



LYNNWOOD TIMES

2021 Year in Review Special Edition *Real News Real Impact*

PERSON OF THE YEAR

"Van Dinh-Kuno represents all that is great about Snohomish County and the Pacific Northwest"
– Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers

Van
Dinh-Kuno
P. 6



"Washington is a better state because of **Van Dinh-Kuno** and her work" – Gov. Jay Inslee

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2021 YEAR IN REVIEW LIFESTYLES

Snohomish County is home to a diverse group of people, all with their unique perspectives, talents, heroic efforts, and overall independent experiences and stories. Stories have been the fulcrum of human culture for as long as we have recorded history of human culture. As the Lynnwood Times' 2021 Year End Review series continues, here are our top picks for human stories and lifestyles.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

BILLY MCGARRY'S INCREDIBLE RECOVERY

Billy McGarry struggled with drug addiction most of his twenties, eventually allowing it to cripple him into homelessness. One winter, none other than Snohomish Mayor John Kartak found Billy passed out next to a dumpster and decided to give him a chance. He walked Billy to the nearest shelter, shared his support, and encouraged Billy to return to recovery. Now, Billy is engaged, four years sober, and maintains a stable job in Eastern Washington. The two still grab a burger when he's back in town.

LYNNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WINS CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ART COMPETITION

Lynnwood High School sophomore Susanna Lee won 2021's Congressional District Art Competition, a competition that has taken place annually since 1982. Her piece "You and Your Future" was found by Rep. Rick Larsen, and four other judges, to be excellent in the four judging criteria categories: creativity, execution of skill, narrative quality or emotive aspects.

Lee's well-deserving piece features a humanoid character in a dark-lit room, carefully choosing puzzle pieces that will be used to construct themselves. The artist's placement and symmetry are meticulous, with her use of light reverting back to a vanishing point that takes the form of a lit doorway, a symbol of contrast against the dark shades of the rest of the piece. Lee's choice of color are also interesting, using mainly dark shades and warm colors with selective colds designated to specific puzzle pieces. Her choice of giving some pieces color and leaving others shades make the point that not every piece we choose to craft ourselves is the right piece. Lee's work is existential, profound, and well-executed.

BOBBY'S HAWAIIAN LOST AN ICON BUT NOT ITS SPIRIT

Bobby's Hawaiian Restaurant has been a Snohomish County staple for over 20 years. Tragically, Bobby Nakihei, the owner of Bobby's Hawaiian restaurant in Lynnwood passed away leaving its



Afrolatino Festival in Lynnwood on August 7, 2021. Source: Lynnwood Times/Kienan Briscoe.

legacy to his son Robert "Bobby" Jr. Despite the tragedy and management changes, Bobby's is still as delicious and welcoming as ever, preserving the Aloha spirit to community members in any way they can.

VAUGHN'S TEACHING FARM AND KITCHEN

Nestled right in the heart of Lynnwood, down the road from Alderwood, a family-owned teaching farm and future kitchen resides. On this incredible 3.5 acre plot of land where goats, chickens, rabbits, ducks, and a happy dog call home the Vaughn family strive to teach where food comes from through classes and events. Next year the Vaughn family plans to open a restaurant cooking up a diverse menu and hosting cooking classes, using all farm-to-table ingredients.

PURSUIT "AIN'T CANCELLING CHURCH"

When Governor Inslee's Roadmap to Recovery Proclamation Order's restricted social gatherings Snohomish's Pursuit Church NW took a stand for what they believed in. Even after receiving a 14-page letter from the Snohomish Health District

threatening penalties, they refused to surrender their first amendment right to peaceably assemble.

ORTHODOX ETHIOPIAN CHURCH CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Members of the Debre Bisrat Saint Gabriel and Saint Arsema Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church gathered on May 9 in Lynnwood, to celebrate the hundred-year anniversary of their building with music, dancing, traditional outfits, and prayer. The building was bought by the church in November of 2017, with the goal to not only use it for prayer but to help children learn the language and culture of their country of origin and become outstanding citizens of Lynnwood and the United States.

LYNNWOOD'S WEST AFRICAN COMMUNITY GATHERED FOR

GRANDMA'S SUKURI NDOGU

In English, "Grandma's Sukuri Ndogu" roughly translates to giving something sweet to grandma so she can break her fast. Typically this West African tradition is celebrated at the beginning of Ramadan. On April 17, Lynnwood's West African community gathered at the Gambian Talent's Promotions office to give sweets, groceries, and money to the elders of their community in spirit of this annual tradition.

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS 2021

Kathryn Lewandowsky won the Human Rights Award, What Happened on First Street Documentary Team won the Young People's Award, and Kristina Jorgenson, Esther's Place, and The Hand's Up Project, won Transformational Leadership Awards at Snohomish County Human Rights Commission's 2021 Human Rights

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Awards. Living Voices also presented a moving performance, Native Vision, about the Navajo tribe.

WAGRO'S DAY OF THE DAY FESTIVAL

The WAGRO Foundation sponsored a Día de Muertos event at Lynnwood City Hall on November 1, complete with poetry, music, dancing, and costumes to pay tribute to the dead and embrace traditional Mexican culture. The Day of the Dead event was initially going to be led by Lynnwood Councilwoman Julita Altamirano-Crosby, but she unexpectedly had to fly to Mexico due to a death in her family. Her niece, Suly Altamirano, oversaw the festivities in her absence.

AFRO LATINO FESTIVAL AND MEXICAN FOLK DANCE

On August 7, the Afro Latino Festival returned for its 10th year at Silver Creek Family Church to celebrate Afrolatino culture in Washington State with food, live music, dancing, and vendors selling everything from clothing and jewelry to freshly-pressed agua de coco and hand-pressed crepes. Vendors could sell their goods without having to pay a fee, made possible thanks to Silver Creek Family Church offering their grounds free of charge and the \$1,500 in grants offered by both the city of Lynnwood and Community Transit.

Ten days later, dance troupes Bailadores de Bronce and Herencias Mexicanas stunned audience members at Cedar Valley Gym with traditional Mexican folk dances from Guerrero and Oaxaca. Led by famous Mexican dancer Concepción Bello Nava (Conchita), the dance was organized by the Guerrero Association which is a connection between Guerrero and Washington State founded as part of the friendship between Guerrero and the city of Lynnwood.



Concepción Bello Nava (Conchita), the artistic director for the renowned Chilpancingo dance troupe Campañiade Danza Folklórica Xochicalli, teaching local dance groups Bailadores de Bronce and Herencias Mexicanas traditional Mexican folk dances. Source: Lynnwood Times/Mario Lotmore.

LYNNWOOD VET HELPS FELLOW VETERANS OVERCOME PTSD WITH PSYCHEDELIC DRUGS

Jared Rinehart, U.S. Marine Corps Veteran, suffered from depression for years, a condition only intensified with PTSD when he returned to civilian life from serving in the Middle East. After trying everything, from medications to therapy, he sought treatment at an Ayahuasca center in Peru. His experience here was so transformational he dedicated his life to helping fellow veterans suffering from mental illness through guided, psychedelic, therapies.



Did porch pirates make off with your package?

Our office has received reports of several package thefts this week. If you have had a package stolen, please fill out a report online at www.mycrimereport.us

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2021 YEAR IN REVIEW EDUCATION

By **OLIVIA THIESSEN**

BILLY LYNNWOOD TEACHER, MS. WROLSTAD RETIRES AFTER 36 YEARS

This June, Lynnwood’s favorite teacher Cathi Wrolstad retired after 36 years of service to Lynnwood schools. In a car parade event organized by her colleagues at Beverly Elementary School, Ms. Wrolstad celebrated her teaching career among friends, colleagues, and former students where vehicles would stop and exchange memories and words of encouragement.

