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## Kerry Doman's company adds fun to the after-work mix

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As soon as Kerry Doman found out Mark Petroff was moving his marketing company from Bloomfield Hills to downtown Detroit last November, she contacted him to welcome her newest neighbor.

The night before Petroff's staff arrived at their new offices at 1 Kennedy Square on Woodward Avenue, she brought in gift bags with champagne glasses, various treats and information about where to socialize, eat and drink in Detroit.

"She rolls up her sleeves with a sort of can-do attitude," said Petroff, chief executive officer of Marketing Associates, who was impressed by the effort.

Doman, 26, is methodically building a brand for After 5 Detroit, the ever-expanding company and Web site she started in 2006 to attract young professionals to play after work in downtown Detroit.

She also is this year's recipient of the Dave Bing Future Leader Award. The recognition is among the Shining Light Regional Cooperation Awards, presented in honor of former Free Press publisher Neal Shine, and created by the Free Press and the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition.

Doman, who has been featured in several Free Press articles since she founded After 5, is an enthusiastic promoter of all good things happening in and around Detroit.

Though she grew up in Bloomfield Hills, Doman said After 5 was inspired by social networking sites in Chicago, where she briefly lived. Today, the After 5 Web site -- with the tagline "Go. Play. Detroit." -- gets about 65,000 monthly hits.

Dozens of events fill the Web site's calendar of events and Doman, CEO of the company, said she now routinely gets contacted by event organizers who want to promote their events through After 5.

"We've been involved in the community for a few years now so we know all the Web sites ... and other resources to seek out so that we can always offer an eclectic array of entertainment options," she said.

In fact, Doman, who received a bachelor's degree in communications with a minor in Spanish from Denison University in Ohio, has created at least one After 5 spin-off -- Connect After 5 -- which hosts sports tournaments in volleyball, softball and broomball at Campus Martius and at Wayne State University.

"The business community is struggling to attract and retain top-notch talent and they have eagerly embraced Connect After 5 as a way of engaging their employees and showcasing Detroit as a fun place to work," she said.

Petroff, along with his staff, has participated in several After 5 and Connect After 5 events. He said Doman's concept works because "it's people with a common purpose."

Doman, he added, has embraced "how her generation perceives work and play."

Now Doman has her sights trained on event planning. Before the gala opening of the Westin Book Cadillac hotel, she's hosting an Access Detroit block party Oct. 24 with live entertainment, food, drinks and giveaways.

"Ultimately, our overall goal is to have a major impact on the initiative to further attract and retain young professionals to our region," Doman said.

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