


# DAILY TIMES

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## Business

### Organizing is her game

■ Sara Long Organizing helps the hapless make order of their lives.

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**BROOKHAVEN** — Sara Long has always wanted to help people get organized and now she's made it her life's work to do so.

In August, she launched Sara Long Organizing, her own professional organizing business to help others find their place if not in the world at least their home and office.

For four years, the Penncrest graduate had been doing public relations, grant writing and Web design for the Delaware County Library System, while her dreams of order kept nagging.

"I've always been in P.R. and I've always been organized. I've always wanted to help people with it," Long said. "It's been a dream and I didn't really think it was a job."

In researching the viability of the occupation, she contacted the National Association of Professional Organizers and learned it has 4,000 members.

"It's really a growing field," she said. "It's a passion." And Long certainly has enthusiasm about her profession.

"It's something at the end of the day, I look at how happy the clients are," she said. "If I could only organize one corner of the world at a time ..."

Long extolled the benefits of her craft, adding that a few hours of organizing save dozens of hours in the future.

She knows she's up against television shows like "Clean House" and "Neat" with near-instantaneous results.

"It's not going to take 20 minutes," Long said.

A look at "before" and "after" pictures on her Web site shows home offices that took 10 hours each, she said.

A typical case begins with Long visiting the area to be organized, where she completes a free half-hour to one-hour assessment while listening to the client's problems and goals.

Long covers the tri-state area and travels to Montgomery, Chester and Bucks counties as well as Delaware.

She then creates an estimate based on what is going to be organized and how long it will take. A closet, she explained, has about 100 items to organize. A file cabinet, on the other hand, has about 1,000.

She and the client work in three-hour shifts sorting through the items as burnout could occur if they try to plow through the period break-free.

Sometimes problems arise. For instance, if Long is working on an office and the client wants to include another filing cabinet, it would change the scope of the project.



Sara Long looks for common-sense solutions to the everyday problems of life.

There are items she'll take and organize not on the client's time. For example, Long said she'd take Rolodexes home and organize them or papers to shred. She'll also take addresses off-site to compile in a particular program to save the client time.

Afterwards, she does follow-up to see how clients are faring.

Long said she checked on one two to three months after her space was finished and she had added some decorations.

"It looked even better," she said.

Long understands the modern schedule.

"People's lives are so busy," Long said. "We only get 24 hours. My job is to organize people's space so they have more time."

As a kid, her closets were color-coordinated.

But, she warned, not all professional organizers had an innate knack. Some, she said, were quite messy and had to learn the craft.

"It's just a set of skills," Long explained. "It's just habits and skills, like anything else."

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