Cathi Wrolstad started teaching at Beverly Elementary School in 1985 and taught more than 900 children throughout her career. Wrolstad is loved by her students and was recognized for her uncanny ability to connect with young children and their families.

SPRUCE ELEMENTARY TEACHER RECEIVES GLOBAL RECOGNITION

In October, Jennie Warmouth, a second-grade teacher at Spruce Elementary, became one of the 50 finalists in the Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize 2021. According to the Varkey Foundation, the purpose of the prize is to recognize one exceptional teacher “who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession as well as to shine a spotlight on the important role teachers play in society.” Warmouth was one of 8,000 nominees from across more than 120 countries.

An example of Warmouth’s exemplary curriculum includes one pet adoption project. Through a partnership with local animal shelter PAWS (Progressive Animal Welfare Society), the project required students to write descriptions for difficult-to-place cats and dogs based on the health records and behavior notes of each pet.

Through this project, roughly 800 children who participated helped 600 shelter animals find new homes, all while fine-tuning the students’ reading and writing skills. Warmouth’s ability to make standardized curricula personally applicable for her students makes her an outstanding educator.

DR. BETTY COBBS RECEIVES ACT LEADERSHIP AWARD

This November, Everett’s own Dr. Betty Cobbs was awarded the Trustee of the Year Leadership Award. Dr. Cobbs was presented the award by the Washington State Association of College Trustees (ACT) for her contribution to Washington State’s community and technical colleges.

Cobbs has served on multiple boards and has worked with several nonprofits, all while working full-time as the principal of Woodside Elementary



Jennie Warmouth and her “teaching assistant,” Maeby. Photo courtesy of Jennie Warmouth.

School, currently overseeing 540 elementary students and dozens of staff. Even after almost 40 years as principal, she still shares the same love for her students as her first day.

MARYSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Marysville School District approved the resignation of Superintendent Jason Thompson in September following a 6-month medical leave. The former superintendent began his leave of absence after allegedly accusing the district of creating a hostile work environment. Thompson currently collects a \$21,629.85 monthly pay which will continue until his official resignation takes effect in June 2022. Interim Superintendent Chris Pearson will take his place until a new superintendent is hired for the next term.

The district is also seeking applicants to fill its open District 3 seat after the unopposed candidate Sherry Weersing turned down the position. Weersing, who attempted to pull out of the election during the summer, was left on the ballot after missing the campaign termination deadline. The district is accepting applications through January 7, with application packets available at its Educational Service Center at 4220

80th St. NE, Marysville, WA, or on the district’s website at www.ms25.org/page/school-board-application.

MONROE SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT PLACED ON LEAVE

This December, Monroe School District Superintendent Dr. Justin Blasko was placed on leave amidst protests in the district surrounding a racial harassment incident. In a 2-hour school board meeting, students, parents, and community members took to public comment to discuss the how district’s leadership has handled racism in schools, some calling on the resignation of Dr. Blasko and other leaders.

Earlier this year, a video circulated of a Black student in the Monroe School District being hit with a water bottle and being called the n-word. A short time later, an eleven-year-old student was placed into remote learning after being repeatedly called the n-word.

The Monroe School District also placed a high school psychologist on leave after he was arrested in a child sexual exploitation sting in October and was charged with four counts of communication with a minor for immoral purposes. A representative

from the district explained that the allegations did not involve any students from the district.

SCHOOL BONDS AND LEVY VOTES

This April, Edmonds School District celebrated the results of the April 2021 Special Election which passed the 2021 Capital Levy measure with nearly 55 percent of the votes. The levy has allowed the district to make necessary improvements to preserve buildings, ensure safety, security, and accessibility improvements, address capacity challenges, and replace two elementary schools (Oak Heights and Spruce).

The district also prepares for the 2022 Educational Programs and Operations (EPO) Levy, recently appointing its Pro/Con Committee members. If approved, the EPO levy will replace an expiring levy that is set to expire in 2022. The levy, which totals roughly \$276 million, will be placed on the February 8 ballot.

Everett, Lake Stevens, and Monroe will also be voting on separate levies in February, as their respective EPO levies are set to expire in 2022. For Everett

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2021 YEAR IN REVIEW TRANSPORTATION

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LARSEN RUNNING FOR CHAIR OF HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

On December 2, Representative Rick Larsen (WA-02) announced he will run for Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for the 118th Congress. Larsen, a senior member of the Committee and Chair of the Aviation Subcommittee, made the announcement in a letter to colleagues after Chair Peter DeFazio (OR-04) announced his retirement at the end of his term.

THREE NEW LIGHT RAIL STATIONS OPEN IN SEATTLE

Sound Transit celebrated the grand opening of three new rail link stations and a pedestrian bridge Saturday, October 2nd in Northern Seattle. From north to south, the rail links are called the Northgate, Roosevelt, and U-District stations. The new John Lewis Memorial Bridge is located at the Northgate station and crosses over I-5, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to cross the freeway safely.

Bus service to the station also got an upgrade with the addition of 48 new direct bus trips between Snohomish County and Northgate. Community Transit and Sound Transit buses drop riders right at the front steps of the station, making for fast and easy bus-to-rail connections.

TIB PROJECTS

Snohomish County Public Works held a ribbon cutting ceremony Thursday, November 18, to celebrate the completion of a major construction project on 180th St SE, between Bothell and Mill Creek, stretching from State Route 527 to 23rd Ave SE.

The 180th St SE – Phase I Improvement Project is part of a larger, \$93 million, plan to improve travel ways in the area. The five other projects in the area also include:

- 180th St SE Phase II (TBD)
- Seattle Hill Rd (completed 2018), Transportation Improvement Board grant: \$3.6 million
- 35th Ave SE – Phase I (completed 2019), costing \$3.6 million
- 35th Ave SE – Phase II (in construction)
- 43rd Ave SE/Sunset Rd (2022/2023)

AMTRAK RESTORED SERVICE

On May 26, Representative Rick Larsen (WA-02) joined by Amtrak President Stephen Gardner and staff at the Seattle King's Street Station, celebrated the restoration of daily passenger service for all Amtrak trains traveling through Washington State.

One of these lines, the Empire Builder, connects Seattle to Everett. Prior to Larsen and Gardner boarding the Empire Builder to head to Everett, they held a press conference sharing the benefits of rail travel and the role the American Rescue Plan had in restoring

Amtrak services in Washington state.

HOBBS TRANSPORTATION PACKAGE

Senator Steve Hobbs reintroduced his Forward Washington transportation package at a public hearing on April 12. On May 18, a transportation biennium budget proposal was enacted with a partial veto by Gov. Jay Inslee that included funding and certain sections that were in conflict with other statutes, past vetoes, and the state ferry system.

The 16-year \$17.8 billion transportation plan would inject funding into transportation projects throughout the state and create 18,000 family-waged jobs throughout Washington per year, according to a news release by Senate Democrats.

HARBOUR REACH CORRIDOR

Mukilteo's Harbour Reach Corridor Project opened June 26, connecting Harbour Pointe Boulevard and Beverly Park Road. This new road added an alternate north-south route through the City, providing increased capacity for vehicles, and significantly improving emergency response times to the south portion of the City. It adds a multimodal connection through the community, providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities, streetscape standards, and traffic safety measures such as a roundabout.

The Harbour Reach Corridor Project was funded by \$15.1 million of Connecting Washington Funds, \$2.3 million in Washington State Transportation Improvement Board funding, and \$1 million of City transportation impact fees. The project is almost equal to the city's annual budget at the time funding was received back in 2015.

