



Population Health Trust October Newsletter

Community Advisory Board to the Skagit County Board of Health

October 2025

It was wonderful having so many people join in the celebration of collective impact at Powerful Partnerships this year! While there was much to learn and share throughout the evening, the highlight for many was the awards. This year, the Trust honored three individuals for dedication to the community.

Skagit Change Maker Award Recipient

Inspired by the life of Terry Belcoe, this award recognizes an individual with a legacy of service that has resulted in tangible benefits to Skagitonians. The Change Maker goes above and beyond their work to meet the needs of their community while inspiring others into action.

Jennifer Sass-Walton

“Jennifer has always been able to act as a bridge between sectors... she is able to bring people together to find shared understanding, develop common goals, and keeps the focus on the well-being of children and families in Skagit County. Her collaborative style is inclusive and intentional, ensuring that those most impacted by the system have a voice in shaping it.”



Skagit Community Champion Award Recipients

This award recognizes a person who is working to create an environment where all can thrive by raising their voice to support others and advocating for conditions that create lasting solutions. This year, two individuals were honored for this award.



Randall Simmons
Skagit County Public Health
RISE Recovery



Randall Simmons

"Throughout his decade-plus of work in the substance use disorder field, he has gone above and beyond to help people... About three years ago, he decided to branch off on his own, starting R.I.S.E. Recovery, putting in tens of thousands of dollars and thousands of hours of time renovating and furnishing properties, turning them into welcoming homes for people who have often been cast off from the rest of society."

Dr. Eric Stark

"Dr. Stark has dedicated his retirement to serving those who are often invisible within our society... His work embodies the highest ideals of healthcare, outreach, and social justice, demonstrating that true healing extends beyond clinical settings to address the social determinants of health that shape our most vulnerable populations."



Dr. Eric Stark
Community Action of Skagit County



This year we received many outstanding nominations. We'd also like to recognize the individuals below for the work they are doing to build a thriving Skagit!

- **Kelsey Baechler**, Mount Vernon School District
- **Matthew Des Voigne**, VSH CPAs
- **Wende Dolstad**, Community Action of Skagit County
- **Graciela Ibarra**, Skagit County Public Health
- **Kelley Kirkpatrick**, Mount Vernon School District
- **Charles Messinger**, Volunteers of America Western Washington
- **Kevin Riley**, Mount Baker Presbyterian Church
- **Kendall Stafford**, Community Action of Skagit County
- **Kierra Wright**, Mount Vernon School District

Thank you for your partnership in keeping Skagit County healthy!



The Population Health Trust was founded in 2015 and is the Community Advisory Board to the Skagit County Board of Health. For more information, check out our [website](#).

[Population Health Trust](#)

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