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REPRENEURIAL WOMEN IN BUSINESS 2005 — PAGE 12



Kristin Crowe says she's glad she's landed back in Belleville.

"It was a phenomenal experience that really gave me the business education and training and experience which enabled me to come back here and take on this new role with the family business," said Crowe.

Crowe spent most of her retail career on an airplane and living out of suitcases when she decided enough was enough.

"I wanted to raise my family in Belleville ... I have no regrets returning home."

She believes her decision to return here could serve as an important lesson for other women.

"I made some huge personal, career and life changes at the same time ... you have to follow your dreams and take the risk," said Crowe.

The single mom with two sons, Brady, 6, and Colby, 4, has learned first hand that balancing a family and a career is achievable.

"You have to work at it and I'm doing just that."

Along with her career, Crowe is vice-

president of the Rotary Club of Belleville and sits on the Imagine diagnostic fundraising campaign with Quinte Health Care.

"I'm a firm believer in community involvement," she said. "Giving back to the community is essential because they give to us every single day."

She has donated use of communications services — cell phones, radios and answering services — for such major events as Waterfront & Ethnic Festival, Festival of Trees and other major community activities.

Crowe's philosophy of doing business is based on three simple principles.

"You have to build positive business relationships because business is really about people and personalities," she said. "Collaboration is cool. Meet with your people on a regular basis and get them involved in the business decisions."

"Balance beats burnout," she added. "You have to find a healthy life balance and make quality time for yourself."