TARGET ZERO

Motor collisions and fatalities on Washington roads continue to rise leading legislation to continue its effort to make roads safer. One of these strategies is Target Zero, which is an agenda that aims toward zero deaths and serious injury on Washington roadways by 2030.

Target Zero incorporates what it calls the Safe Systems Approach to assess contributing factors that prevent zero deaths on roadways. It includes four main components: speed, infrastructure, vehicle manufacturers, and users.

PAINE FIELD

For the second year in a row, Paine Field Passenger Terminal was voted one of America's Best Small Airports in the USA Today's "10 Best" Reader Poll.

On October 5, United terminated service at the facility, however Alaska's presence is doing the opposite. They began to ramp up its service on June 17 and plans to return to a full schedule of 18 non-stop flights from the Everett airport by spring 2022.

Non-stop flights are to resume from Paine Field Airport to Portland, Santa Ana, and San Diego starting January

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2022. Currently, travelers can fly out of Paine Field non-stop to Spokane, Boise, Palm Springs, Las Vegas, Phoenix, and Tucson taking Alaska Airlines.

Paine Field expects its passenger count to quadruple by 2040.

SOUND TRANSIT HIGHLIGHTS

- Following an unprecedented affordability gap of \$7.9 billion, down from \$11.5 billion, Sound Transit looked to realignment strategies to ensure voter-approved projects – ST-2 and ST-3 – remain on schedule due to the combined effects of the pandemic and increased cost estimates. On August 5, during a Special Business Meeting, Sound Transit adopted a new business plan to address this affordability gap.
- Amazon and Sound Transit announced June 16 a partnership to accelerate the creation of up to 1,200 new affordable housing units on Sound Transit surplus properties near light rail stations across the Puget Sound region.
- Sound Transit, the City of Shoreline, and King Conservation District announced Trees for Rail, a partnership to re-green the Lynnwood Link light rail corridor with native trees and shrubs as it passes through Shoreline.
- Sound Transit CEO Peter Rogoff announced he will be stepping down from his position in the second quarter of 2022. The Sound Transit Board of Directors convened the first meeting of its CEO Selection Committee on December 2, receiving an overview of the CEO search process, timeline and work plan.
- Sound Transit held its first Elected Leadership Group (ELG) meeting on November 29th as part of the first phase of Alternatives Development of Everett Link Extension. The meeting was the first of six meetings that will continue through 2022. The purpose of the ELG is to build consensus around key decisions and work through project issues as needed. The ELG will ultimately make recommendations to the Sound Transit Board to aid the Board's identification of a preferred alternative and other alternatives to move forward for environmental review.
- Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers and the Snohomish County Council appointed Everett Mayor Cassie Franklin to the Sound Transit Board of Directors, effective January 1, 2022. Mayor Franklin will fill the seat of outgoing Everett City Council member Paul Roberts, a longtime member of the Board and advocate for Snohomish County residents.

Lynnwood Times' 2021 Person of the Year: Executive Director Van Dinh-Kuno

By **BO JOHN BRUSCO**

The Lynnwood Times proudly presents the 2021 Person of the Year Award to Van Dinh-Kuno, the Executive Director of Refugee & Immigrant Services Northwest (RISNW). For over three decades, Dinh-Kuno has helped thousands of immigrants and refugees across Snohomish, Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, and Island Counties.

Dinh-Kuno's efforts have been especially crucial in 2021, given the events that took place in the fall. After President Biden withdrew all American troops from Afghanistan, hundreds of refugees arrived in the state. Under Dinh-Kuno's direction, RISNW has been providing essential services for these displaced families as they work to make Washington their new home.

"You know, I thought I've just been doing my job. And I didn't believe people recognized my work and my contributions to our community. So I'm just speechless. I don't know what to say," Director Dinh-Kuno said upon accepting the 2021 Person of the Year Award.

"This is really, really, the highest honor in my career."

STATEMENTS FROM GOVERNOR INSLEE, EXECUTIVE SOMERS, AND LYNNWOOD COUNCILWOMAN AN ALTAMIRANO-CROSBY

The Times is not alone in honoring Van Dinh-Kuno's work. Governor Jay Inslee also recognizes her years of service. "Van Dinh-Kuno is someone who has made a lasting impact in the lives of many," said Gov. Inslee.

"Over the years, she has worked diligently to bring voice and visibility to the needs and priorities of our diverse ANHPI communities. She has been hands-on in Olympia, a key organizer in the annual ANHPI Lobby Day, bussing thousands of Washingtonians to Olympia and connecting them with their elected officials so their voices can be heard."

"Her influence has helped make Washington one of the most welcoming and supportive states for immigrants and refugees, ensuring we are first in line to receive refugees in need, and promoting continued investments into a social safety net providing vital resources," he continued.

"She understands the urgent needs of ANHIP's that have only deepened during the COVID-19 pandemic, and has been in the front lines providing direct support to people who experienced acts of violence or discrimination in the rise of anti-Asian hate. Washington is a better state because of Van Dinh-Kuno and her work," Gov. Inslee concluded.

Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers also commented on the Lynnwood Times' 2021 Person of the Year. "Van Dinh-Kuno represents all that is great about Snohomish County and the Pacific Northwest," he said.

"She is compassionate, a tenacious



Above: Van Dinh-Kuno speaking at the APIC rally in Olympia. Right: Van meeting with Gov. Jay Inslee at the Washington state Capital to lobby for funding to support refugees and immigrants.

advocate, a true public servant, and someone who has made our community safer, more welcoming, and a better place for everyone. Her work at Refugee and Immigrant Services Northwest has been transformative for hundreds of thousands of people who needed help in starting their new life in America. I am grateful for her unrelenting passion for helping some of our most vulnerable neighbors."

"This honor is well deserved," Exec. Somers continued. "On behalf of Snohomish County, we congratulate Van and her extraordinary staff at RISNW."

Lynnwood Councilwoman Julieta Altamirano-Crosby recalled working with Dinh-Kuno as a Spanish interpreter for her first job in the United States several years ago.

"Van is an extraordinary leader and mentor," Altamirano-Crosby said. "She always follows through, and we share a common goal to serve our community to make tangible changes. I appreciate her friendship, her trust, and her values. We still work together providing vaccines to BIPOC communities through Covid-19 Vaccine Equity Partnership (VEP)."

DINH-KUNO THANKS HER INCREDIBLE STAFF

Dinh-Kuno also made it a point to recognize her phenomenal staff at RISNW, all of whom were once refugees themselves.

"The job I've done, I haven't done alone," she said. "I have a team of staff, and they are incredible. And I think they should be honored."

"All of my staff—they are first-generation refugees," she continued, explaining how they fled from various wars.



"One of my senior staff members came from Bosnia. She lived during the wars. There were rockets shooting in her area every single day. She witnessed death every single day of her life. Her name is Vahida Polovina," she said.

Polovina has not only been able to "overcome all that sadness," as Dinh-Kuno explains but has also earned the trust of countless other refugees. "All of the refugees come to her regardless of what country they're coming from," Dinh-Kuno said.

"Another refugee on my staff, Kamal [Acharya], lived 20 years in the refugee camp in Bhutan before he was able to migrate here to the United States," she continued. "But you know, all of my staff, they never look back. They're looking forward to better themselves, and they are at the forefront, helping every refugee who walks through the door of my agency."

"I AM A FORMER REFUGEE. I CAME FROM VIETNAM."

When Director Dinh-Kuno met with Lynnwood Times' staff to share some details for our report on Afghan Refugees, another story emerged.

