

## Clatskanie PUD's Sarah Johnson Receives 2024 Champion of Communications Award

(Sept. 23) Northwest Public Power Association is pleased to announce Sarah Johnson of Clatskanie PUD (Ore.) as the winner of the 2024 Champion of Communications Award. The award (formerly the Lacy Peoples Award) honors an individual who has demonstrated a lifetime commitment to the public power industry, communication, and public involvement. Theresa Phillips, who received the award last year, presented the award Sept. 18 on behalf of NWPPA during the 2024 Northwest Innovations in Communications Conference at The Grove Hotel in Boise, Idaho.

“Sarah has spent the last two decades lifting up those around her, being a cheerleader, a confidant, a sounding board, an educator, and a friend to all who know her,” Phillips said. “We are incredibly fortunate to have her as part of our public power family. She is a true champion in every sense of the word.”

Johnson began her career in public power at West Oregon Electric Cooperative in Vernonia, Oregon, before joining Clatskanie PUD more than 10 years ago. Over the years, she not only helped lead innovative customer programs and community outreach efforts but also demonstrated a deep commitment to employee engagement. Last March, she was promoted from communications and executive coordinator to chief operating officer.

Johnson is actively involved in the public power community. She served on the NIC Planning Committee and chaired the 2018 conference in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. She leads the Northwest Regional Group of utility communicators, curating the programs and speakers for the group's meetings. She is also a regular attendee at NWPPA's annual Women in Public Power Conference. Outside of the industry, Johnson supports various nonprofits as the president of Clatskanie Chamber of Commerce and leader of Keep it Local Columbia County.

“This means the world to me,” Johnson said upon receiving the award. “Public power, and having lifelong friends, and being in this industry is the best thing that I ever did.”



*(L-R) Theresa Phillips presents the 2024 Champion of Communications Award to Sarah Johnson.*

The NIC Planning Committee selects recipients of the Champion of Communications Award based on accomplishments through at least 10 years of marketing and communication experience; at least 20 years of service to the industry; and promotion of public power through efforts such as community service. Current or former employees of NWPPA member utilities are eligible. In addition to Phillips, recent winners of the award include Libby Calnon of Hood River Electric & Internet Co-op (2022), and Lena Wittler of Clark Public Utilities (2021).

**About NWPPA:** NWPPA is regional association representing and serving more than 150 customer-owned, locally controlled utilities in the Western U.S. and Canada. The association also serves over 350 associate members across the U.S. and Canada who are allied with the electric utility industry. For more information, visit [www.nwppa.org](http://www.nwppa.org) or follow @NWPPAssoc on our social channels.

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