



**Press Release**

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**Spokane's Ray Rieckers Receives State's Highest Housing Honors**

Spokane, Wash. — Sept. 28, 2011 — the Washington State Housing Finance Commission presented The Margaret M. Sevy Lifetime Achievement Award to Ray Rieckers this evening by at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane during the annual *Housing Washington* conference.

"The impact that Ray has had on the Spokane community is large, far reaching and incalculable," said Cindy Algeo, director of the Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium and who has been a colleague of Mr. Rieckers for many years. "Beyond the bricks and mortar, the homes weatherized, saved or found, Ray's ability to mentor people to become leaders will truly carry on his legacy of affordable housing advocacy for years to come."

Rieckers, recently retired, had worked for the area's largest community action agency, Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP), for more than 33 years.

He started with the agency in 1978 as an outreach worker for the Minor Home Repair program. Almost twenty years later, in 1996, Ray was appointed to a four-year term by Governor Mike Lowry to the Affordable Housing Advisory Board and most recently served on the Board of the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

During his career in service of those in need of affordable housing, he not only effectively developed programs but also help to shape policy and initiatives. In 1990, Ray assisted State Representative Shirley Rector in designing a rental assistance program that provided a combination of housing subsidy and social services to 400 households transitioning from homelessness.

Rieckers had his finger on the entire housing spectrum. He over saw SNAP's HUD-approved housing counseling program that got its start in the mid-1980s providing foreclosure counseling for homeowners in Spokane. Since that time, the program has provided down payment assistance and homebuyer education and is playing a pivotal role in foreclosure prevention counseling in this challenging economic environment.

Rieckers was responsible for SNAP's entire housing portfolio. The agency started with a few small properties geared towards homeless households. At the time of Rieckers' retirement, SNAP's portfolio included 19 properties, located in three counties (Spokane, Stevens and Ferry) that provided homes for over 375 low-income individuals and families.

Today, Rieckers is busy building leaders in social work one student at a time in his role as an instructor at Eastern Washington University.

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