It was the beginning of November,

and we sat down with Dinh-Kuno at a corner booth in Mukilteo's Speedway Cafe. Over coffee and orange juice, she explained to us the plights of the Afghan families coming into the U.S. with nothing but the clothes on their backs.

She also shared personal anecdotes about helping Iraqi women obtain driver's licenses in the '90s, pressing people in power to give COVID-19 vaccines to refugees and immigrants, and helping individuals on their long pathway to citizenship. We were amazed by her wealth of knowledge, experiences, and decades of dedication to serving the underserved.

There was a brief pause in the conversation as we processed the impact she must have made throughout her career. We asked what inspired her to start helping refugees and immigrants. "I am a former refugee. I came from Vietnam. I escaped like the Afghan people have escaped," she answered.

"I'm thankful I came to this country [when I was] much younger, so I had the opportunity to go through the education system of this country and succeed. I came with my parents, my grandmother, and my ten siblings."

ESCAPING VIETNAM

When she was just a teenager, Dinh-Kuno undertook an incredible exodus from a war-torn Vietnam. Bringing a large family safely across the globe is no small feat, and Dinh-Kuno says they could not have done it without her father's leadership.

Her father, Colonel Hoi Dinh of the Vietnamese Artillery Army, was adorably referred to by his children as "The Sergeant."

"You have to understand, you grow up in a military family, right? Your father is just like a Sergeant; he tells you what to do, and if you follow the orders, you will survive. That's what it is," Dinh-Kuno said.

"THE SERGEANT" LEADS HIS FAMILY THROUGH SAIGON HARBOR'S GATES.



Van Dinh-Kuno's father Colonel Hoi Dinh.

As she related to us how her family traversed a vast crowd at Saigon Harbor in Vietnam, it was clear that her dad was her hero. "When we escaped, my father was in full uniform with insignias and a gun on his hip. He was charging ahead because you have to see [through] a sea of people around you," she said as her eyes glowed with the light from the cafe's window.

Decades later, she still remembers the orders her father gave that day. "He told my older brother, 'you take care of grandma.' He told his wife, 'you're taking care of the younger one,' and he told my second [oldest] brother to take care of his two younger brothers. He told me I had to take care of my two younger sisters, who were a couple years younger than me. And he told my other sister, 'you're taking care of one sister,'" she said. "And so that's how we were able to get through the gate at Saigon Harbor."

Her father's military status was also instrumental in getting their family through the harbor. "He brought out his [military identification] and the American Military Police opened the gate, and they allowed us to go through," she explained.

LOST IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Though they were relieved to have made it onto a boat together, their time at sea wouldn't be easy. Dinh-Kuno recalls being lost in the Pacific Ocean for eleven days and running out of fuel and food.

"We didn't have much water or food, so some of the people in my boat died. We

didn't know where we were going, and we went in circles with a storm pounding on us," she said, thanking God that the storm inadvertently kept them alive with the rainwater it provided.

After eight days on the water, a U.S. helicopter flew over them. U.S. Navy boats came to their rescue just a few hours later. "The [U.S.] Navy boats came out, and they pumped fuel to our boat and gave us canned food and crackers," Dinh-Kuno said.

"They gave us canned food, and they didn't give us a can opener, and some people used knives and were pounding on the cans and got cut and things like that," she recalled with a chuckle.

FROM THE PHILIPPINES TO GUAM, FROM GUAM TO AMERICA

The U.S. Navy officials pointed them towards the Philippines, and Dinh-Kuno and her family would arrive at Subic Bay three days later. Thanks to her dad's connection with the U.S. government, they were loaded onto a C-130 cargo plane and flown to Guam.

"We stayed in Guam for a week. They gave us all the immunization shots—we had no privacy whatsoever," Dinh-Kuno said, describing a large table at which they were instructed to sit and remove their shirts. "You'd just take your shirt off, and they'd inject you, and we didn't even know what we got," she recalled.

After a week in Guam, Dinh-Kuno and her family were transported to America. "They transported us to Arkansas. We stayed in the refugee camp for four months. And we got sponsored by the Lutheran church to go to Minnesota."

"When we got to Minnesota, there was snow on the ground, and I came from a country where the average temperature was 80—so we got cold," she laughed. "From there, we were at the mercy of the community and church."

NEW ORDERS FROM "THE SERGEANT."

Once she and her large family made it to the states, her father gave some new orders.

"You go to medical school, you go to engineer school, you go to this school." He told me to go to medical school; that's why I have a degree in Biochemistry," Dinh-Kuno explained. "But when I looked at the [Master's] medical school for four years plus three years—I had no money for it. So when I got my Bachelor's, I got a job immediately so I could support myself and help my dad out."

Dinh-Kuno earned a Bachelor's in Biochemistry from the University of Minnesota at the beginning of the 1980s. She spent the next five or so years researching ways to increase the shelf life of food products and make livestock and vegetation grow larger and faster. "We were worried about having enough food in the year 2000," she explained.

As is traditional for many Asian cultures, Dinh-Kuno's parents followed her oldest brother to Washington state, where he worked as an engineer for Boeing.

Dinh-Kuno moved to Mukilteo in 1985

when her father began to have medical needs. He would later pass away in 2020.

THIRTY-SIX YEARS OF SERVING REFUGEES

Despite her older brother admonishing her to get a job at a Biochem company in Bellevue, Dinh-Kuno saw an open position at RISNW for helping refugees to find employment. Upon reading the job description, she thought to herself, "hmm, that's interesting."

Soon after, she got a phone call. "They said, 'Hey, we want to offer you the job! When can you start working?' And at that point, I was really scared. I knew nothing about Washington. So I went to the Lynnwood Library, and I talked with the Librarian who helped me find the employers directory," she said. "I focused on the companies that had a hundred employees or less and began making cold calls."

Eventually, Dinh-Kuno didn't have enough refugees to fill all the open positions she was finding from those calls. So she began coordinating with refugee services in Seattle too.

A couple of years later, the Executive Director position became available. Dinh-Kuno applied immediately and competed against 30 other applicants for the job. She has been the Executive Director of Refugee & Immigrant Services Northwest for 34 years—making for 36 years of serving refugees in total.

She also earned a Bachelor's in Human Services from Western Washington University in 1987.

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RISNW

With our cups now empty in the Mukilteo Cafe, Van Dinh-Kuno mentioned her plans to retire in the very near future.

We asked what attributes she would look for in an Executive Director candidate.

"It doesn't take a lot to do this job," she told us. "The most important element is to be a director who serves the underserved population and truly provides the services as if you wanted them provided for yourself or for your loved ones—and that's it. No more, no less."

DIRECTOR DINH-KUNO'S MESSAGE TO ALL REFUGEES

Dinh-Kuno stated that her agency helps around three thousand refugees per year. Multiply that by 36, and she has helped more than 100,000 refugees across Snohomish County over the course of her career. "And they vote," she added.

And those 100,000 aren't just lives helped, and livelihoods improved. Those are generations that Director Dinh-Kuno and her team have helped set up for success.

When presented with the 2021 Person of the Year Award in late December, we asked Dinh-Kuno if she would like to say anything to all those she has helped. She offered the following statement:

"I've spent 36 years helping the refugees who've come here from all over the world.

"I remember people from Poland, and Romanians, Bosnians, Serbians, Albanians, Ukrainians, Estonians, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Lebanese, Burmese, Bhutanese, Congolians, Iranians, and Iraqis, Sudanese, Somalians, and in the last three months, predominantly Afghans.

