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**State Honors Melinda Szatlocky for Affordable Housing
Achievements for Clallam County**

SPOKANE, Wash.—Sept. 11, 2007— Melinda Szatlocky of Port Angeles was honored last night by the State of Washington for years 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. Szatlocky received a 2007 *Friend of Housing* award from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

Ms. Szatlocky has been a pioneer and an advocate for affordable housing on the Olympic Peninsula for several years. She began working in Clallam County as a Vista Volunteer in 1997 for Serenity House of Clallam County. From the outset, Ms. Szatlocky was a team builder and community organizer. She helped the community establish transitional housing center: Evergreen Family Village. Later she supervised construction of the Commons, which now serves as the service center for the local homeless provider, and an activities center and a daycare center for the residents at Evergreen Family Village.

That was just the beginning of her Olympic feats. Ms Szatlocky joined the staff of the Housing Authority of the County of Clallam in 1999. According to the Executive Director of the Housing Authority Pamela Tietz, “Melinda takes great ideas and turns them into reality. Without her, we never would have been able to start so many wonderful programs: Family Self-Sufficiency, Mutual Self-Help Housing, Home Maintenance 101, First-Time Homebuyers, Down-Payment Assistance, and Section 8 to Homeownership.”

Ms. Tietz also went on to say that Ms. Szatlocky has the tenacity to convince the community to give their money and time to get the job done.”

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Over 20 families have used the Section 8 to Homeownership program in Clallam County thanks to her work and assistance. She has assisted families using the USDA self-help housing program and personally conducted countless counseling sessions and homebuyer education seminars. She even arranges post-homeownership classes on home repair and maintenance, in addition to moving families to self-sufficiency.

She was instrumental in obtaining Housing Trust Fund money for down payment assistance for Clallam County. Ms. Szatlocky donates countless hours of her own personal time to affordable housing issues and has been actively involved in forming Homeward Bound, the first Community Land Trust in Clallam and Jefferson Counties.

Besides those Olympic feats, Ms. Szatlocky has been asked to speak and share her knowledge on affordable housing and Section 8 to Homeownership by several agencies and organizations. HUD often calls upon her to share her expertise in this area with other housing authorities. There are very few socially active people on the Olympic Peninsula who do not know her name. She is truly dedicated to helping others find affordable housing, becoming self-sufficient and building their future.

The Commission received a record 49 nominations for the *Friend of Housing* awards from people working in the public, private and independent sectors of the affordable housing industry. Honorees are selected for their leadership and exceptional contribution to creating or supporting affordable housing, implementing housing-related programs, creating innovative financing mechanisms for housing, supporting homebuyer education or technical training efforts within the housing community and helping to solve housing problems.

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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