

NEWS RELEASE

April 5, 2011

**MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
411 NORTH 5TH ST
SHELTON, WA 98584**

TO: KMAS, KRXV, SHELTON-MASON COUNTY JOURNAL, THE OLYMPIAN, SHELTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, NORTH MASON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CITY OF SHELTON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, THE SUN

RE: Mason County Earns National "Achieve" Status; National Healthy Community Grant Fuels Community-Based Approach To Combat Obesity And Chronic Diseases

One of 40 Communities Named Across the U.S.

Mason County was selected by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) to participate in the national ACHIEVE initiative as one of 40 U.S. communities to advance the nation's efforts to prevent chronic diseases and related risk factors through local collaboration. ACHIEVE (Action Communities for Health, Innovation, and EnVironmental change), supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Healthy Communities Program, brings together leaders from all sectors of a community to build healthier communities by promoting policy, systems, and environmental change strategies that focus on physical activity, nutrition, tobacco cessation, obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

ACHIEVE combines the expertise of state and local government and public health departments with the experience of community-based organizations that provide community support and outreach. ACHIEVE communities promote health through such improvements as safe locations for physical activity and increased access to healthy food options such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains at schools, worksites, places of worship and in the general community, among others.

Mason County Public Health applied for ACHIEVE and was selected after a competitive review process. Mason County Public Health and Mason Matters are the partner-coach organizations that will lead a community team representing diverse sectors of our community.

"The team-based approach, in which our local health department plays a key role, allows our community to provide a cohesive response to the lifestyle challenges facing our nation," said Lydia Buchheit, Community and Family Health Manager. "By connecting the leaders who can facilitate change, Mason County, is helping to make healthy behaviors an easier choice, not just the healthier choice. These improved opportunities for active living and healthy eating will serve as models for and lay a foundation to help reduce the risks of chronic diseases that affect so many Americans."

Mason County, like the other 39 ACHIEVE communities, will engage and mobilize leaders in the local community to respond to the public health challenges of obesity, physical inactivity and poor nutrition and support individuals and families in their efforts to become and stay healthier.

"Prevention activities like those supported through ACHIEVE are the key to creating and improving the health of all Americans," said Robert M. Pestronk, NACCHO's executive director. "These partnerships create intentional momentum in the right direction, based on successful strategies at work, home, and play to reduce our nation's burden of chronic disease."

NACCHO, National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, National Recreation and Park Association, and YMCA of the USA are the national partners that fund 40 ACHIEVE communities in 24 states. The Society for Public Health Education provides technical assistance.

In Washington State, two other communities, Yakima Health District, also selected by NACCHO and the YMCA of Port Angeles selected by the YMCA partner, were also selected to become 2011 ACHIEVE communities.

For a complete listing of all funded communities, please visit the ACHIEVE Web site at www.achievecommunities.org or CDC's Healthy Communities Program's Web site at: www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram.

Mason County invites community members who would like to participate in this community health initiative to contact Mason County Public Health from Shelton at 360-427-9670 ext 404 or Belfair 360-275-4467 ext. 404 for further information.

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's 2800 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities.

Lynda Ring Erickson
Chair

Jerry Lingle
Commissioner

Tim Sheldon
Commissioner

