

Preservation Act

FRANK STAGEN: CO-FOUNDER, AND **KEVIN DANIELS:** PRESIDENT, NITZE-STAGEN

>> BY **PETER STEINBRUECK**, SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL MEMBER AND ARCHITECT

[history] When a wrecking ball seemed the likely end of the landmark First United Methodist Church in downtown Seattle, Kevin Daniels and Frank Stagen of the real estate investment firm Nitze-Stagen (nitze-stagen.com) came up with a creative 11th-hour solution. How did they do it, where others had failed for decades? "Listening," says Daniels modestly. "If you listen carefully, rather than fanatically pushing your agenda on others, you can find a way to bring all sides together toward a solution." Daniels, 50, put his listening and negotiating skills to work while driving last-ditch meetings with a laundry list of interested parties, from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to preservation-minded politicians such as King County Councilmember Dow Constantine, King County Executive Ron Sims and Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis to church members, who had voted as late as 2006 to accept a proposal by Martin Selig to raise a skyscraper on the site. After 21 years of battling between church

and state over the building's future, including an era-ending state Supreme Court decision in 1996 that upheld the church's right to profit from its landmark-designated building, Daniels struck a deal to suit all sides. Now, congregants are assured of profits from land sales to aid their mission, the 1910 Beaux Arts-style sanctuary—one of the city's oldest churches—is insured against becoming an architectural casualty and Nitze-Stagen gets to mix preservation with progress by building a new office tower alongside the existing church. It's another positive preservation act from the bicoastal firm (its other offices are in New York) co-founded by Frank Stagen in 1970, which made its local rep with another Seattle save: the old Sears building in the SoDo area, now the world-famous headquarters of Starbucks.

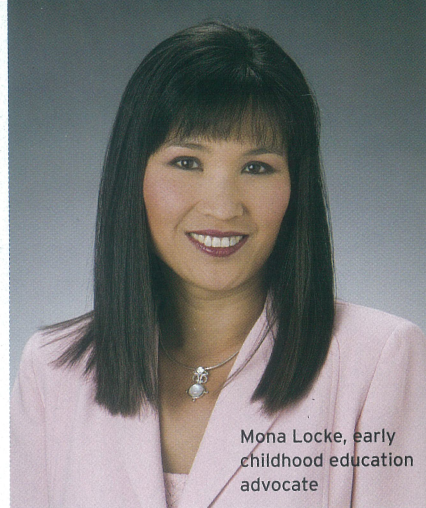
BIGGEST INFLUENCE: Kevin Daniels: "There have been many at various points in my life, but the most important persons throughout my life were my parents, who engrained [in me] the belief that you can accomplish anything if you put enough effort into it and believe in yourself."

TEACH THE CHILDREN

MONA LOCKE: BOARD MEMBER, THRIVE BY FIVE, AND CO-FOUNDER, FOUNDATION FOR EARLY LEARNING

[education] When Mona Locke helped create the Foundation for Early Learning (FEL) seven years ago, the former Washington state first lady and TV newscaster was at the leading edge of a hot-button issue. Two years earlier, her husband—then Governor Gary Locke—appointed her (and Melinda Gates) co-chair of the Governor's Commission on Early Learning. But while crisscrossing the state over the next two years, speaking to parents, teachers and caregivers about gaps in early learning, she found the subject was all but taboo. "While many parents were seeking help and information, many others resented the commission, believing we were trying to interfere with

their home lives and tell them how to parent.... In fact, our work in early learning drew more protesters than any single issue that Gary, as governor, ever tackled," says the 42-year-old mother of three (Emily, 10; Dylan, 7; and Madeline, 3) who recently became the interim executive director of the Puget Sound Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation. With recent studies indicating that as many as half of the state's kindergartners are ill prepared for school, it's clear Locke—and others in the state who have promoted the importance of early childhood education—was on the right track. The chilly reception she initially received didn't stop her from giving voice to her passion, both as chair of FEL (she recently stepped down from that post but is still a board member) and as a board member of Thrive by Five, the Washington Early Learning Fund, a statewide public/private nonprofit dedicated to making sure that children start school ready to succeed. Locke, meanwhile, says she's thrilled about the progress being made in early childhood education here: "I recently spoke



Mona Locke, early childhood education advocate

to a Harvard expert about this topic, and he told me 'all eyes are on Washington state.' There could be no better compliment." *Elizabeth M. Economou*

BIGGEST INFLUENCE: "When you live with someone who is dedicated to public service, the need to make a difference and give back to the community...really becomes a part of you," she says, speaking of her husband, Gary Locke.