

The Fine Art of Engineering

By Kara E. Hensley

Most would say that the disciplines of engineering and the arts couldn't be more distinct. However, to Vasiliki (Vicky) Keramida, the founder, president and CEO of KERAMIDA Environmental, Inc., the fields of engineering and art could not be more complementary. In her native country of Greece, Keramida grew up in an environment where the two fields were well integrated, as engineers were often also talented artists.

In 1969, Keramida left Athens to pursue her passion for academia and engineering, subsequently receiving a B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. in environmental engineering from Purdue University—the first woman to do so. A woman of many firsts, she was selected as the first director to head all of the environmental programs for the City of Indianapolis, and was founder of the Indianapolis Water and Land Protection Division.

In 1986, she was appointed to serve on the U.S. EPA Superfund Municipal Settlements Policy Committee, under President Ronald Reagan's Administration.

In 1988, with the inception of KERAMIDA Environmental, Inc., she became the first woman to own and operate a full-service environmental firm in the country. Today, with four offices—including one in Greece—and over 60 professionals, the engineering and consulting firm specializes in innovative and cost-effective solutions for all stakeholders in brownfield redevelopment.

While the environmental expertise of Keramida and her firm's professionals is well known throughout the industry, her innate proficiency in marketing provides KERAMIDA Environmental with a unique edge. The child of a talented artist father and a mother with an inherent mar-

keting sense, Keramida learned early on the interdependent relationship between providing an excellent product and the ability to

it booth sets the tone for one of Keramida's key taglines, "Masters of the Art of Consulting."



Vicky Keramida, founder, president and CEO of KERAMIDA Environmental, Inc., stands in front of "The Guarding," painted by her father, A. Keramidas (1905-1980), which has come to represent the firm's unique approach to environmental consulting.

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get the product out to the marketplace. In determining the best market strategy for her own environmental engineering firm, she thought it only natural to incorporate the arts, specifically her father's. One particular piece of art, "The Guarding" (Oil on Canvas, A. Keramidas, 1905-1980), has become a KERAMIDA icon, representing the firm's unique approach to environmental consulting.

Set in the lush Greek countryside, the oil portrays a strong woman exhibiting a protective stance over her land and flock. Standing as not only a metaphor for the firm's guardian-like support for its clients, the painting and its incorporation into marketing materials and exhib-

In 2006, Keramida officially combined the worlds of engineering and art in the founding of the KERAMIDA Arts Education Foundation and the A. Keramidas Museum of Art (AKMA), both housed in her firm's corporate headquarters in Indianapolis.

Keramida and her company continue to remain at the forefront of the brownfields arena with project sites across the country, which range from large manufacturing facilities and Superfund sites to gas stations and dry cleaners, all of which receive the same level of high-quality service, commitment and attention to detail. Keramida and her firm demonstrate daily that many masterpieces can originate from one palette. **BFN**