"If I had the opportunity to stand in front of all the refugees I've been helping throughout the last 36 years, I would tell them, 'Welcome to America! I'm so happy you are here, and it's an honor to serve you and [help] give you a better life—and you're safe. It's an honor I've been performing for the last 36 years, and I will continue to do it as long as there are refugees who will need my help.'"



Above: Van Dinh-Kuno meeting with Senator Bernie Sanders in Washington D.C. Below: Van Dinh-Kuno meeting with Senator Patty Murray (D-Washington).

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW PUBLIC SAFETY



Memorial for Tejpal Singh at the Chevron station in Lynnwood where he was murdered in the early morning of September 26, 2021. Source: Mario Lotmore/Lynnwood Times.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

2021 was a big year for public safety in Snohomish County. Police reform laws were signed, peace officers resigned, protests ensued, and Community Justice Centers were approved.

To continue our Year in Review series, here are the Lynnwood Times' highlights of the top 2021 stories involving public safety.

POLICE REFORM LAWS

On May 18, Governor Inslee signed new state laws, HB1054 and HB1310, influencing the way Police Officers can use tactics and force when responding to incidents. Both bills passed at the House and Senate levels and went into effect July 25.

Since then, Police Departments all throughout the state have been retraining officers, combing the statutes, and even calling upon a resolution that would reconsider these reforms after many believe they are not carefully thought out.

POLICE RESIGNATIONS AND INCENTIVE PACKAGES

Following a year of protests and reform laws, police departments everywhere experienced an unprecedented number of resignations. Over 200 Seattle police officers resigned from their positions in 2020, nearly 20 percent of the force.

The Everett Police Department lost 1,100 years of police experience since 2014 and 295 years of experience within the first six months of 2021, including six officers, three sergeants, two lieutenants, and one deputy chief.

To incentivize existing officers to consider filling these vacancies, many departments offered incentive packages for lateral hires, some including as much as \$20,000 in hiring bonuses.

The bonuses were approved by each city's respective city council and the deadlines were extended through December 31, 2022.

LYNNWOOD COMMUNITY JUSTICE CENTER

Lynnwood's \$64 million Community Justice Center project was green lit last year to many resident's opposition, sparking protests.

Set to be completed in 2023, the \$64 million Community Justice Center project includes the rebuilding of the existing police department, reimagining the misdemeanor jail, a remodeled court while expanding east to the adjacent vacant, city-owned wooded area. The expansion of the lot will connect the police station to the neighboring Community Health Center of Snohomish County (CHCSC), allowing for a direct partnership of services aimed at reducing recidivism.

In response to the in-custody death of Tirhas Tesfatsion at the Lynnwood Jail, Lynnwood City Council postponed the vote awarding the construction contract to FORMA construction company, after a last minute letter from State Representatives, and City Hall was stormed by passionate protestors criticizing the city for moving forward on the project until a more thorough investigation could be conducted concerning Tesfatsion's death.

A task force was assembled by Mayor Nicola Smith, Chief Jim Nelson, and Representative Laura Davis to reexamine the CJC's programs and purpose, ultimately deciding to green light the project with some changes including decreased jail beds and increased substance abuse and behavioral health services.

The Community Justice Center held its ground breaking ceremony on October 27 to signify the end of the planning process. During this ceremony, the

project's history of protest continued when a protester splayed herself on the ground where executives were suppose to dig their shovels. The protestor's display went largely ignored and the ceremony proceeded to conclusion. The Community Justice Center is still scheduled to open in 2023.

LYNNWOOD JAIL IN-CUSTODY SUICIDE

Lynnwood Jail experienced its first in-custody death since it opened in 1994, when 47-year old Tirhas Tesfatsion was found dead in her cell on July 13.

Tesfatsion was pulled over by an LPD officer on July 12 after swerving between lanes and driving 15 below the speed limit. Although Tesfatsion denied being under the influence of alcohol she admitted to being under the influence of drugs and, upon submitting to a field sobriety test, the officer observed probable cause to arrest for DUI. She did not have a valid driver's license, no insurance, and had been arrested for DUI just seven months prior. Tesfatsion's blood test would later report she was under the influence of fentanyl, marijuana, methamphetamine, and amphetamine.

Tesfatsion was found dead the next afternoon by a jail officer. Kirkland PD was brought in as an external investigator, ultimately ruling Tesfatsion's death as a suicide based on security camera footage showing, what looks like, Tesfatsion using her jumpsuit to hang herself by the bathroom area.

Despite this ruling, many were infuriated by the outcome and events leading up to Tirhas' death. Protestors, Black Lives Matter activists, Defund the Police movements, and even Tirhas' family members, accused the Lynnwood PD of negligence believing if the department had checked on her more frequently they could have prevented Tirhas' death. Many did not

believe the ruling of both Lynnwood PD, and Kirkland PD, calling upon the Attorney General's Office to conduct further investigation, which was supported by Lynnwood City Council but unapproved by the Attorney General.

LYNNWOOD CHEVRON WORKER MURDERED

Tejpal Singh (60), was murdered while working a shift at a Lynnwood Chevron station on September 26. He was a husband and father to three children.

The murder took place during one of Singh's opening shifts in which a gunman, attempting to rob the store, shot and killed him. The Snohomish County Sheriff's Department conducted an investigation but no arrest was made.

Singh was a beloved member of the community, having worked at the Chevron on Highway 99 and 148th Street for 21 years. In the days following his death community members took to social media to express their mourning and memories, a memorial was enacted inside of his workplace, and a GoFund Me raised over \$40,000 for funeral services within the first 18 hours of going live, all exhibiting Singh's everlasting impact he had on the people around him.

VIOLENT OFFENDER TASK FORCE

Snohomish County's Violent Offender Task Force arrested a 48-year-old male outside his Seattle residence for the 2004 murder of 31-year old Hoang V. Nguyen, Thursday, September 9.

On the morning of October 23, 2004, Everett police officers responded to a disturbance at a home on Hardsen Road where Nguyen was found with a stab wound to the chest. He was transported to the hospital but later died from his injury. The suspect was



Snohomish County's Violent Offender Task Force, the A-Team in crime fighting. Source: Kienan Briscoe/Lynnwood Times.

invited to the homeowner's house to help with a project, but upon growing intoxicated late in the evening, engaged in an argument with Nguyen which became physical.

In 2004 the suspect denied stabbing Nguyen, but while reviewing cold cases this year, Everett Police Department Major Crimes Detectives through interviewing and investigation, developed new information that led to probable cause for the suspect's arrest 17 years later.

The VOTF is cross commissioned by the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) Western District of Washington and includes twenty seven federal, state, and local law enforcement partnering agencies. The task force specializes in locating and arresting violent fugitives for offenses such as homicide, assault, sex crimes, failure to register as a sex offender, firearm violations, and federal probation violations.

Since its inception in 2013, the VOTF has made 2,090 arrests, 611 of them sex crime related, and recovered 315 illegally owned firearms.

LEAD THE WAY PROGRAM

Snohomish County Sheriff Adam Fortney's first Lead the Way program, a program designed to provide leadership, encouragement, and direction to youths living in Snohomish County, came to a successful close.

Over eight weeks, attendees met once a week for two hours, beginning July 5 through August 23. Students aged 13 to 17 discussed goal setting, racism and racial equity, decision making, drug and alcohol abuse, and career and professional directional advice.

After the students had completed the eight week-long program, the Sheriff's Office hosted a graduation ceremony at Sno-Isle TECH to commemorate their completion with framed certificates, gift bags, a custom-made sweatshirt from Medusa Apparel, dinner from Meatheads Smokehouse, and dessert from Snohomish Pie Co.

After the success of the program, Sheriff Fortney committed to its return in 2022.

