

TWU Alumni Entrepreneurs



Louise Appleman, Appleman and Associates, Ft. Worth

Louise Appleman founded Appleman and Associates in Ft. Worth in the late 1980s to meet the needs of Tarrant County companies who were recruiting new executives to the Ft. Worth area. While the companies worked with the employee, Louise shows the family members what it's like to live in the Ft. Worth area. The keys to her success? She knows and loves her product, the city of Ft. Worth, and she has a real heart for people. It's the perfect combination for a successful service-based business!

Louise Kuehn, a 1962 graduate in Nursing, came to **TWU** from Corpus Christie. After college, she married attorney Gordon Appleman and they settled in Ft. Worth. She devoted many years to raising their children and serving the community in a variety of volunteer roles. Upon becoming an "empty nester," Louise realized she could move from community volunteer to business owner. Working out of her home she began to circulate her brochures --- and the phone began to ring. In a 1989 Ft. Worth business newspaper article she is quoted, "What I really offer is being available to answer questions about the small, intangible details that can make relocation an ordeal." Companies pay for this service because they know that the new executive who is being recruited is more likely to sign on if the family feels that they can successfully make the transition, too.

Her service package comes in two phases – the first is an orientation and overview of the community, a personal, in-depth tour. Phase two is based on the newcomer's responses to a comprehensive questionnaire which reflects individual needs and interests. She then arranges introductions and schedules appointments. Louise goes the extra mile for her clients, often keeping in touch for as much as six months after the actual re-location. She wants to make sure the family makes it through that "down time" that can set in after the excitement of a move.

TWU Alumni Connection had a few questions for Louise. Here are her responses.

Connection: What changes have you seen in the business since you began – either in Fort Worth or in the needs of the clients or the families?

Louise: Interestingly, not many changes in what clients want: attractive, safe housing communities with a broad range of pricing, good schools if children are involved and interesting and enriching extra-curricular activities (museums, concerts, plays, etc.) Changes in Ft. Worth have certainly occurred. There are more housing options for “starters” (singles, young couples and empty nesters) especially in urban village areas such as downtown and the 7th Street corridor and the medical district.

Connection: Are you mentoring anyone else to bring them into the business once you are ready to retire?

Louise: I have three friends who are able and love to give the orientation tour. I recently hired someone in the Colleyville/Southlake/Keller area to assist me with companies there. That is such a fast growing area and I do not know it well. None of my “partners” would likely be willing to assume the business. I would be happy to mentor someone who is interested, but this is a very personal effort. Anyone who has lived here can give the driving tour, but I believe that my more than 20 years of volunteer work and connections made in the community prior to starting Appleman and Associates and another 25 year of involvement make me uniquely qualified to assist the newcomer in becoming involved in the community outside the workplace. I am sometimes asked by conventions or other “visitor groups” to give a tour highlighting the amenities in Fort Worth. That is not what this is about. This is about LIVING in Fort Worth/Tarrant County.

Connection: Do you have any advice for someone with an entrepreneurial spirit, someone wanting to start a business?

Louise: Of course I have advice – and the price is right! Consider something for which you have a passion, something that “feels right.” If it’s necessary to make a living from this business, then embellish and add on in some way to increase profits. I do not have a real estate license, so I’m leaving a lot of money on the table. Realtors cannot include me in the referral fees. But, in the end, my clients know that any referrals I make are what I consider to be in *their* best interests, not mine. The Personal Yellow Pages print-out we provide in response to their questionnaire carries a “no vested interest” clause.

Louise Appleman was selected for the TWU Distinguished Alumni Award in 1987. Just a few of her volunteer activities and her honors and awards are: selected to Leadership Texas, named First Lady of Fort Worth by the Altrusa Club, dubbed Outstanding Volunteer by the Fort Worth

Chapter of the National Society of Fund Raising Executives and cited as one of Tarrant County's Most Influential Business Women. Currently, she serves on the Boards of the Tarrant County College District and Workforce Solutions, the Women's Foundation of North Texas, and North Texas Public Broadcasting, Inc.

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