

Portland Business Journal - November 30, 2009
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PORTLAND BUSINESS JOURNAL

Friday, November 27, 2009

Marsha Spellman

Portland Business Journal

Resume

Name: Marsha Spellman.

Title: President and principal.

Organization: Converge Communications Inc.

Description of organization: Telecommunications management consulting company, specializing in developing broadband networks, public safety radio networks, wireless and plain old telephone services for cities and municipalities, Indian tribes and school district. Converge is a certified women's business enterprise.

Professional background: Strategic planning and regulatory services and marketing for the telecommunications industry including the Oregon Cable TV Association and Cathey Hutton and Associates. Freelance writer for CableWorld and Multichannel News. Served as the director for the Lewis and Clark bicentennial for Portland and cultural arts director for the Mittleman Jewish Community Center.

Education: Law degree from Concord Law School (2009), master's degree in communications from the University of Portland (1985) and a bachelor's degree in history from Boston University (1973).

Residence: Vista Hills in Southwest Portland.

Business Philosophy

Essential business philosophy: Work hard and do a good job for your clients. This comes from my dad who passed away this year. He was a working class guy from the Bronx, had his own business and worked hard to be successful.

Best way to keep competitive: Know your business.

Guiding principle: Deliver what you promise.

Yardstick of success: Has the work made a difference for the client?

Goal yet to be achieved: I always thought that I should have gone to law school. In fact I started applying in my late 20s, but life, children, work, all got in the way. This year, I graduated from law school. It feels great. Now everything else, including passing the bar, is just icing on the cake.

Judgment Calls

Best business decision: Starting Converge with my husband and business partner, Adam Haas.

Worst business decision: Not buying a rural telephone company.

Toughest business decision: Moving back to Portland from England.

Biggest missed opportunity: I was offered a job with the BBC in London when we lived there. However, my children were young, and the job would have required too much travel.

Mentors: Mike Dewey, director of the Oregon Cable Telecommunications Association, and my dad.

Word that describes you: East Coast.

True Confessions

Like best about the job: The flexibility and the variety of projects.

Like least about the job: Working from home means that the work is always there, I can never get away from it all.

Pet peeves: I hate when people don't say what they think to your face, but will do so behind your back.

Most important lesson learned: We work a lot with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and have since been involved with many tribal organizations throughout the country. I have learned a lot about tribal cultures and how to work within these sovereign nations.



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Person most interested in meeting: I met Golda Meir when I was about 20. I would like to meet her again. I would ask her why she was so effective.

Most respected competitor: Turtle Island Communications.

Greatest passions: Music, theater, art, dance and New York City, my mother's influence on me.

First choice for a new career: Tap dancer.

Predilections:

Favorite quote: "Create your own reality."

Most influential book: Exodus.

Favorite Web site: FCC.gov.

Favorite cause: Women's issues and Democratic politics.

Favorite movie: "When Harry Met Sally."

Favorite musicians: Laura Nyro and Phil Ochs.

Most treasured possession: My family, including the entire clan, aunts, uncles, cousins.

Favorite restaurant: I was in Israel last summer and I went to Abu Gosh, a little village outside of Jerusalem, and had the most unbelievable hummus ever.

Favorite vacation spot: Europe, anywhere, although somewhere sunny is preferable. I love Spain, Italy and France.

Favorite way to spend free time: What's that?

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