

Fong sworn in as Small Business Administration regional administrator

SEATTLE — Michael “Mike” Fong, of Seattle, has been sworn in as Region X administrator for the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Fong has oversight of the federal agency for four Pacific Northwest districts located across Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, which are home to more than 1.3 million small businesses, representing over 2.7 million jobs.



Mike Fong

The SBA’s Pacific Northwest region guaranteed over \$2.5 billion in small business loans in fiscal year 2021, in addition to over \$22 billion in ongoing coronavirus pandemic relief funding. The region also awarded nearly \$7.7 billion in federal contracts to small businesses.

“I am extremely honored to serve the Biden-Harris administration, and to work under Administrator Isabella Casillas Guzman’s leadership,” Fong said. “There is no doubt that small businesses have faced unimaginable challenges over these past two or more years, and I am committed to help bring recovery relief and growth tools to the entrepreneurs located across the Pacific Northwest region where I was born and continue to make my home, so they can continue on the path toward being successful.”

Fong most recently worked with Snohomish County as a senior adviser and chief recovery and resilience officer. He was also the former senior deputy mayor of Seattle and managed Mayor Jenny Durkan’s cabinet and executive team.

For more information, go to sba.gov.

Seppa promoted to regional manager for Columbia Bank

TACOMA, Wash. — Columbia Bank has announced the promotion of Heather Seppa to the role of market region manager for the Columbia and Willamette market in Oregon. She has also joined the retail leadership group, which drives strategy and execution for retail initiatives for the bank.

Seppa is a 17-year veteran of Columbia Bank with more than 30 years of leadership experience in the financial services industry. She was formerly a regional manager for the bank’s Oregon Coast and southwest Washington region.

“Heather has done an outstanding job of leading teams to very successful results for many years, delivering for customers and establishing herself as a go-to expert within Columbia’s growing retail operations,” said Dave Hansen, director of retail banking. “She is a strong collaborator and team



Heather Seppa

builder, and we look forward to her expanded influence throughout the Columbia/Willamette region and beyond.”

Seppa was an executive vice president at Bank of Astoria prior to joining Columbia Bank in 2004. After the acquisition of Bank of Astoria, she served as president of Bank of Astoria from 2009 to 2013

when it operated as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Columbia Bank.

Seppa is a member of the Columbia Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees, a board member of the Columbia River Maritime Museum Rolf Klep Trust and a board member of the Riedel Scholarship Endowment Fund. She is a past president of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce.

Headquartered in Tacoma, Washington, Columbia Banking System is the holding company of Columbia Bank, a Washington state-chartered full-service commercial bank with locations in Washington, Oregon, California and Idaho.

In October, Columbia Bank and Umpqua Bank announced that they will merge.

For more information, go to columbiabank.com.

Reynolds joins Haglund Kelley

ASTORIA — Longtime Astoria attorney Heather Reynolds has joined the Haglund Kelley LLP law firm.

Reynolds has been a prominent lawyer in Astoria for more than 40 years, serving as county counsel for Clatsop County for 25 years and representing local businesses and individuals in connection with business transactions, real estate and estate planning.

Reynolds said she is looking forward to the expanded opportunities joining Haglund Kelley will provide her clients. “Haglund Kelley is a highly respected law firm, and I have been impressed with the work of their resident partner, Josh Stellmon,” Reynolds said. “I am delighted to be joining this firm, and excited about the breadth of expertise they have available for serving my clients.”

Haglund Kelley is a Portland-based business and litigation law firm with an office in Astoria for over 15 years. Clients include the Columbia River Bar Pilots, Fishhawk Fisheries, the Port of Ilwaco, Fort George Brewery and Pig ‘N Pancake.

Like Reynolds, the firm believes in the North Coast community and for decades has represented the Columbia River Bar Pilots, multiple area fishermen and various wood products and maritime businesses in the county.

Stellmon has lived in Astoria for more than three years. He serves as president of the board for the Liberty Theatre as well as on the board of directors for Clatsop County Court Appointed Special Advocates and the organization committee for the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association.

Stellmon also provides pro bono services to the Astoria Senior Center.

“We are extremely pleased that Heather Reynolds will be joining our law firm at the beginning of 2022,” Stellmon said. “The synergies between Ms. Reynolds’ practice and ours are strong. Together, we will strengthen our services to North Coast clients in litigation, business, real estate, employment, municipal and estate planning work.”

Mike Haglund, senior partner, has been representing clients in the county for over 40 years, including clients in seafood processing, fishing, logging and general business.

Haglund is the chair of the board for the Columbia River Maritime Museum.

“My legal work in Astoria started with representing the worker-owned Astoria Plywood Co. in 1980,” Haglund said. “Clatsop County is a tremendous community and we have been privileged to be a part of its development over the last several decades.”

For more information, contact Heather Reynolds at 503-325-8449, or Stellmon or Haglund at 503-225-0777.



Heather Reynolds

Schulte to lead TLC’s commercial business development team for the Oregon Coast

SEASIDE — TLC, a Division of Fibre Federal Credit Union has appointed Joe Schulte to the position of market president, commercial business development for the Oregon Coast region.

Schulte will head the new commercial business development team, serving the North Coast from the Seaside financial service center at 2315 Roosevelt Drive.

Schulte has 25 years of experience in the financial industry, beginning his career with the Bank of Astoria.

He co-founded Clatsop Community Bank in 2008 and was most recently CEO prior to its merger with Lewis & Clark Bank.

He holds a bachelor’s degree in finance and accounting from Pacific University and a master’s degree in business from the Oregon Graduate Institute of Science & Technology.

TLC offers Clatsop County businesses another option to fulfill their financial needs, with cost-effective business loan and deposit solutions and flexible, local decision making.

“I am thrilled to be joining such a talented team of financial professionals possessing a common focus of success through service,” Schulte said. “TLC’s combination of a very strong balance sheet, local roots, a wide array of products and services, and a committed focus to assist our business community compelled me to get involved. I look forward to helping our local businesses with their lending needs and future financial success.”

TLC is a division of Longview, Washington, based Fibre Federal Credit Union, which serves over 110,000 members and has 15 financial service centers in Oregon and Washington. TLC financial service centers in Clatsop County include Astoria, Warrenton and Seaside.

For more information, contact Schulte at 503-738-6836 or jschulte@fibrecu.com.

Q: The cold weather and wind has damaged a lot of my perennials and shrubs. Should I cut them back now so they look better?

A: The arctic freeze we’ve had has no doubt blackened normally hardy plants. While they may look really bad, pruning them hard now may be a bit premature. Cut them back lightly so they look better, but save the hard pruning for late Feb. or March. Many plants are showing signs of life with the warm days we’ve had, but don’t get in too big of a hurry to encourage new growth by pruning. We still have some cold months ahead. If you have not mulched, now is a good time to get some on your beds.



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