



NEWS RELEASE

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CITY COUNCIL HONORS VOLUNTEERS AND COMMISSIONER OF THE YEAR

Covington, WA – This week, City Council honored four individuals for their commitment and dedication to the Covington community as Commissioner of the Year, Volunteer of the Year and Youth Volunteer of the Year. These annual honors are bestowed upon those commissioners and volunteers who have shown exemplary commitment and dedication in their volunteer positions with the City.

The Commissioner of the Year Award was given to Arts Commissioner Marita Ledesma. Marita has been an arts commissioner for nearly four years, has served as vice chair and is currently the chair. She has been instrumental in the successes of the arts commission over the past several years including fostering the arts fund, growth of the Student Art Show, advancement of several public art projects like the utility box wraps, storage wrap and new art piece Metamorphosis at Covington Community Park. Marita was also asked to join the city's Aquatic/Recreation Feasibility Study Steering Committee which she currently serves on. We are lucky to have Marita's commitment to the City of Covington, the community she calls home. She has had a lengthy career in marketing and advertising, which enables Marita to bring great ideas to the commission and even developed a social media outreach plan and coordinated with the city to help communicate the arts commission's goals. In fact, the arts-related posts on the city's social media pages were some of the most engaging posts this past year. Outside of her career and city volunteer roles, Marita also has a history of service with organizations like the Make-A-Wish Foundation and other community service organizations for other areas she has lived.

The Youth Volunteer of the Year Award was given to Youth Councilmember Justin Bose, a senior at Kentwood High School who has served on the Covington Youth Council for the past two and a half years. Justin is the chair of the youth council and is a wonderful leader and role model. Besides serving as the chair of the Covington Youth Council, Justin is a full-time running start student at Green River Community College. He also volunteers part-time at the hospital through MultiCare. Justin is taking a rigorous course load as he is preparing to become a doctor one day. Justin will be greatly missed when he graduates and heads to college later this year.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was given to Terry and Stephanie Thomas. Terry and Stephanie have been police volunteers for many years. As 2020 was particularly challenging for everyone, but for those associated with the police it has been particularly difficult. Terry and Stephanie have adapted their patrols educating the

public about disabled parking and providing a police presence in the downtown core by making use of PPE and maintaining appropriate social distance while issuing traffic warnings and interacting with people parked in violation of disabled parking laws. Enforcement and education of these rules has been particularly important due to the impact on our disabled and senior residents. Terry has also continued processing false alarm violations, which are a significant draw on police services, but has adapted to recognize the financial impact of Covid by turning fines into warnings intended to educate instead of punish. Terry and Stephanie are kind, caring, and very reliable. Their presence has helped police improve public trust with the public.

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