

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NNDA Names Jim Peckham 2019 Pioneer of the Year**  
*FISH Executive Director Focused on Self-Sufficiency for  
Individuals and Families in Nevada's Sierra Region*

CARSON CITY, NV – July 23, 2019 – Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) today announced that Jim Peckham, Executive Director of Friends in Service Helping (FISH) since 2009, has been named as the 2019 Pioneer of the Year. NNDA's Pioneer of the Year award honors an individual who both personally and professionally supports and has had a significant impact on the economic development and growth of the region.

Under Jim's leadership, FISH (NVFISH.com) has grown to become rural Northern Nevada's largest and most complete social services program. The non-profit organization is focused on helping guide individuals and families in Carson City, Douglas, Lyon, and Storey counties toward self-sufficiency. This includes providing life and soft skills for the region's workforce which are critical to employers.

Jim was instrumental in the construction of Richards Crossing in Carson City. A collaboration between FISH and Nevada Rural Housing Authority (NVRURAL.org), Richards Crossing is a 38-unit affordable housing development for the homeless and extremely low-income individuals which opened in Spring 2017. In addition to providing shelter, the facility provides on-site services and related support including referrals to local service organizations.

FISH summarizes the services it provides using the organization's FISH acronym: Food, Instruction, Shelter, and Healthcare. It does not rely on the government for funding, and Jim is proud that 99% of the organization's multimillion-dollar budget is funded through the local community via donations and grants, saving millions of dollars in taxes for the communities it serves. In 2018, 93 cents out of every dollar donated to FISH, went back to services.

"This is a great honor, recognizing the staff and volunteers of FISH, as we creatively provide a Hand-up, not a Hand-out to those in need. In the last 12 months, FISH has helped over 7,000 individuals with our "Hand-up" programs. We rely on God, staff, board members, volunteers, and partner organizations for ideas and solutions to systemic challenges in our community. Personally, I work hard and pray hard, and everything eventually comes together," said Jim Peckham.

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Robert “Rob” Hooper, NNDA President and CEO, commented, “We are excited to recognize Jim’s many efforts which support the economic ecosystem of Nevada’s Sierra Region.” He continued, “NNDA and FISH share a common goal: lifting up families now and to create a better future for our children and our children’s children.”

Carson City Mayor Robert Crowell, NNDA’s 1st Pioneer of the Year award winner, said, “During my service as Mayor of our community, I have witnessed first-hand the many good things that Jim and the FISH organization does and has done every day to improve the quality of life for many in Carson City. Frankly, I hate to think what we would have done to survive the Great Recession without the many services FISH provides.” Crowell continued, “Through Jim’s leadership, FISH has become not just an important part but an essential part of our community. In my book, Jim deserves not only the recognition that this award represents but our collective gratitude.”

Tara Addeo, Associate Publisher of Douglas County’s Record-Courier added, “Since Jim and FISH arrived in the Carson Valley years ago, they have assisted the community in so many ways and well beyond their thrift store services. FISH provides for those in need in the Carson Valley at their Ranchos Family Services Center located in Gardnerville. FISH assists veterans, children, seniors, disabled and young families with shelter, medical needs, job referrals and much more. To say Jim and his devoted FISH team supports and nourishes those in need is an understatement. I am honored to have worked with Jim on several projects bringing more awareness of these services. Jim’s award of Pioneer of the Year comes as no surprise to those who know him. Job well done Jim and Congratulations, you deserve this and so much more!”

“This year’s NNDA’s Pioneer of the Year award going to Jim Peckham is a great choice. Jim’s broad vision for helping those in need has been instrumental in helping CenterPoint Christian Fellowship lend a helping hand to those less fortunate in our community of Lyon County. CenterPoint C.F. has maintained a monthly food distribution program from our church campus for a little over 6 years. The success of this program is primarily due to the partnership we have with Jim and the FISH organization,” according to Senior Pastor Tony Zehring.

The first 25 years of Jim’s career were spent in corporate America using his organizational development and “turn-around” skills at organizations including Motorola and Harley-Davidson Financial Services. He transitioned to a consulting career which included teaching at a local university and working with various organizations in Northern Nevada.

During his consulting years, Jim took a part-time position as Executive Director of the Children’s Museum of Northern Nevada. The museum provided him with experience rebuilding nonprofits to become self-sustaining, valued, and supported by the local community. Jim has the ability to identify seemingly unrelated issues impacting the

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nation, our state, and our local community. He then creates or encourages local private/public coalitions to develop one tailored local solution that impacts all three issues. “The best solution for Douglas County is not going to be the best solution for Lyon or Carson City. A lot of the concepts are interchangeable, but the best solutions for individuals and communities need to be specific to them,” said Peckham. “Often times, these solutions inspire projects initiated outside of our region.”

He has a Master’s Degree from Michigan State University, and is a member of the local Pastor’s Association and Rotary Club. His focus is on developing collaborative relationships with individuals and organizations in the region to help enhance communities. Jim’s wife Suzanne indicates, “Sometimes it seems like he works 24/7, but I know he enjoys what he does and it doesn’t seem like work to him.”

Jim will be honored during the 5th Annual NNDA Pioneer Awards & Gala. NNDA’s annual fundraiser recognizes businesses and individual professionals whose outstanding contributions to economic development have supported the growth of Nevada’s Sierra Region. This year’s gala is being held on Thursday, November 7, 2019 from 5:30–9:30 PM at the Atlantis Casino in Reno ([PioneerAwards.com](http://PioneerAwards.com)).

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**About NNDA:** Northern Nevada Development Authority ([NNDA.org](http://NNDA.org)) is a Nevada domestic nonprofit corporation, and the state-designated Regional Development Authority for the Sierra Region of Nevada: Carson City (state capital), Douglas County, Lyon County, Mineral County, and Storey County. The region is Nevada’s third largest metropolitan area, includes south Lake Tahoe, and encompasses a diverse set of industry sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, mining, health care, aerospace, logistics, tourism, and many others. Since 2010, NNDA has assisted more than 100 companies with relocation and expansion, and its economic development efforts have resulted in over \$1.4 billion total economic impact for the region.