EDMONDS GUN LOCKER ORDINANCE LAWSUIT

Edmonds City voted in favor of Ordinance 4120 requiring firearms

within the city to be safely secured in lockers. Violations of the ordinance would range from \$500 for anyone not permitted to use it gains access to the weapon, to a fine of \$10,000 if the firearm is used to commit a crime, injure or cause death to themselves or others.

Edmonds man Brett Bass, backed by the SAF and NRA, filed a lawsuit against the city calling the ordinance unconstitutional. The appellate court ultimately was in favor of the plaintiff and appealed February, arguing the law is ambiguously worded.

LYNNWOOD MAN SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS FOR GUN AND DRUG TRAFFICKING

A 39-year-old Lynnwood man was sentenced, in U.S. District Court in Seattle, September 9, to 10 years in prison for federal charges involving distribution and transport of heroin, fentanyl, methamphetamine, and firearms including illegal fully automatic rifles.

Jose Casablanca and co-defendant Jessie Cruz were arrested in late 2020 following a lengthy undercover investigation. In May 2021, Casablanca pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute controlled substances, possession of a machine gun, and possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.

Two undercover detectives with the Snohomish Regional Drug Task Force (SRDTF) posed as gun and drug buyers to learn more about Casablanca

and Cruz's operation. The undercover detectives successfully purchased fentanyl, heroin, methamphetamine, and a fully automatic firearm, classified as an illegal machine gun, and other firearms from the pair. Casablanca and Cruz also confided where they were hiding a large amount of drugs at their Lynnwood home.

A court-authorized search warrant at this location resulted in the seizure of large amounts of heroin, fentanyl, multiple firearms, and ammunition, as well as body armor. The two were arrested at a regional airport where they met another undercover detective posing as someone who could get them access to a pill press.

SNOHOMISH COUNTY SHERIFF SURVIVES RECALL EFFORT

Back in March, a recall effort aimed at removing Snohomish County Sheriff Adam Fortney ultimately failed, unable to receive its required 45,000 signatures by its March 9 deadline.

The petition was an effort by the Committee to Recall Snohomish County Sheriff Adam Fortney claiming the sheriff "endangered the peace and safety of the community and violated his statutory duties... by inciting the public to violate Governor Inslee's 'Stay Home—State Healthy' proclamation...and.... exercised discretion in a manifestly unreasonable manner by rehiring three deputy sheriffs previously discharged following investigation and findings of misconduct."

The Committee referred to Fortney's public announcement that he would not be enforcing Governor Inslee's emergency orders for mask and COVID-related safety precautions. With the recall efforts now behind him, Sheriff Fortney says that he will continue to be transparent with Snohomish County residents but will be increasingly mindful in how he presents those decisions and opinions.

RETIREEES AND NEW CHIEFS

Edmonds Mayor Mike Nelson announced that Acting Police Chief Michelle Bennett is his choice for the permanent position of Edmonds Police Department Chief of Police. Bennett was appointed following a grueling interviewing process, after Acting Chief Jim Lawless left the city of Edmonds for a job in Marysville.

Lake Stevens also received a new Chief following Chief John Dyer's retirement. Replacing Dyer is Jeff Beazizo who has served 31 years in law enforcement, beginning his career on the Washington State Patrol and working his way up. As well as Chief John Dyer, two celebrated Lynnwood Police Officers also retired from the force - Sergeant David Byrd and Detective Robert DeGabriele.

2020 LYNNWOOD CRIME OVERVIEW

During the week between June 21-28 there were 116 crimes reported by the Lynnwood Police Department with the most frequent being theft in 25 cases.

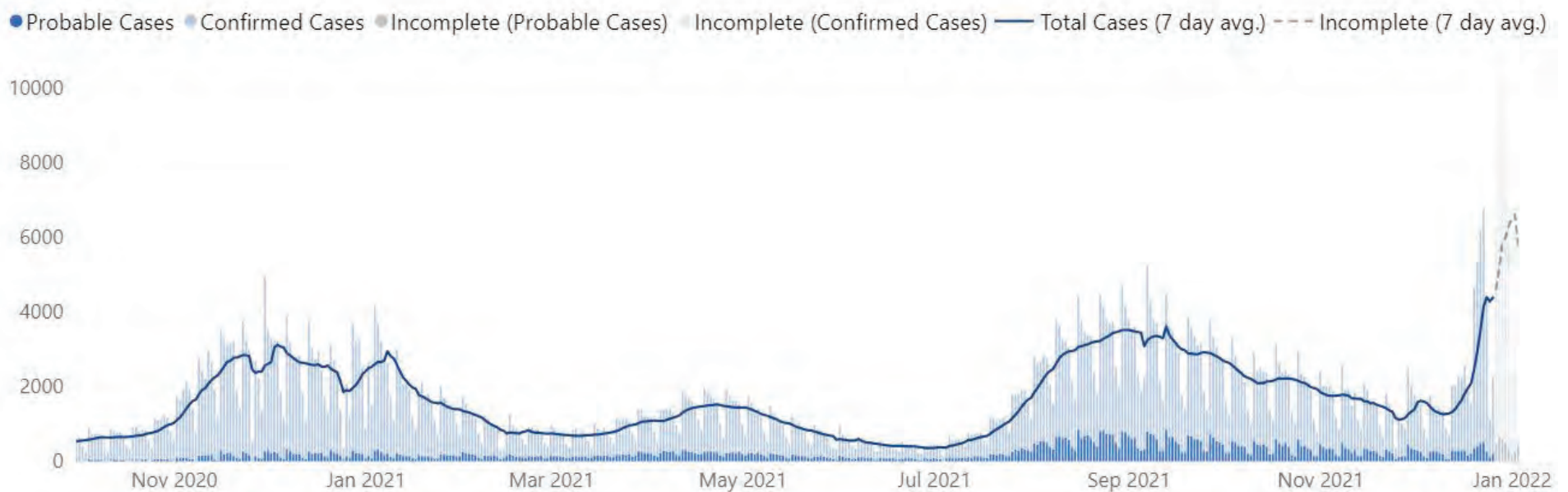
A total of 121 crimes were reported to the Lynnwood Police Department, with theft within chain stores leading the list of crimes for the week of July 18-25 in Lynnwood. Stores such as Walmart, Costco and Walgreens are among some of the places where incidents occurred. There has also been an increase of thefts from porches, mailboxes, and cars.

The Lynnwood Police Department reported 104 crimes during the third week of August, including theft of second and third degree, a shooting on Highway 99, and possession of dangerous weapons. Compared to the previous week, Lynnwood saw 9 more crimes, a 9 percent increase overall.

In the week of August 28 to September 4, Lynnwood saw about 95 total reported crimes, 30 of which included burglary, theft, or prowling. Nearly 1 in 3 crimes the Lynnwood Police Department is called to report included theft or burglary. Overall, crime has decreased this week compared to 104 reported incidents the previous.

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW COVID-19

CASE COUNTS



By KIENAN BRISCOE

This June, It's hard to believe that it's been two years since the World Health Organization identified SARS-CoV-2 as a new type of coronavirus, which would change the world and how we approach public health.

Through vaccination efforts, mandates, new billionaires, and new variants, here is the Lynnwood Times' Year End Review of COVID-19.

OMICRON/DELTA VARIANTS

It is normal for a virus to change, or mutate, as it infects people and this virus has done so. There are several variants that are now spreading, some proving to be more contagious as well as more deadly than the original virus.

