

PUGET SOUND Business Journal

Business Leaders Get It.

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ROGER **NYHUS**

**PRESIDENT
AND CEO**

**Nyhus
Communications
LLC**

This 8-foot-tall totem pole stands at the end of a long hallway outside Roger's office. The artist who made it, Steve Jensen, calls on Scandinavian themes. Roger says it's "inspiring and transcends the stress of daily life."



Word that best describes you
INTENTIONAL

Cellular phone pioneer Craig McCaw. South African civil rights activist Nelson Mandela. Keiko the killer whale. They all have something in common.

Each has been represented by Roger Nyhus, 38, CEO of Seattle-based Nyhus Communications. Nyhus handles public relations and public affairs for clients ranging from then-Gov. Gary Locke to then-Mayor Paul Schell of Seattle to the group of local investors backing the new Four Seasons hotel and condominium project.

"The common thread is our passion for their work," says Nyhus. "We don't take clients we don't believe in strongly. We are passionate about their work or enjoy them as people ... or animals."

Nyhus says managing media coverage of Keiko's move from captivity to freedom off the coast of Iceland in 1998 was a highlight of his career. Keiko, who in 1993 appeared in the film "Free Willy" about returning a killer whale to the wild, drew worldwide media coverage after the whale was found

in ill health in an amusement park in Mexico. Nyhus wrangled some 750 journalists covering Keiko's return to his native waters off Iceland.

"It was a very bold experiment," says Nyhus, who accompanied the killer whale in the UPS plane that transported them to Iceland.

The Westport native moves easily among his high-profile clients.

"My mom instilled in me the confidence to interact with anyone at any level," says Nyhus. "Even though I grew up in a small fishing town, my mom was very cosmopolitan and we spent a lot of time in Seattle and traveled extensively."

He credits his grandfather, who read three newspapers a day, with getting him interested in politics and the news business. Nyhus worked as a reporter for The Associated Press for several years after graduating from college.

"I'm an optimistic person and I think that's what drives me," he says. "It's easy to

HOMETOWN:

Westport
BOOK ON YOUR NIGHTSTAND:

"Marley & Me" by John Grogan

FAVORITE MOVIE:
The original "Manchurian Candidate"

MOST EMBARRASSING

CD YOU OWN: "Favorite TV Theme Songs"

GUILTY PLEASURE: Zen Boy Chocolates

PROFESSION OTHER THAN YOUR OWN

YOU'D LIKE TO TRY: White House press secretary

SUPERPOWER WANTED: Ability to read minds

IF YOUR LIFE WERE A MOVIE, IT WOULD BE CALLED: "From Fishing Derby to Four Seasons"

WHO WOULD PLAY YOU: Matthew Broderick

FAVORITE VACATION SPOT: Canyon Ranch in Lenox, Mass.

SINGLE, NEVER MARRIED



get cynical in politics and as a former journalist." But he adds, "I believe each of us has a capacity to make a huge difference in the world."

- JEANNE LANG JONES