

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Caroline Bombar-Kaplan, 425-260-3302



State Honors Corine Knudsen for Lifetime Achievement in Affordable Housing

SPOKANE, Wash.—Sept. 11, 2007— Corine Knudsen was honored last night by the State of Washington for a lifetime of service to the mission of providing affordable housing for the benefit of Washington residents. In an awards ceremony at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane that was part of the annual Housing Washington conference attended by more than 700 peers and colleagues, Ms. Knudsen received a Margaret M. Sevy Affordable Housing Lifetime Achievement Award from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

In their nominating letter from the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless, board members and friends wrote, “Corine Knudsen has been a pioneer in the development of housing and service programs for low income and homeless people in Washington State for 30 years. She also has been at the forefront of the creation of new partnerships and coalitions throughout her career.”

Ms. Knudsen started her professional life as a schoolteacher and then entered the world of housing by becoming the Executive Director of World for Women in Snohomish County, now Pathways for Women, a program of the YWCA of Seattle, King, and Snohomish Counties. She developed and implemented innovative programs that helped women transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency using her well-honed teaching skills to educate people on social justice issues and to build partnerships.

In 1985, Ms. Knudsen moved to Olympia to work for the Department of Community Development, now the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED). During her twenty years in CTED's housing division, she demonstrated extraordinary vision and leadership in affordable housing. She helped to lead the development and implementation of the Emergency Shelter Assistance Program, the Washington State Housing Trust Fund, and other important state housing programs.

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Ms. Knudsen was one of the early motivators behind the creation of the Washington State Homeless Coalition. Due in large part to her stewardship and dedication, Washington state is known for its innovative and successful housing and homeless programs. From 2005-2007, she took on the role of Executive Director for the Coalition. Being one of this agency's founders, this brought her career full circle and reflects her deep commitment to helping the homeless. During her tenure, the Coalition's advocacy and fundraising grew by leaps and bounds. For instance, she was instrumental in the passage of the Homelessness Housing and Assistance Act of 2005, multiple increases to the Housing Trust Fund, and a \$4 million increase to the Washington Families Fund.

Under her leadership, sponsorships for the annual Conference on Homelessness increased by 50 percent, enhancing the quality of the conference while keeping registration costs low for attendees.

Before retiring in May of 2007, Ms. Knudsen served the housing needs of Washington's low-income and homeless residents for 30 years, and did so with exemplary leadership, compassion, and wisdom.

The Margaret M. Sevy Affordable Housing Lifetime Achievement Award is named after a long time advocate for affordable housing, who was committed to strengthening communities and the quality of life for people in need of affordable housing.

Washington State Housing Finance Commission is a publicly accountable, self-supporting agency dedicated to increasing housing access and affordability and to expanding the availability of quality community services for Washington state residents.

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