul Vertrees, Tennille Johnson.

Middle Row: Teresa Anda, Monisha Wasson, Matt Sneed, Beverly Kimble, Lisa Nisenfeld, Cindy Williams, Sally Garcia

Front Row: Beth Hammer, Lynnae Rutledge, Meredith Hardin, Darcy Hoffman, Medolie Pazolt, Joyce Smith