



**Office of the City Administrator  
CITY OF HOQUIAM**

609 – 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Hoquiam, WA 98550  
(360) 532-5700 ext. 243– FAX (360) 538-0938  
Email: bshay@cityofhoquiam.com

## Press Release

DATE: June 4, 2010  
TO: Media Representatives  
FROM: Brian Shay, City Administrator  
SUBJECT: **City of Hoquiam Receives WellCity Award**

**Julie Braaten (left) Celina Batchelor holding plaque**



The City of Hoquiam was recently honored with the WellCity Award by the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) at their Wellness Academy.

Hoquiam was one of only 35 cities and the only one in Grays Harbor County that received recognition for its workplace wellness program. The WellCity Award recognizes cities and towns that demonstrate best practices in employee health promotion. A city must meet the minimum criteria in each of 9 WellCity standards

to receive the award. This is the first year the City has received this honor.

Through its wellness program, the City of Hoquiam initiated fitness programs such as the biggest loser, active for life and lunch time riverfront walks, coupled with nutritional and healthy living education.

“Well designed, worksites wellness programs help reduce employee health risks and health care costs. Employee’s health costs hit Washington’s cities hard over the past decade, rising 194% from 1999-2009,” said Carol Wilmes, AWC Employee Benefit Trust Manager.

Beginning in 2011, programs that qualify for the WellCity Award will earn a 2% premium discount on Regence/Asuris employee and spouse premiums. “Wellness programs help the city operate more efficiently and contribute to maintaining affordable health care coverage for all AWC Trust-insured cities and employees,” said Wilmes.

In addition to the savings the City will see in our medical premiums, our goal in establishing a wellness program was to encourage our employees to live healthy lifestyles and to be a leader in Grays Harbor,” said City Administrator Brian Shay. “This weekend, the City of

Hoquiam and a host of other teams will be participating in the annual Relay for Life helping to raise funds to cure cancer. Through our wellness program, many employees now exercise regularly and two employees have quit smoking which is a significant health benefit not only to them, but their co-workers, family and friends.”

“Our wellness program fits perfectly into the goals of the Grays Harbor County Health Department to improve the overall health of Harbor residents,” said Mayor Jack Durney. “I am proud of our staff for creating this program and earning the WellCity recognition.”

The City’s Wellness team that plans, organizes and manages the wellness activities includes Celina Batchelor, Julie Braaten, Maureen Smedley, Tracy Wood and Alissa Thurman.

For more information about the City of Hoquiam’s Wellness Program or our Healthy Hoquiam Lifestyles Initiatives, please visit our website at [www.cityofhoquiam.com](http://www.cityofhoquiam.com).

