

ADVERTISING STAR



McKee Wallwork Cleveland's Account Executive: Deena Crawley

[By Robin Salisian]

Like the old Byrds song "Turn! Turn! Turn! (To Everything There is a Season)" says, there was an unknown purpose to Deena Crawley's punishment for throwing a raucous (and parentally unsupervised) high school party.

"As expected, I got caught, and my parents forced me to get a job to pay for the damage," said Crawley.

She began working for a local pizza chain, got to know the regulars well, and there met the McKees.

"I came to know the family pretty well after helping them several months in a row. I appreciated the family's kind and courteous nature, but I didn't think much of them beyond that," she said.

"I eventually left the pizza restaurant to work in retail and never saw the family again. It wasn't until my senior year in college on a field trip that I bumped into the father of the family I knew from the restaurant," Crawley continued. "He... informed me that he was the president of the advertising agency I was touring [and then]...proceeded to ask me if I was interested in an internship at the agency...I was completely blown away. I accepted the internship and shortly thereafter accepted a full-time position. I've been at the agency since my internship and couldn't have asked for a better job."

Talk about an unknown purpose.

Today, this University of New Mexico graduate works as the account executive for McKee Wallwork Cleveland, a New Mexico-based ad agency that prides itself on its unique setting, where "diverse culture and artistic communities" abound.

"We could have easily set up shop on the 74th floor of some glass building, but we didn't," says McKee's website. "In doing so, we

Q. What do you do for fun?

A. I've become a runner in the past few years. I wouldn't say I like running—in fact, I despise it—but it definitely takes up a chunk of my free time. I also like to cook. Some of my specialties include green chile chicken enchiladas and spicy spaghetti.

Q. What CD is in your CD player right now?

A. The Shins, Magnet and Gemma Hayes, Pink Floyd, and Michael Jackson.

Q. What is the last magazine you read?

A. I really read more blogs than I do magazines. I read a blog called *YPulse* every single day. If I don't read it I feel pretty out of touch. As the title suggests, the blog focuses mainly on Generation Y, but it's a great source for up-and-coming trends. I'm also a sucker for celebrity gossip sites like perezhilton.com and pinkisthenewblog.com.

Q. What is your favorite TV show?

A. I can't name just one, but my favorites include *The Office*, *America's Next Top Model*, *Antiques Road Show*, and *Oprah* (I hate to admit that one). I have also recently fallen in love with *Entourage*. I bought the DVDs and can't stop watching them. I watch at least four episodes a week. Jeremy Piven plays one of the best TV characters ever.

Q. Who is your role model?

A. Again, I can't name just one. In general, my list includes my mom, my grandparents, and my three aunts. My family is unbelievably optimistic, intelligent, humorous, and compassionate. Without my family I wouldn't be where I am today. Professionally, I really look up to Steve McKee. He is an incredibly bright and charismatic person who is always pushing me to a new level.

broke the rules of where an ad agency can be, and it's this rule-breaking mentality we bring to the work we do. We'll try anything to help your brand, and sometimes that means doing something that's never been done before."

McKee's rule-breaking mentality has worked, landing the agency jobs with clients such as Blake's Lotaburger ("a 78-unit hamburger chain in the mold of In-N-Out Burger and White Castle"), Heritage Hotels, and Mr. Rooter.

"My client list includes the New Mexico Department of Health, Central Restaurant Products, Farm Credit of New Mexico, and TriCore Reference Laboratories," said Crawley, who allocates much of her time towards working with the New Mexico Department of Health.

"We specifically work for the anti-tobacco division to educate both adults and youth about the dangers of tobacco. It's a pretty challenging job in the sense that we are trying to dissuade people from using tobacco as opposed to persuading," Crawley continued. "Last year we created a campaign for the youth target titled 'Thank You for Not Sucking' where we tried to communicate the negative social consequences associated with smoking."

Despite the challenges of the work, Crawley knows it's worth it.

"If my work has caused even one person to quit smoking or kept one teenager from picking up a cigarette, I am completely satisfied," she said.

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Crawley has also worked on numerous campaigns for Farm Credit of New Mexico, a bank she describes as “especially for farmers and ranchers.”

“The campaigns have been print based and poke fun at stereotypical bankers. One ad, for instance, shows a trite banker-looking man sitting backwards on a horse. The campaigns have really resonated with the target and have increased Farm Credit’s loan volume.”

Outside of McKee, Crawley appreciates the advertising tactics of Apple and Target. With its “genius” “Mac vs. PC” ads, she said, Apple “was able to take a truism in the marketplace and execute it beautifully. Target has also displayed exceptional advertising over the past five years. The strategy and execution behind their ads are flawless.”

“What I really like about both Apple and Target,” Crawley added, “is that their brands extend beyond their ads. Their personalities can be seen in their products, stores, and packaging.”

Though Crawley’s journey into advertising was unconventional, it serves as a reminder that there *is* a season to everything—even a season to be punished. Because, after all, *that’s* what introduced Crawley to advertising. That’s what helped her find her niche. And that’s what allows this well-seasoned advertiser to offer this advice:

“My best advice for those who are looking to get into advertising is to seek out an internship at an ad agency, even if it’s unpaid. It’s one thing to learn how advertising works from reading it in a textbook and another to learn it in real life. The experience you can gain in an internship

is priceless. Do whatever it takes to get your foot in the door. When I did my internship I was also taking 18 hours in school and working 40-plus hours. It wasn’t easy, but it was well worth it.”

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www.mckeewallworkcleveland.com

New Mexico Department of Health
www.health.state.nm.us

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