



# News Release

For immediate release: November 17, 2022

(22-169)

Contact: [DOH Communications](#)

## Washington State Department of Health celebrates Community Star on National Rural Health Day

**OLYMPIA** – In celebration of [National Rural Health Day](#), the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) is excited to congratulate Martha Lanman, this year’s [Community Star](#) for Washington.

The Community Star is awarded annually by the [National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health](#) on National Rural Health Day. It celebrates one individual in each state whose determination and dedication created meaningful change for the health and well-being of their rural community.

Martha is the Executive Director of the Southeast Washington Alliance for Health (SEWAAH), a coalition working to improve the health of people living in Asotin, Columbia, and Garfield Counties. Since 2017, SEWAAH has brought together healthcare providers, community-based organizations, and other partners to identify and address health priorities across the tri-county region.

“National Rural Health Day honors the ‘Power of Rural’ and we use it to celebrate the strength of communities and the amazing people working in rural healthcare systems,” said Pat Justis, Executive Director for DOH’s State Office of Rural Health. “Martha has shown a lifelong commitment to improving health in Southeast Washington. She is a shining example of rural resilience and daily demonstrates how much impact one person, deeply committed, can have on her community.”

Under Martha’s leadership, SEWAAH established itself as a crucial hub for health issues affecting communities in Southeast Washington, leading to improvements in health programming and better alignment of resources between partners. SEWAAH also distributed

— More —

funds to organizations across the region in support of an equitable response to and recovery from COVID-19 [as well as initiating other programs](#).

In addition to directing SEWAAH, Martha also serves as the Health Administrator for Garfield County and is a board member for Greater Health Now.

The [DOH website](#) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. [Find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#). Sign up for the DOH blog, [Public Health Connection](#).

###