



End of year message

December 31, 2011

Ending the Year with Good News

In these tough economic times, I wanted to take a moment to step back and reflect on some recent good news in an effort to ring in the new year in a positive light. I feel it is important, even with the Legislature facing an unprecedented upcoming challenge, to remember we still have a lot going for our state and our community.

Bemis Elementary Wins Distinguished School Award

Bemis Elementary in the Spokane Public Schools District was one of only four schools in Washington State to have been recognized as a Title I, Part A Distinguished School.

The award is given to schools that have exceptional student performance or that have demonstrated that they are closing the achievement gap between student groups. Congratulations to the teachers and students at Bemis!

Washington Wins \$60 Million for Early Learning

Washington State was one of the winners in the national Race to the Top competition for early learning funding. The state, already known for its early learning efforts, will

Contact Information:

Olympia Office:

307 Legislative Building

By Postal Mail:

Senator Lisa Brown
PO Box 40403
Olympia, WA 98504-0403

By Phone:

Olympia Office: (360) 786-7604

Spokane Office: (509) 456-2760

Toll-free legislative hotline:
1-800-562-6000

TTY/TDD Hearing impaired
hotline: 1-800-635-9993

bring in \$60 million for additional programming aimed at our youngest learners.

Washington and eight other states are sharing a total of \$500 million in prize funding through the US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. [To read more click here.](#)

Washington State earns nearly \$17 Million Performance Bonus

Washington has been awarded nearly \$17 million by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) as a bonus for the state's efforts to identify and enroll eligible children in Medicaid coverage. The bonus was announced today in a press release by the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA). This is a real testament to the hard work that advocates for children and legislators have put into making Apple Health for Kids a national model for delivering health care to some of our most needy children in Washington.

The HCA touted in their release that this is the third year in a row that Washington has received a CMS performance bonus. Last year, the bonus totaled \$20,649,662; in 2009, it was \$7,846,180. The amount of the bonus is based on caseload growth.

Helping military families find jobs

During this holiday season it is important to reflect on the sacrifices that not only are women and men in uniform make but also their spouses. I was pleased that one of the bills we passed during special session was aimed at making things a bit easier for spouses of members of the armed forces who have professional expertise to land jobs more quickly and easily.

[Senate Bill 5969](#) speeds up professional licensing for military spouses. It's geared to help the estimated 43,000 spouses of active and reserve military members in

E-mail:

lisa.brown@leg.wa.gov

Web site:

<http://senatedemocrats.wa.gov/senators/brown>

For staff contact information click [here](#)

Senate Page Program

Applications to the Senate Page Program can now be submitted. If you or somebody you know is age 14-16, and interested in being a page, please click [here](#) for more information or click [here](#) to download an application. The completed application can be mailed to: Senator Lisa Brown, PO Box 40403, Olympia, WA 98504.

Washington, many of whom are licensed professionals in their home states. The Department of Defense estimates one third of them work in professions that require a license – such as nursing or hair dressing – but many were licensed in other states before their spouse was transferred to Washington, making finding a job more difficult. The bill expedites professional licensing for military spouses who meet certain criteria. Spouses must: 1) be licensed in the same profession in another state; 2) have a spouse who has been transferred to Washington by the military; and 3) have left a job in another state to accompany the military member. Also, the requirements of the original licensing state and Washington must be substantially similar.

Agencies will be able to issue temporary licenses to qualifying military spouses, allowing them to go to work immediately instead of having to wait until they complete Washington requirements.

Spokane District Dental Society receives \$250K for Dental Clinic at Northeast Community Center

A recent press released announced that the Spokane District Dental Society Foundation (SDDSF) was awarded a \$250,000 grant from the M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust to purchase instruments and equipment for the Inland Dental Expanded Access (IDEA) Clinic, located in the North East Community Center within the Riverstone Family Dental Clinic. There will be a total of 15 treatment chairs as well as a surgical suite for both entities to use and is expected to be operational in 2012.

Considered a truly innovative model for providing care for populations that have been traditionally under served, the IDEA Clinic addresses the growing need for dental care. The IDEA clinic offers a sliding fee scale to those who cannot afford access to existing dental care. It also serves as an outlet for volunteer dentists to donate their time and talents to improve the health, welfare, and lives of the local citizens. The IDEA clinic will serve the surrounding

community, which includes 47.5 percent of Spokane County's uninsured.

Thank You!

As you know there are many more great stories to share, this is just a sampling of some of the good news occurring. I want to close this update and this year by saying it is always an honor and privilege to work for you and our community. My very best wishes to you and your loved ones as we kick off 2012! As always, if you have questions or concerns, you can contact me via email or through my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Click [here](#) for contact information for my Olympia or Spokane office.

