



**News Release • October 5, 2018**  
Washington City/County Management Association

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*For immediate release*

## **WCMA Launches the NW Women’s Leadership Academy To promote more women serving in local government leadership positions**

(Kirkland, WA) – On September 28, 2018, the Washington City/County Management Association (WCMA) kicked-off the NW Women’s Leadership Academy. With approximately one in five women in the top executive role, it is a priority of WCMA to prepare and promote more women into leadership roles in local government. Other objectives for the Academy include:

- Provide opportunities to enhance skills and competencies and build confidence;
- Provide opportunities to expand professional connections and support network; and
- Provide opportunities for women from diverse backgrounds and experience to obtain the core skills necessary to move into local government leadership roles.

“WCMA is committed to seeing more women compete and be placed in top level executive positions,” said Cindy Reents, City Manager of City of Richland, and President of WCMA. “We’re so excited to see an overwhelming response to our first Academy.”

The Academy takes place over 10 months and includes six full days – one full day held every other month, with the following focus areas:

- Leadership and ethics
- Governance structure – legislative bodies and appointed executives
- Communication strategies and nurturing trust
- Strategic planning
- Finance and budgeting
- Labor relations and negotiations
- Life work balance, confidence, and self-awareness
- Interviewing, resume prep, and working with recruiters

The classes are being taught by academics, professional trainers, as well as local government practitioners and are held at various municipal and community college settings around the Puget Sound region, which aids in keeping the registration fee within reach for most attendees. To further remove financial barriers, scholarships are available and several WCMA members have offered their home to visiting participants coming from long distances.

The first cohort – the Class of 2019 – includes 32 women from a diversity of agencies, across the state, and at various levels and disciplines of the public sector. The participants include:

- Mary Heather Ames, City of Pasco
- Joanna Bailey, City of Pullman
- Maili Barber, City of Bonney Lake
- Sarah Bohlen, Sound Transit
- Torie Brazitis, City of Bothell
- Allyson Brekke, City of Port Angeles
- Andreana Campbell, City of Kirkland
- Jenny Cole, City of Burlington
- Ana M. Cortez, City of Yakima
- (Kelly) Tuyet Dang, King County, Department of Natural Resource, Solid Waste Division
- Charisse Deschenes, City of Sequim
- Lluvia Ellison-Morales, King County, Regional Animal Services
- Nora Gierloff, City of Tukwila
- Margo Gillaspy, Skagit County Public Works
- Annaliese Harksen, City of Olympia
- Marcia Harnden, Bellevue Police Department
- Leslie Harris, City of Bonney Lake
- Lynn Hyde, North Bend
- Julie Johnston, City of Covington
- Halley Kimball, City of Everett
- Maia Knox, City of Sammamish
- Stephanie Lucash, King County, Department of Executive Services
- Lorrie McKay, City of Kirkland
- Angela Pashon, City of Pasco
- Lorraine Patterson, King County, Department of Natural Resources & Parks
- Maria Pena, City of Connell
- Stacey Ray, City of Olympia
- Brandy Rettig, King County
- Kristi Rowland, City of Renton
- Elizabeth Soltero, King County
- Andrea Snyder, City of Burien
- Anastasiya Warhol, Town of Yarrow Point

The Class of 2019 will graduate from the Academy in June 2019.

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