

■ **Résumé: Chryssa Zizos**

At 30, she's a company founder and president, a college instructor and a former editor who was sent to Seoul in 1991 to help the two Koreas join the United Nations.



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Surmounting one challenge after another

Chryssa Zizos has welcomed challenges all her life — from her days in college on a field hockey scholarship to her congressional appointment in Seoul during UN talks between the two Koreas, to her present job as founder and president of LiveWire Media LLC in Alexandria, Va.

Former Rep. Louis Stokes hired Zizos as a young congressional page, and later, when she was a college journalism major, he recognized her talent with words and helped her win the Seoul assignment that was part of an elaborate process to enable the two Koreas to join the United Nations.

"The UN had asked North Korea and South Korea to enter under one seat. For obvious reasons, they didn't want to," she said of her four-month assignment to Seoul in 1991. A team of U.S. editors went to South Korea to work with Korean translators editing both nations' diplomatic materials and speeches into standard English, facilitating the two nations' entry into the world body.

After college, in 1995, Zizos completed a master's program in public communications at American University in one year and a summer. Her MA emphasis on crisis management came in handy while she juggled classwork and another editing job.

"While in graduate school, I became the editor of *The Computing Times*, which doesn't exist anymore," she said. "It was one of the only computer, high tech-related magazines in the area." She took the job to help pay her tuition.

"That's where I got my first taste of technology, and really fell in love with it," Zizos said. "I went on to work at Ketchum and later Ogilvy [public relations firms] and always had an interest in technology."

At Ketchum, she "got the bug to own my own business, but I was too young and inexperienced," she said. At Ogilvy, she

worked on the MCI account, adding to her growing store of tech expertise.

She credits her nearly five years at Ketchum and Ogilvy with the inspiration to strike out on her own. "I understood there were a lot of inefficiencies that were occurring because we were such big companies. And I started flirting with the idea of starting my own company," she said.

Zizos left her last job, with Kershner & Company, in December 1998, to found LiveWire in January 1999, with about \$40,000 of her own money. She describes it as a boutique PR agency dedicated to the technology community. "We don't try to be everything to everybody," she said.

And Zizos has been successful. Her client list has included such software companies as PeopleSoft and InfoShark, and she went from a few hundred thousand dollars in billing the first year to \$2 million in the second.

"Even though we grew quickly," she added, "it was a controlled growth strategy. As a matter of fact, this July we had one of our best months ever."

Not content merely to work days as an executive, Zizos has just begun a new challenge — teaching a class in "Workforce Effectiveness" at George Mason University. And when she has time for fun, she heads to the beach in North Carolina.

— David Hubler

Chryssa Zizos

Age: 30

Birthplace: Cleveland, Ohio

Education: BA, Eastern Kentucky University; MA, American University

Residence: Alexandria, Va.

Occupation: Founder and president LiveWire Media Relations LLC.

Favorite Web site: www.abcnews.com

Favorite vacation site: Sunset Beach, N.C.

Last book read: "Workplace Diversity, Issues and Perspectives" by Alfreda Daly, editor

THE REGION'S

TECHNOLOGY

NEWSWEEKLY

www.potomactechjournal.com

April 2, 2001

Volume 2, Issue 14
