

November 1, 2013

White House to honor Commission energy expert as a veteran “Champion of Change”



SEATTLE—Avi Jacobson, senior sustainable energy coordinator at the Washington State Housing Finance Commission, will be honored as a Champion of Change at the White House on Nov. 5 for his work to advance clean energy.

“Being recognized is incredibly humbling, and at the same time a great opportunity to share how we are growing the green economy in Washington state,” said Jacobson.

The Champions of Change event on Tuesday honors veterans who have taken action to promote clean, renewable energy sources, encourage climate resilience and preparedness, and raise awareness surrounding climate change.

A veteran of the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard, Jacobson was inspired by his experiences in Iraq to focus his career on renewable energy.

“The most disruptive sound on our secure compound was not mortar attacks or fighter jets,” he explained. “It was silence—the sudden quiet of our diesel generator shutting down. It showed me how energy management directly impacted our combat readiness.”

Jacobson joined the Commission in 2011 to help implement the Commission’s new mandate from the state legislature to find ways to support private investment in sustainable energy, energy efficiency and clean technology.

Thanks to his work, the Commission’s [Sustainable Energy Program](#) has grown into a clearinghouse of information and a source of innovative financing models for developers of green homes, energy-efficiency upgrades and clean-energy sources. The Commission’s bond-financing programs that he developed were recognized at the 2013 [Better Buildings](#) Summit as a model of public-private partnerships, and are now being replicated in other states.

Examples include the energy-efficient rebuilding of affordable homes in Seattle, energy improvements to six YMCA of Greater Seattle locations, and wind turbines that are now powering 1,000 homes near Ellensburg.

Jacobson also worked to convince cities and counties statewide to pool \$40 million in Qualified Energy Conservation Bond (QECB) authority, thereby ensuring that this resource would be fully invested and would be accessible even to private developers and rural areas planning clean-energy projects.

Before joining the Commission, Jacobson served as a Special Operations Weather Team leader in the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan College of Engineering, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the Case Western Reserve University School of Law. He lives in Seattle’s View Ridge neighborhood with his wife son, and dog, and is an all-weather bicycle commuter.

To watch the Champions of Change event live: Visit www.whitehouse.gov/live at 10 a.m. EDT, Tuesday, Nov. 5.

White House Champions of Change info: Visit www.whitehouse.gov/champions.

WSHFC Sustainable Energy Program: Visit www.wshfc.org/energy.

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Celebrating its 30th year in 2013, the [Washington State Housing Finance Commission](#) is a publicly accountable, self-supporting team that works with lenders, investors, developers, nonprofit organizations and more to bring private investment dollars to benefit families and achieve public goals throughout Washington. The Commission has created and preserved more than 275,000 affordable homes across the state. while contributing more than \$42.5 billion and 240,000 jobs to the economy.  [@WSHFC](https://twitter.com/WSHFC)  [Facebook.com/WSHFC](https://www.facebook.com/WSHFC)