

MEDIA RELEASE

Date: May 15, 2025

Contact: Kasey Knutson, Public Information Officer, 509-962-7515

Kittitas County Public Health Champion Recipient Announced

The Kittitas County Board of Health Advisory Committee (BOHAC) is pleased to announce that the Upper Kittitas County Senior Center (UKCSC) will be awarded the 2025 annual Kittitas County Public Health Champion Award. The award recognizes the work UKCSC does to promote activity, mental stimulation, engagement, and economic support. The award will be presented during the Kittitas County Board of Health meeting on Monday, June 16, 2025, at 10:00 am. The meeting is open to the public.

The award comes with a \$500 donation to be used to benefit the health of the community. “The UKC Senior Center provides compassionate, holistic care for older adults in the upper county. The center provides a wide variety of services including nutrition, fitness, medical, and numerous enrichment activities that all seek to improve the lives of older adults, allowing them to live healthier, more connected lives. They also listen to the needs of their patrons that are beyond the services they provide and successfully collaborate with other service providers to find the right referrals” states BOHAC Chair Andrew Lyons.

The Kittitas County Public Health Champion Award recognizes individuals, groups, or organizations that make significant contributions to the health of Kittitas County. The award is funded by a generous donation from former Kittitas County Health Officer Jim Gale. The following individuals and agencies received previous Public Health Champion Awards:

- 2015 City of Ellensburg Parks and Recreation for noteworthy work regarding the breadth of programming for residents across the lifespan.
- 2016 Dr. Paul Schmitt for his years of service as a health care provider and his dedication to the health of his community.
- 2017 Kittitas County Early Learning Coalition for the coalition’s work to improve the health and success of young children and their families.
- 2018 Open Door Health Clinic for the clinic’s mission to provide basic medical care for people living on low incomes without insurance or readily accessible healthcare.
- 2019 APOYO in recognition of their work to provide food, recycled clothing, and furniture to the community.
- 2020 Rolf Williams and 2021 COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic (recognized in 2021 due to COVID-19) for their work and commitment to Kittitas County and the community.
- 2022 Kittitas County Health Network (KCHN) Care Coordination Program for their work to connect vulnerable people with health and other social services.
- 2023 Kittitas County Fire Protection District #6 for work to care for some of the most vulnerable people with the goal of understanding people holistically and addressing all their needs.

- 2024 Community Health of Central Washington for their work with some of the most vulnerable people in our community.

BOHAC would also like to thank the other 2025 Public Health Champion nominees who have made significant contributions to the public health of Kittitas County:

- Kittitas Cancer Support Group
- Ellensburg Dance ensemble
- Jack Carpenter
- Upper Kittitas County Senior Center

For more information regarding BOHAC or the Public Health Champion Award, please contact the Kittitas County Public Health Department at (509) 962-7515.

###