Throughout the pandemic, scientists have kept a close eye on variants like:

- Alpha
- Beta
- Gamma
- Delta
- Lambda
- Mu
- Omicron

The Delta variant was first discovered in India in late 2020 before reaching the U.S. where it quickly surged. By mid December the Delta variant made up more than 99 percent of COVID-19 cases, at the time, leading to an overwhelming increase in hospitalizations. The Delta variant was believed to be more than twice as contagious as other variants.

The latest variant Omicron, which is now the predominant variant in the U.S., was first detected in specimens collected on November 11, 2021 in Botswana. Experts in South Africa first reported the Omicron variant to the World Health Organization (WHO) on Nov. 24, 2021. They discovered the variant after COVID-19 infections suddenly began to go up.

The Omicron variant was first detected

in Snohomish County in December when the Washington State Department of Health reported at least one such case of the Omicron variant detected by sequencing of lab results.

LAWSUITS

In response to Washington State's COVID-19 policy requiring proof of vaccination or negative test result to be on the House floor, a handful of Republican state lawmakers filed a lawsuit, November, against Democratic leaders and House Chief Clerk Bernard Dean, in a Thurston County Superior Court. It was filed by Representatives Jim Walsh, Robert Sutherland, Jenny Graham, Rob Chase, Bob McCaslin and Jesse Young, plus citizens from those lawmakers' districts who say they are affected by the restrictions on their representatives.

The legislative session begins January 10.

Despite the lawsuit, Thurston County Superior Court Judge Mary Sue Wilson has declined to halt policies at the Washington State Legislature requiring vaccination proof or negative test results in session.

MANDATES

Governor Inslee announced an emergency order, that went into effect August 23, requiring all people over the age of 5 wear a mask in indoor public settings, including places like restaurants, grocery stores, and malls.

In addition to masks being required in most indoor settings, Governor Inslee announced September 9 that masks would also be required for large outdoor gatherings. This expanded mask order took effect statewide on Monday, September 13, and applied to all outdoor venues with 500 or more attendees. This included festivals, fairs, concerts, and sporting events.

President Biden also released a six-pronged strategy, September 9, that lays out the "Path Out of the Pandemic." This plan includes the following:

- Requiring all employers with 100+ employees to ensure their workers are vaccinated or tested weekly.
- Requiring vaccinations for all federal workers and contractors that do business with the federal government.
- Requiring COVID-19 vaccinations for health care workers at Medicare and Medicaid participating hospitals and other health care settings.
- Calling on large entertainment venues to require proof of vaccination or testing for entry.
- Requiring employers to provide paid time off to get vaccinated.
- Making at-home tests more affordable, sending free test kits to community health centers and food banks, and expanding free testing at participating pharmacies.
- Continuing to require masks on federal property, in airports, and on public transportation.

VAX PASSPORTS

On September 7, King County Executive Dow Constantine announced Public Health – Seattle & King County was working to develop a vaccine verification policy for some non-essential indoor business activities and other venues in a press release. This went into effect October 25 and applies to:

- Outdoor events with 500 people or more – such as professional and collegiate sports and entertainment events
- Indoor entertainment and recreational events or establishments – such as professional and collegiate sports, entertainment, performing arts, museums, theatre, live music, gyms, and conferences/conventions.
- Restaurants and bars (including indoor dining) – this does not apply to outdoor dining, take-out customers, and places that aren't primarily used as a restaurant, such as grocery stores.

Mill Creek Councilman Vincent Cavaleri presented a resolution, September 28, prohibiting mandatory vaccination for the City of Mill Creek employees but the resolution ultimately did not pass.

As of the publication of this article there are currently 205 million Americans fully vaccinated, 62.2 percent of the country, according to Our World in Data.

COVID BILLIONAIRES

From the same pandemic that sent the jobless rate to 20.2% in Snohomish County last year and near record high unemployment nationally causing millions to leave the work force, arose nine new billionaires after shares in companies producing vaccines soared. The nine new billionaires collectively are worth \$19.3 billion, enough to vaccinate approximately 780 million people in low-income countries, according to People's Vaccine Alliance.

The 9 new vaccine billionaires, in order of their net worth are:

- Stéphane Bancel, Moderna's CEO (worth \$4.3 billion)
- Ugur Sahin, CEO and co-founder of BioNTech (worth \$4 billion)
- Timothy Springer, an immunologist and founding investor of Moderna (worth \$2.2 billion)
- Noubar Afeyan, Moderna's Chairman (worth \$1.9 billion)
- Juan Lopez-Belmonte, Chairman of ROVI, a company with a deal to manufacture and package the Moderna vaccine (worth \$1.8 billion)
- Robert Langer, a scientist and founding investor in Moderna (worth \$1.6 billion)
- Zhu Tao co-founder and chief scientific officer at CanSino Biologics (worth \$1.3 billion)
- Qiu Dongxu, co-founder and senior vice president at CanSino Biologics (worth \$1.2 billion)
- Mao Huinhua, also co-founder and senior vice president at CanSino Biologics (worth \$1 billion)



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2021 YEAR IN REVIEW POLITICS

2021 was a year of elections, budget updates, housing action plans, and American Rescue Plan Act funds allocation. Many decisions were voted on, some issues more contentious than others. Continuing the Lynnwood Times 2021 Year End Review series, here are the top news stories in Snohomish County politics throughout last year.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION WINNERS

- Nate Nehring (I) (Snohomish County Council Position 1)
- Jared M. Mead (I) (Snohomish County Council Position 4)
- Sam Low (I) (Snohomish County Council Position 5)

CITY OF ARLINGTON ELECTION WINNERS

- Heather Logan (Arlington City Council Position 1)
- Don Vanney (I) (Arlington City Council Position 2)
- Debora Nelson (I) (Arlington City Council Position 3)
- Jan Schuette (I) (Arlington City Council Position 7)

CITY OF BOTHELL ELECTION WINNERS

- Jeanne Zornes (I) (Bothell City Council Position 1)
- Rosemary McAuliffe (Bothell City Council Position 3)
- Ben Mahnkey (Bothell City Council Position 5)
- Rami Al-Kabra (Bothell City Council Position 7)

CITY OF EDMONDS ELECTION WINNERS

- Kristiana Johnson (I) (Edmonds City Council Position 1)
- Will Chen (Edmonds City Council Position 2)
- Neil Tibbott (Edmonds City Council Position 3)

CITY OF EVERETT ELECTION WINNERS

- Cassie Franklin (I) (Everett Mayor)
- Mary Fosse (Everett City Council Position 1)
- Paula Rhyne (Everett City Council Position 2)
- Don Schwab (Everett City Council Position 3)
- Liz Vogeli (I) (Everett City Council Position 4)
- Ben Zarlingo (Everett City Council Position 5)

CITY OF LAKE STEVENS ELECTION WINNERS

- Kim Daughtry (I) (Lake Stevens City Council Position 1)
- Gary Petershagen (I) (Lake Stevens City Council Position 2)
- Steve Ewing (I) (Lake Stevens City Council Position 3)
- Marcus A. Tageant (I) (Lake Stevens City Council Position 7)

CITY OF LYNNWOOD ELECTION WINNERS

- Christine Frizzell (Lynnwood Mayor)
- Shirley Sutton (Lynnwood City Council Position 1)
- Patrick Decker (Lynnwood City Council Position 2)
- Joshua Binda (Lynnwood City Council Position 3)

CITY OF MARYSVILLE ELECTION WINNERS

- Jeffrey D. Vaughan (I) (Marysville City Council Position 1)
- Mark James (I) (Marysville City Council Position 2)
- Tom King (I) (Marysville City Council Position 3)
- Michael A. Stevens (I) (Marysville City Council Position 4)

