

## Katherine Padilla Is Not Afraid to Get Technical

### MEMBER PROFILE



*Katherine Padilla (Katherine Padilla & Associates), Photo © John Livzey, 2014*

Many people excel at communications. Many also possess great technical depth. Few combine the two to great effect. Katherine Padilla and her team at [Katherine Padilla & Associates](#) (KPA) do exactly that to help public sector agencies engage the communities they serve.

“We’re a small, woman-owned business (WBE, DBE, SBE, MBE) that provides community outreach. What makes us unique is that we have deep technical backgrounds as well as extensive training in communications and marketing,” explains Padilla. “We’re different than most PR and lobbying firms because of our unique ability to understand the technical and translate it into consumable language for communities.”

Founded in 1994, KPA is a full-service strategic communications firm. Boasting an impressive roster of clients, collaborators, and successful projects, Padilla and her team pride themselves on providing effective, sensitive, specific communications engagements. A recently completed engagement provides perfect illustration.

“We recently completed our last workshop on the Metro Gold Line Eastside Stations Access Project. We were part of a technical team led by AECOM where we provided community outreach. The project sought to make biking and walking to and from Gold Line stations more enjoyable and safer, to connect the stations more effectively to neighborhoods so people would be more inclined to use the Gold Line.



“So we defined all of the key reasons that would make people really *want* to walk and bike in the area, including an array of landscaping improvements, signage, greater visibility, and access for key landmarks. And the community was very engaged when it was time to provide input. When we presented the final design in a public open house, we heard from many people who thought it was an improvement. They felt it would help unite the community, as it would provide opportunity for families to walk together, an integral part of cultural life, particularly for families of Latin American descent.

“We also established a community advisory committee to create a feedback loop. And we combined some of the planning workshops with other community events so people who wouldn’t normally participate in a planning workshop did, and they brought the entire family. Overall, it was a fantastic and effective collaboration.”

In addition to being a veteran communications and industry expert with a quarter century of experience, Padilla boasts many additional talents including being a trained mediator and certified Charrette manager and planner. She holds a Bachelor of Science and Master of Business Administration from California State University, Los Angeles and a degree in interior design and space planning. And she is no stranger to WTS-LA.

A longtime WTS-LA member and WTS-LA Bronze Sponsor, Padilla first learned of the chapter from a very informed source.

“I heard about WTS because I had friends on the board. But when I got to know WTS, that’s when I really discovered its value. I went to events and saw that it showcased women’s talents. I also saw that big engineering companies and corporations that supported women also supported the chapter. WTS provides great opportunities for small businesses. It was a good fit for both my philosophy and my needs in terms of business development.”

Many people excel at communications. Many also possess great technical depth. Katherine Padilla and her team at Katherine Padilla & Associates combine both to help public sector agencies effectively engage the communities they serve.