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## Accidentally following in father's footsteps not such a bad thing

Kristen Scott: Principal and partner, Weber + Thompson Architects

Puget Sound Business Journal (Seattle) - by [Rob Smith](#)

Growing up, Kristen Scott knew what she definitely did not want to be: an architect.

Funny how things work out.

The 39-year-old Scott is not only a full-fledged architect, but one of three principals in the firm Weber + Thompson Architects.

"My father is an architect, but I didn't want to compete so directly with the idea I have of my father and what he does," recalls Scott, a Seattle native.

So she decided to become a marine biologist - until she struggled in a required chemistry class and quickly changed her plans.

She wound up majoring in psychology and became obsessed with how environment influences behavior. She then did what had previously been unthinkable - earned a Master of Architecture degree from the University of Washington and set out to follow in her father's footsteps.

Scott says her background in psychology has strengthened her skills in analytical problem-solving and information-gathering - two areas critical to an architect's success.

Scott joined Weber + Thompson out of college. She became an associate in 1993 and a full partner three years later. The company has grown to 40 employees - Scott was the fourth - and specializes in commercial office, residential, hospitality and urban mixed-use projects.

Though the architecture profession is overwhelmingly male-dominated - only about 10 percent of licensed architects in Washington state are women - Scott believes her gender helps her develop a rapport with clients, particularly when designing a single-family home.

"Women tend to be more verbal and empathize better. It's important to see both the husband's and wife's outlook on things," she says. "I think I've actually gotten the commissions on several single-family projects because I've connected well."

That connection is often enhanced by a pin she made six years ago. In the middle of it is a giant

M - which stands for her daughter's name, motherhood and her maiden name, Maher.

**Married with two children**

Book on your nightstand: "Gravity of Sunlight" by Rosa Shand and "House as Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home" by Clare Cooper Marcus

Last movie you saw: Last grown-up movie, "Run Lola Run"; most recent movie, "Spy Kids"

Favorite musical artist: Barenaked Ladies and Catie Curtis

Favorite escape: Reading or a walk on the beach

Wheels: Saab 9-5

Person you'd most like to meet: Georgia O'Keefe

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