



COMING TO "FRUIT-ITION"

SMALL BUSINESS OWNER **GALE RUE**

IS DOING WHAT SHE LOVES

Gale Rue grew up in Eau Claire, Michigan. She married, raised three children and worked in various industries. "While my kids were in school, I worked in food service for the school district," explains Gale. "I loved the prepping of food, the large groups of kids and the whole environment. I especially enjoyed making the decorations for the special events." Gale left her food service position to help her then husband in their family business, an entrepreneurial venture. She missed working with the public and planning events, but did enjoy owning her own business and seeing the success of their hard work and dedication.

Several years later Gale's life changed. She was going through a divorce, and wanted to find a career that was personally gratifying. Gale knew that she really enjoyed the freedom of owning her own business; working for someone else other than herself wasn't an option.

One day she saw an ad in the local paper for franchise opportunities with Edible Arrangements. She contacted them and soon she started the process of owning a store in Benton Harbor, MI. Gale had a second home in Florida and put that on the market as she needed the funds to start her franchise. "I knew I was making the right decision when the house sold within 30 days," said Gale.

Putting her finances in order, Gale needed some additional capital to launch the franchise. Her daughter had heard about Women's Business Center at Cornerstone Alliance and encouraged her mother to reach out to them for direction. Gale did just that and was able to secure the additional financing she needed from their SBA Microloan program and signed the franchise agreement.

Gale opened her doors on March 9, 2015 and is attracting new customers every day. "I have an Edible Arrangements Dashboard on my computer screen, and I am happy to report that our store is performing to our goals each month," said Gale. "Holidays are very crazy here and it reminds me of when I was working at the school and everyone worked together for special events. I love working with the public and creating something that everyone enjoys. I am able to do this every day at my store."

"I have always been determined, and been able to take care of myself financially," said Gale. "I've taught this to my kids as well." Gale's daughter works part-time in the store and her sons are available to help out when she needs them.

Gale is looking forward to possibly opening another Edible Arrangements sometime in the future. "I love what I'm doing," says Gale. "This time around it's on my terms. I encourage any woman to take the plunge and be confident in your decisions. You really can do anything you set out to do."

