Tom Horner Biography

Tom Horner is president of Horner Strategies, LLC, a public relations and public affairs consulting firm.

Horner is a native Minnesotan and a graduate of the University of St. Thomas. He began his career in community journalism with the Suburban Sun Newspapers where he eventually became managing editor, supervising the editorial content and production of 16 community newspapers.

In 1978, Horner joined Dave Durenberger’s staff as press secretary during Durenberger’s first campaign for the U.S. Senate. After Durenberger’s election, Horner served as communications director and chief of staff to Durenberger until 1985. He returned to Minnesota to manage the regional office of the Hill and Knowlton, an international public relations firm. In 1989, Horner co-founded the public affairs firm of Himle Horner Inc., which quickly earned a reputation as one of the region’s most effective firms.

In 2010, Horner was the Independence Party candidate for governor of Minnesota. He won endorsements from several significant business and health organizations (including the endorsing arms of the Minnesota Medical Association, the Minnesota Hospital Association, the Minnesota Association of Realtors, the Builders Association of Minnesota and others) and 39 of the 40 Minnesota newspapers that backed a candidate. The state’s largest newspaper, the Minneapolis Star Tribune, said this in endorsing Horner: “Not since Elmer L. Andersen in 1960 has a successful business owner and CEO left a prominent Minnesota firm to seek the governorship. Like Andersen, Horner, the cofounder of the Himle Horner public-relations firm, is doing so for the best of reasons: He loves Minnesota; he’s a serious student of government and economics, and he feels called to service. At age 60, Horner seeks to apply the lessons of a lifetime spent working in and around public policy to the restoration of this state’s vitality.” Horner lost the gubernatorial contest to Democrat Mark Dayton.

In addition to his public relations and public affairs consulting, Horner is an adjunct professor at the University of St. Thomas, teaching master’s courses in corporate communications and public affairs. Horner also writes a monthly column for the Star Tribune and is an active leader in several non-profit and community organizations.

Horner and his wife Libby have three adult children, Christopher, Kevin and Amanda.

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