

A forum of businesswomen from Seattle and the Baltic States focused on cultivating partnerships to support business leaders and increase economic equity for a socially responsible, sustainable future beyond borders.

October 2004

"The worldwide advancement of women's issues is not only in keeping with the deeply held values of the American people; it is strongly in our national interest as well. In today's world, any American Secretary of State, male or female, must pay attention to the issues affecting the rights and well being of women—over half the world's population. Women's issues affect not only women; they have profound implications for all humankind. Women's issues are human rights issues... We, as a world community, can not even begin to tackle the array of problems and challenges confronting us without full and equal participation of women in all aspects of life." U.S. Secretary of State Colin L Powell

Project Contact Information

This program is hosted by Women's Business Exchange, Seattle WA and (Young) Business and Professional Women Association, Tallinn, Baltic States (Estonia).

Christina Bruning	WBE President	christinabruning@earthlink.net	206 915 4391
Katrin Sulg	YBPW Representative	Katrin@krimelte.ee	372 60 59 372

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a cross cultural exchange among the business leader community from Seattle and the Baltic States to build partnerships for learning among the participants and enhance relationships with alumni of the "WOMEN – Decision Makers and Influence Makers" conference in Estonia which was attended by the UW Center for Women & Democracy Sweden and the Baltics 2003 Delegation and BPW Estonia members.

Across Cultures is the outcome of a project management mentorship. Christina Bruning, president of WBE and Katrin Sulg, representative of YBPW lead the program. Christina and Katrin both have International Business degrees and share a passion for leadership and project management.

Christina is one of the 21 Leaders of the 21st Century, recognized by Women's eNews for stretching her reach across cultures. Most recently, Christina served as the Manager, Project Management for the [US Library Program](#) of the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#). The Foundation's US Library Program was a five-year, \$250 million investment in public libraries throughout the United States, providing approximately 47,000 computers in 11,000 buildings, training, Internet connections, and support to increase access to digital information and software tools for underserved populations. Christina led the coordination of activities to achieve the program objectives.

Women's Business Exchange (WBE) is celebrating 25 years empowering women leaders. WBE serves the Seattle area community as the largest regularly meeting leadership and networking organization. Both

WBE (www.wbex.org) and BPW are independent non-profit organizations of women entrepreneurs, managers and professional women and have a comparable size membership base of 225 members. The organizations have shared objectives and BPW goals for 2004 include: mentoring, leadership, networking, communication, and self-development.

Across Cultures is a 2-week program focusing on:

- **Human Rights**—Seminar focusing on trafficking of women, HIV, and reproductive health.
- **Access to Information**—The importance of increasing access to media, communications, technology and the Internet.
- **Economic Equity**—Leadership training, business mentoring, sharing knowledge in case study seminars, site visits to organizations with environmental and sustainable practices.
- **Cultural Experience**—Experiencing “each others world” will increase mutual understanding and result in beneficial working relationships.

This program will introduce participants to various training, philosophies, trends, and practices that enhance the leadership potential of women. The connections are the beginning of long lasting alliances that will unite the world.

Goals

- To raise awareness of human rights.
- To support the development of women-owned small businesses, promoting efficiency, productivity and sustainability in a growing economy.
- To develop skills and knowledge base of businesswomen, enabling better management of their businesses.
- To disseminate acquired knowledge to the business community.
- To promote partnerships between women professionals.

A second project is proposed to bring a delegation of US women to Estonia in 2005 as a continuation of this business leader exchange.

Across Cultures Leadership

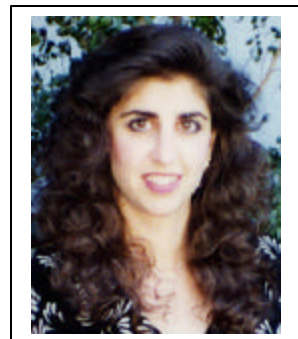


Katrin Sulg has been a member of YBPW since 2000 and representative since 2003. She also serves as a board member for the BPW Estonia Tallinn Club since 2002. Additionally, in May 2003 she proudly participated in the “WOMEN – Decision Makers and Influence Makers” conference in Estonia which was attended by the UW Center for Women & Democracy Sweden and the Baltics Delegation. Ms. Sulg is currently the Product Manager at Krimelte (www.krimelte.ee), a producer of joint sealants in business since 1994. Krimelte customers include wholesale and retail dealers of construction materials, producers of doors and windows, and construction companies. Katrin enjoys long-distance running as well as singing, playing guitar, and traveling. Katrin is excited to promote and participate in the 2004 cultural and business exchange between Estonia and the U.S. Her business interests include Project and Product Management, Product Development, and Marketing. Contact: katrin@krimelte.ee

CHRISTINA BRUNING

President, Women's Business Exchange

christinabruning@earthlink.net



Christina is one of the 21 Leaders for the 21st Century, recognized by Women's eNews for stretching her reach across cultures. With more than 17 years of leadership in operations, IT, and project management, Christina is a dynamic business and civic leader. She is active in the community as the president and chair of the board of directors for Women's Business Exchange (www.wbex.org), and a member of the leadership council for the for the NW Girls Coalition and The Synergy of Women.

Christina is also a member of the UW Center for Women & Democracy Global Networking Committee and participated in the 2003 Women's Mission to Sweden and the Baltic States and the 2004 mission to South Africa. As a follow up, she is leading "Across Cultures," a business and cultural exchange. This program will host a delegation of businesswomen from the Baltic States in Seattle with a focus on human rights, access to information, and economic equity. Christina is a professional host for the World Affairs Council supporting State Department Visitor Programs.

Ms. Bruning worked for Nordstrom and Weyerhaeuser in an IT leadership capacity and as the Manager of Project Management for the [US Library Program](#) of the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#). The Foundation's US Library Program was a five-year, \$250 million investment in public libraries throughout the United States, providing approximately 47,000 computers in 11,000 buildings, 62,000 training opportunities, internet connections, and support to increase access to digital information and software tools for underserved populations. Christina led the coordination of activities to achieve the program objectives.

She enjoys traveling, exploring the outdoors, hiking, and cycling.

Women's Business Exchange, Seattle, USA



Celebrating 25 years of empowering women leaders and encouraging networking locally, nationally, and globally. Women's Business Exchange (WBE) was founded in 1979. WBE encourages business and personal growth through networking, professional education, leadership training, mentoring and exposure to community issues, business trends and vital business concerns. Participants learn to network with heart, lead others with clarity and intention, and apply practical business skills in a warm and supportive environment. For more information visit www.wbex.org, or call 206.382.1234.