

Snohomish County Executive  
**AARON REARDON**



*Priorities in Action*



Latest News & Upcoming Events

Friday, March 26, 2010

[www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org)

 **A message from Executive Reardon**

Next month, Snohomish County will begin filling slots for its very successful Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP).

ECEAP is a free, comprehensive and family focused program that prepares three- and four-year-old children for school. It also offers parents the tools they need to raise healthier children.

The dedication of the people working in this program, as well as the commitment of the participating families, creates the positive results that we see in each of our ECEAP classrooms.

These children are Snohomish County's future, and we have a responsibility to be sure they're prepared.

I encourage you to look at the requirements for this program, and if your family qualifies, please consider submitting an application.

Aaron Reardon  
County Executive

 **County, Home For Good provide affordable housing**

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon welcomed five families at risk of homelessness into new homes Monday through a joint venture with the nonprofit Home For Good.

Called Project Phoenix, Snohomish County awarded \$665,320 in Federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds to Home For

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The SnoStat system tracks how well the County is delivering

Good, which used the money as leverage for \$400,000 in low-interest loans from Cascade Bank for the purchase of the five homes.

“Today, many middle-class, Snohomish County families – living the dream of homeownership, gainfully employed, paying their mortgage on time and supporting their families – through no fault of their own, they find themselves one step away from homelessness,” Reardon said. “Home For Good has found a viable solution to getting these families into permanent housing at affordable prices.”

Many families today have experienced dramatic financial shocks, such as unemployment, life-threatening illness, disability during military service, sudden divorce due to spousal abuse of children and other issues entirely beyond their control.

As a result of foreclosure and income loss, these families now have no other housing options and are at risk of homelessness.

“There are no programs like this anywhere in the region,” said Melanie Gillespie, executive director of Home For Good. “Snohomish County once again proves itself to be a true housing and human services innovator by funding this special pilot initiative and taking an active stance to combat the community impacts of foreclosure.”

The average cost for the homes was \$225,000 with approximately 45 percent of the purchase price costs coming from Fannie Mae loans. The three-bedroom homes in Marysville – where foreclosure rates have been especially high – are being rented to homeless or at-risk households who are at 50 percent of the area median income or below.

The homes eventually will be converted to permanently affordable ownership opportunities without displacing current families living there.

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## County’s free preschool program to begin recruiting

Beginning in April, the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) will begin recruiting to fill openings at 21 locations in Snohomish County. The free preschool is offered to low-income three- and four-year-olds.

The following free services are provided to eligible families:

services, the costs of those services, and the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

Simply visit our [SnoStat website](#).

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And please be sure to [visit me on the web!](#)

Sincerely,



Aaron Reardon

- Children take part in a preschool program with literacy, math, art, science and field trips.
- Children receive health screenings and referrals.
- Parents receive information about local resources, opportunities for parent education, family fun nights, volunteerism in the program and opportunities for community leadership.

“This program helps the youngest learners in Snohomish County succeed in the public education system,” said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon. “The earlier we prepare children and families for school, the more successful they will be, ultimately benefiting themselves and our community.”

Snohomish County will soon distribute fliers to community organizations and businesses, and will contact income-eligible families by mail.

For more information on the county’s Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, go to [www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org) and search “ECEAP,” or contact Joe Varano at 425-388-7251 or [joe.varano@snoco.org](mailto:joe.varano@snoco.org).”

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## **County names Sharon Olsen as 2010 Fair Honoree**

Snohomish County has named Sharon Olsen, a longtime Snohomish County 4-H leader, as its 2010 Evergreen State Fair Honoree.

Each year, the Evergreen State Fair honors an individual or family who has contributed significantly to the improvement and betterment of the annual fair. Their efforts can be focused in a specific area of exhibition or toward the overall function of the fair.

For 27 years, Olsen has dedicated her life to supporting youth through the Snohomish County 4-H program. Olsen has worked as a leader in the 4-H dog program and has been the 4-H Dog Superintendent at the fair for the past 13 years.

“Sharon has been a strong role model for community involvement,” said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon. “She has grown up and trained young leaders from the children

she supervises.”

As a fair superintendent, Olsen is responsible for maintaining safety for fair visitors and 4-H members during the 12-day fair as well keeping the schedule of events in the dog barn, which includes exhibitions, contests and dog shows.

“She accomplishes this every year,” said Mark Campbell, manager of the Evergreen State Fairgrounds. “These children and young adults that she works with are always excited because Sharon makes it fun.”

On a fair honoree nomination form, one parent wrote that Olsen was responsible for the confidence and self-esteem her daughter now felt.

“She made her feel like she could accomplish things, and now she does so with ease,” the parent wrote. “My other daughter’s eyes have been opened to how good you can feel when you give to the community.”

This year’s fair begins Aug. 26 and runs through Sept. 6.

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