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Justine Sweeney
photo by Chris Fritchie



Justine Sweeney & Her Many Hats

By DeAnn Daley Holcomb

JUSTINE SWEENEY is a woman on the go. On any given day you'll find Ms. Sweeney planning a media blitz for a client, organizing a non-profit charity event or at her computer crafting an advertising campaign for a new product she's promoting. As the owner of Sweeney Media Group, this Frisco resident has her pulse on the local community and surrounding cities.

Recently Ms. Sweeney launched a second company called Sweeney Soirees, an event planning and fundraising firm. She's also added a new community project called the Collin County Social Calendar. Ms. Sweeney said the calendar's website, www.collincountysocialcalendar.com has all the latest community events.

"The site is designed to be "THE" calendar for what's happening in Collin County for non-profit, civic and social events," Ms. Sweeney said. "It has been so frustrating identifying ideal open dates to host client events. We would check up to 75 websites before making a decision. Organizations will be able to submit their events on-line."

Ms. Sweeney said the "magic of Disney" cultivated her creative juices.

While she was a student at Texas A&M University, Ms. Sweeney was selected from 250 Aggie applicants to participate in "Management Disney Style," a four-month training program at Walt Disney World Corporation in Florida.

"My Disney experience provided me with a source of inspiration for thinking ahead and to always infuse creativity in your work, give back to your community, know that every detail matters and treat people like they are a special guest," Ms. Sweeney said.

While at Disney Ms. Sweeney was introduced to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The foundation grants wishes for children who suffer from life-threatening diseases.

"That ignited a passion in me for non-profits," Ms. Sweeney said. "After college I continued to be a part of the Make-A-Wish Foundation in Dallas for several years where I chaired the Azalea Run on Turtle Creek, granted wishes and served as a founding vice chair for the WISH NIGHT Gala."

Born in Vermont, Ms. Sweeney moved to Texas with her family in the early eighties. Ms. Sweeney graduated from Texas A&M

with a bachelor of administration and minor in marketing.

"My first professional job after graduation was in Oregon at Mt. Hood Meadows Ski resort as the revenue and guest services manager. But, after one season, I knew accounting was not for me," Ms. Sweeney said.

Moving back to Texas, Ms. Sweeney went to work as a media planner for a large Dallas advertising agency. She then jumped into advertising retail sales at the *Dallas Morning News*. She moved into promotions and marketing at the newspaper and along with her mentor, Dot Rhyne, together they developed many successful campaigns.

"That's where my seed was planted for Sweeney Media Group," Ms. Sweeney said.

Ms. Sweeney decided to take a chance and open Sweeney Media Group in 2003, a full-service marketing and public relations firm, after she and her husband Sean Sweeney made Frisco their home. The couple also has a two-year old daughter.

"My client, Jim Snell of Snell Motor Companies/Land Rover Dallas and Frisco gave me the confidence to pursue opening my company," Ms. Sweeney said. "I am grateful to him and the example he sets for me as a mentor."

Ms. Sweeney has left a creative mark on the business community and local charities with notable works and clients such as Land Rover Dallas and Frisco, Great Steak of Texas At Frisco Square, Cross Timbers Youth Orchestra, Shops at Starwood "An Evening under the Stars" and the opening of the McKinney Performing Arts

"In my business, the lines blur between work and volunteerism," Ms. Sweeney said. "I have a passion for making a difference and helping organizations become stronger."

"The idea of shaping the future for our children is an overwhelming responsibility. I do my part supporting the arts, education, economic development and making local nonprofits strong."

DeAnn Daley Holcomb is a freelance writer living in Plano.