



Diahann Howard, PPM[®], PPX[®]

Executive Director of the Port of Benton

Diahann Howard was named Port of Benton's executive director in December 2019.

Howard previously served as the Port of Benton's director of economic development and governmental affairs. Before joining the Port in 2006, she was the economic development manager for the City of Richland.

Howard earned a Professional Port Manager (PPM[®]) certification in 2019 and was named a Port Professional Executive (PPX[®]) by the American Association of Ports in 2023.

During her 18 years at Port of Benton, Howard's efforts have resulted in over \$30.9 million in grant and legislative funding, including \$5 million to support the Ste. Michelle Wine Estates WSU Wine Science Center and \$7.1 million for Port rail line improvements. Additionally, under her leadership, the Port administers the VERTical Innovation Cluster. VERTical is working with industry to solve supply chain, workforce and other challenges to accelerate the deployment of next-generation nuclear energy.

Howard currently serves on the Washington State Community Aviation Revitalization Board, Eastern Washington University President Advisory Board, Foundation for Seaport of the Americas and others. In 2018, she was appointed to the U.S. Department of Energy's Environmental Management Advisory Board to provide expert advice on intergovernmental and stakeholder engagement, contracting, management, large project planning and risk assessment. Previously, she served as the Richland Rotary president from 2017 to 2018 and was named Rotarian of the Year in 2012.

Howard is a native of Tri-Cities, Washington, and holds a Bachelor of Science in International Affairs from Eastern Washington University. She is the first female to hold the Port of Benton executive director position and the first executive director with Latina heritage among the 75 port districts within Washington state.