CITY OF MILL CREEK ELECTION WINNERS

- John Steckler (I) (Mill Creek City Council Position 1)
- Stephanie Vignal (I) (Mill Creek City Council Position 2)
- Connie Allison (Mill Creek City Council Position 3)
- Brian Holtzclaw (I)
- Melissa Duque

CITY OF MONROE ELECTION WINNERS

- Geoffrey Thomas (I) (Monroe Mayor)
- Kevin Hanford (I) (Monroe City Council Position 1)
- Tami Kinney (Monroe City Council Position 2)
- Kyle Fisher (Monroe City Council Position 3)
- Kirk Scarboro (I)

CITY OF MUKILTEO ELECTION WINNERS

- Joe Marine (Mukilteo Mayor)
- Louis Harris (Mukilteo City Council Position 1)
- Tom Jordal (Mukilteo City Council Position 2)
- Steve Schmalz (Mukilteo City Council Position 3)

CITY OF SNOHOMISH ELECTION WINNERS

- Linda Redmon (Snohomish Mayor)
- Felix Neals (I) (Snohomish City Council Position 3)
- Tom Merrill (I) (Snohomish City Council Position 4)
- David Flynn (Snohomish City Council Position 5)
- Lea Anne Burke (Snohomish City Council Position 6)
- Karen W. Guzak (Snohomish City Council Position 7)

ADDITIONAL BALLOT ITEMS

- City of Lake Stevens Proposition No. 1: Should the possession, sale and discharge of consumer fireworks be made illegal within the city limits of the city of Lake Stevens? (Voted No)
- City of Mukilteo Proposition No. 1: Do you think the city should encourage more high-density housing to be built in Mukilteo? (Voted No)

LYNNWOOD NEW RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR POSITION

On August 17, Mayor Nicola Smith hired Douglas Raiford to serve as the

City's first Race and Social Justice Coordinator. Smith advocated the need for a dedicated staff member to further Lynnwood's commitment to being a safe, welcoming, and equitable community for all.

Raiford, who is originally from Miami, Florida, has a Bachelor's Degree from Barry University in International Advertising and Communications. He has past experience working for the Department of State in Washington, D.C.

Douglas Raiford comes to the City of Lynnwood from Cascadia College where he worked with international students and in the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

MUKILTEO ARPA FUND USES

As part of the American Rescue Plan Act, Mukilteo was awarded \$5,985,212 to offer relief to residents and businesses suffering losses from the COVID-19 outbreak.

On September 26, Mukilteo approved the following ARPA programs:

- \$20,000 for for public engagement services
- \$200,000 of funding to be used to assist businesses or nonprofits with various COVID-related expenses
- \$162,600 of funding to be used to supplement the Hotel/Motel Lodging Tax fund
- \$681,000 of funding to be used to pay outstanding utility bills with Mukilteo Water and Wastewater District, Alderwood Water and Wastewater District, Puget Sound Energy, and Snohomish County PUD.

On October 26, Mukilteo approved the following additional ARPA programs:

- \$450,000 to \$500,000 (depending on software chosen) for Enterprise Resource Planning Software Update
- \$65,000 for police body cams and \$300,000 for a new Public Safety Network Engineer Position
- \$148,924 to go toward audio and visual upgrades to Council Chambers

LAKE STEVENS ARPA FUND USES

The City of Lake Stevens received \$9.466 million in federal funds through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The city council unanimously passed a motion to allow the mayor to disperse the ARPA funding as recommended during their meeting on July 13.

The decision was made to allocate these dollars to fund city staff positions, two custodial positions for the Public Works Department, reclassify and fund an HR technician from part-time to full-time, capitol investments and planning for infrastructure improvements, software upgrades, and provide additional assistance to nonprofit organizations such as the food bank.

LYNNWOOD ARPA FUND USES

Lynnwood was awarded \$10.9 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding of which there has not been any clear plans of allocating. However, at the Lynnwood City Council meeting held on July 19, council discussed ideas and heard recommendations from city staff.

Continued PAGE 12 >>



Douglas Raiford, Lynnwood Race and Social Justice Coordinator. Source: City of Lynnwood.

from page 11 **POLITICS**

MUKILTEO HOUSING ACTION PLAN

The Mukilteo City Council passed its Housing Action Plan (HAP) with a vote of 4-3 during its four-and-a-half hour contentious Business Meeting on June 7.

The adopted HAP passed is a shell of its original 13 strategies to address housing needs in Mukilteo. The three strategy categories presented by newly-appointed Councilman Harris and seconded by Councilwoman Crawford, appears to focus on amending housing and land use policies in Mukilteo's existing Comprehensive Plan.

The three strategy categories adopted were:

- Strategy 1: Review Comprehensive Plan Language;
- Strategy 2: Educate About Programs to Help Residents Stay in Their Homes; and
- Strategy 3: Expand Senior Housing Options.

The decision came following months of public opposition, protests, and even an advisory ballot voting no by Mukilteo residents concerned that implementing the HAP may result in high-density living that would jeopardize their city's "small-town feel."

LYNNWOOD HOUSING ACTION PLAN

On May 24, the Lynnwood City Council unanimously adopted their own Housing Action Plan through Resolution 2021-05.

This plan was created by evaluating the City's ongoing efforts, analyzing Lynnwood's current and future housing needs, and collaborating with the community. It is the result of hundreds of conversations, survey responses, and other methods of community feedback.

STEVE HOBBS SWORN IN AS NEW SECRETARY OF STATE

State Sen. Steve Hobbs (D-Lake Stevens) was sworn in Monday, November 22, as Washington's 16th secretary of state. He replaces Kim Wyman, who resigned mid-term to join the Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

Representative John Lovick (LD-44) has replaced Hobbs' State Senate position. Brandy Donaghy was appointed as State Representative for LD-44 filling the vacancy left by John Lovick.

JOSHUA BINDA ALLEGATIONS OF CAMPAIGN FRAUD, STILL WINS CITY COUNCIL POSITION

Lynnwood City Council candidate and BLM activist Joshua Binda, 21, recorded almost \$4,848.19 in expenditures towards rent, towing fees, concert tickets, jewelry, laptops, airfare, groceries, dental work,

haircuts, and office furniture.

In addition to the thousands in suspicious expenses, another \$4,952.12 was recorded as "Expenses of \$50 or less." This would equate to at least 100 expenses of \$50 or less.

Binda failed to produce the supporting documentation required by Washington state law, during the public inspection of books of account (RCW 42.17A.235.8 and WAC 390-16-043 Section 6) requested by the Lynnwood Times.

In a November 22 email to the PDC which was sent just hours before the 14-day deadline to respond to the second compliant case filed November 8, Binda requested the PDC to provide a "filer assistant" as he is "very new to all of this and could use the help for both cases."

Binda still managed to win the Lynnwood City Council Position 3 Position despite these suspicious expenses.

from page 4 **EDUCATION**

and Edmonds, the EPO levy funds roughly 15 percent of both districts' annual budgets. Lake Stevens will also be voting to replace an additional Technology Levy, which will generate \$10 million over four years.

HOUSING FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

As 2021 ended, Edmonds School District approved a motion to lease property to Housing Hope to develop a 40- to-50-unit affordable housing complex to house homeless students and their families. The housing units would be developed on Scriber Baseball field, located on 58th Avenue West near Cedar Valley Community School in Lynnwood.

Everett School District attempted a similar development in 2020 on an undeveloped ball field in Everett's Port Gardner neighborhood, but the plans were rejected by Everett City Council after Everett residents voiced concern over the location. Though similar concerns have been voiced in Lynnwood, the project is still in progress for 2022.

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