

Meet Doña Keating, WSTPA's Mover and Shaker

The quaint Seattle suburb of Poulsbo, Washington, nestled at the end of a fjord on the Olympic Peninsula's Liberty Bay, seems like an unusually pastoral setting in which to find a high technology Summit taking place. That the conference would bring together no fewer than three U.S. congressmen along with key operatives and leaders from Seattle's technology, governmental and civic sectors is even more remarkable. Who arranged the wake-up call for this slumbering West Sound community? Meet **Doña Keating**, the forward-thinking president of the **West Sound Technology Professionals Association** whose sound ideas are making a difference.

Now in her second term guiding the non-profit group which draws members from seven western Washington counties, Doña enjoys the sound thinking of high technology workstyle and low anxiety lifestyle.

"For **WSTPA**, the water is sometimes viewed as an impediment, and the pie – small," Doña comments. "Since the West Sound is still considered a bedroom community to Seattle and Bellevue markets, we have evangelized the Internet and technology as a motivator to change the way we interact and do business – and incorporate initiatives such as clustering and telework to service one another – and the world."

Doña arrived in the Northwest upon relocating her company, **Professional Options**, from the Chicago area to the Kitsap Peninsula in December of 1996. The firm operates as a corporate troubleshooter, and Doña as someone who can walk into a company or entity and assess the points where improvement and strategic change could lead to greater efficiency and operations. Her company also provides conferences and seminars, including one- and three-day Strategic Consultancy missions. Some representative clients include Liz Claiborne, Inc., AT&T, the National Science Foundation, United Airlines, **Kitsap Public Utilities District #1**, the United Nations Environmental Programme, **the City of Poulsbo**, and the **Kitsap (County) Regional Economic Development Council (KREDC)**.

"My foray into technology could almost be classified as a fortuitous progression," said Keating who studied at both **Northwestern** and **Harvard**. "I worked in broadcasting and public affairs while pursuing my legal education – yet still felt restless. I became involved in sales at **MCI** and was immediately promoted into management. Before I could catch my breath, a large client offered a deal I couldn't refuse, and I became the network operations analyst for the data infrastructure which handled all the worldwide traffic for florists – such as **Teleflora** and **FTD**. From there, it became a matter of appreciating the increasingly ubiquitous value of technology as a functional tool. Although I eventually left that position and became deeply enmeshed in the legal arena, the benefits of technology – and then the Internet – were always the contextual point of reference for getting the job done. Eventually I retired from the legal field, opened my consulting firm, and moved to the Seattle area."

The **WSTPA** mission is to encourage and promote the professional development of its members while vigorously pursuing the promotion of the Technology industry in the West Sound. It is setting out to achieve those goals through the creation of an environment favorable to the development and implementation of efficient and effective technology and service; and to interact with and educate the government and private sector in the areas of technology.

The challenges are formidable. “This region struggles at times with its dependency upon the military, Boeing, even Microsoft and the dotcom explosion,” mentions Doña. Also, there seems to be a conflict between those who desire a competitive wage, yet want to behave in a more casual manner. When competing with first and second tier cities such as New York, Chicago, LA, D.C., even Atlanta, efficient and professional execution is a factor. The challenge, as I see it, is marrying quality of life with globally competitive results,” she said.

With Doña at the helm, the prospects look more promising for this emerging association than ever before. [24x7]



Doña Keating is guiding the **West Sound Technology Professionals Association (WSTPA)** into a new era of growth and possibility.