

Media Advisory – June 10, 2008

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Art alliance honors county executive

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon has been named a 2008 Local Hero by the Washington State Arts Alliance and will be honored during the group's annual meeting July 1 at the Edmonds Center for the Arts.

Reardon was nominated by the Lynnwood Arts Commission and the Arts Council of Snohomish County, with support from the Snohomish County Arts Commission, for his strong support of the arts.

“Executive Aaron Reardon has sent a strong message that he values the quality of life in Snohomish County and he is working to provide a well-rounded community and promote economic activity through the arts and culture,” his nominating letter reads. “He has put into place the mechanisms needed that will drive, support and promote the arts and culture throughout our county.”

Reardon has been instrumental in promoting the arts in Snohomish County. In 2004, he helped establish the Snohomish County Arts Commission. The seven-member commission serves as the lead organization for the county's art and heritage groups.

He also initiated an ordinance approved this year that requires a contribution to the county arts fund from certain county construction projects costing at least \$100,000. The contribution is equal to 1 percent of the project costs.

These funds are being used to acquire visual art such as drawings, tapestries, weavings, paintings, murals, frescos, sculptures, mosaics and photography as well as to support the performing arts.

“For many years after the mid 1990s, the arts slipped very low on the priority list of Snohomish County government,” wrote Fred Wong, Lynnwood's cultural arts supervisor, in support of Reardon's nomination. “So, Mr. Reardon's actions represent a dramatic initiative and catalyst for countywide arts advocacy.”

Reardon said he was pleased to be receiving the award.

“It's important that we preserve the artistic works of Snohomish County residents as well as promote the cultural identity of this county,” Reardon said. “This honor proves we are making the right steps.”