

Cosmetology Advisory Meeting
April 21, 2022 via Zoom

Members Present:

Liz Montgomery – Salon Professional/Student Representative, Jackson
Rachelle Neal – Salon Owner/Professional - Royal Treatment in Jackson
Lisa Kounkel – MN West Adjunct, Pipestone
Danylle Espenson – MN West Faculty, Jackson
Lynn Gorder – Patron of MN West Pipestone
Adrian Ness – MN West Faculty, Pipestone
Calli Job – MN West Adjunct, Pipestone
King Onah – Student Representative, Pipestone
Hailey Harbitz – Salon Professional (alumni MN West Jackson)
Kelli Anderson – Owner of Salon 310, Jackson MN
Craig Peters – MN West Dean of Management & Technical Programs
Faye Bremmer – Salon Owner/Professional – Salon 75 Luverne, MN
Traci Bonine – Salon Owner/Professional – Holland Hairshack
Brooke Spinks – MN West Adjunct, Jackson

Members Absent:

Eileen Donnelly – South Eastern Hair Design, Salon Owner/Professional
Vikki Hahn – Cost Cutters Marshall, MN Salon Owner/Professional
Jackie Otkin – MN West Dean of Allied Health

Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order via Zoom digital meeting space at 9:03 am by Adrian Ness, who presided over the agenda.

Introductions:

Members were introduced and asked to give a brief summary of their experience and backgrounds.

Craig Peters was introduced as the new Dean of Management and Technical Programs, and members were informed he replaced Jackie Otkin as the Cosmetology Program Dean.

Follow Up on Previous Advisory Board Advice:

Adrian Ness summarized Pipestone's measured improvements in the following areas:

- Student professionalism post-graduation: faculty have strategized soft-skill instruction to prepare students for entry level jobs; appreciate that local business partners recognize that entry level students have opportunity for growth in orientation style training courses to prepare them for salon and industry expectations
- Dress code/attire has been relaxed to reflect working casual in recent trends
- Recruiting/promoting program: students and faculty have attended a few career fairs, glad to have them back in person post-Covid. Anticipate seeing fall enrollment numbers increase.

- Technical skills: emphasis on foundational skillset in basic competencies; noted that colors have become increasingly technical and challenging per current trends. Reiterate that the core basic skillset is the objective of our program and faculty members.
- Soft skills: faculty have increased an emphasis on coachability and teamwork; working under a manager or with a mentor right out of school helps guide students at the start of their career.
- Modern approach to instruction: increased awareness of equity and inclusion in offering salon services

Danylle Espenson summarized Pipestone’s measured improvements in the following areas:

- Covid is in rearview mirror, more guests in salon to have those soft skills and improved the conversation of guests they don’t know.
- Proud of students working to book clients over mannequin work
- Soft skills: improving conversations and the art of small talk and the gift of gab
- Over all technical learning back at full strength
- Instructors are working to provide timely feedback for the students, including guest surveys on services they’ve received.
- Moving forward into the new normal, post-covid environment: Jackson mirrors the program goals and objectives set forth in our course outline, and envisions Pipestone and Jackson continuing to evolve to the future, and ensuring the next generation of professionals is prepared for the industry and success.
- Introduction of new course material: Milady will release a new text book and online learning platform for this fall. It’s the first curriculum update in 6 years, and will include chapters in lash extensions, along with how we’re supposed to teach appropriate words to use. This creates a great learning for our educators.

New Topics of Discussion:

The meeting then segued into new topics of discussion, as submitted by email prior to the meeting. Attending participants were encouraged to chime in and add to the discussion as they wanted.

- Importance of First impressions:
 - o Traci Bonine noted how important first impressions are with guests, and how confidence and is communicated to guests with a firm handshake and greeting.
 - o Faye Bremmer mentioned that since starting their new hire training program through Summit Education, entry level stylists feel more comfortable and confident, and stress on management has greatly subsided. Faye continued to discuss how their in-salon training programs have new stylists shadow salon trainers to build strength. Once that initial training is complete, they slowly integrate new stylists to the floor 1 – 2 days a week, and gradually to full time. This increases employee buy-in and solicits helpful feedback from mentors, guests, and the new employees
- Non-compete clauses:
 - o Faye attested that these contracts protect the investment of the salon into the stylists, and the stylists into the salon – not much feedback beyond this; Adrian redirected conversation to freshman/soph/junior model, and how supporting new hires can really help build a successful salon team. Kelli Anderson echoed these sentiments at her salon as well.

- The Value of extra time in our training programs:
 - Danylle discussed the confidence that advanced education and Elite Team status can have with students. She detailed how students have to try out for Elite Team, and demonstrate above and beyond entry level technical and soft skillset desired by guests and employers
 - Super Seniors were also discussed in regards to students attending an extra semester to pursue Iowa hours (2,100). Instructors see the additional semester as a huge benefit. Brooke Spinks shared that personally, she attended school for 2,100 hours and felt that last 500 hours of training was where her growth and potential were maximized.
 - Calli Job shared that when hours changed in South Dakota, there was considerable push back from educators, as students need additional time to grow in their skills.
 - Brooke Spinks contrasted that students who attend for 1,550 hours are not as confident or independent as students who complete 2,100 hours. She finds value in offering a fourth semester to cosmetology students.
 - Traci Bonine posed a question of why Minnesota West follows a 9-month model, as opposed to a year round, full time schedule. Felt like students lose skillset over the summers off and learning regresses.
 - Danylle and Adrian both offered that a year-round model is something they've discussed as department leaders, but appreciate that more research and guidance will be needed from administrative leadership from Craig Peters before commenting further.
 - Rachelle Neal proposed that the campuses alternate summer course offerings and Hailey Harbitz commented on how affordable housing could make this a reality for some.
 - Student representative King Onah also opined that a summer session or Maymester would benefit him personally.
 - Craig Peters circled back to the discussion of how financial aid would impact such a model, and how when dollars run out, students would have to pay out of pocket. He ensured the panelists that he would conduct a review of the program over the summer and continue the dialogue and suggestions with Danylle and Adrian.
- The value of equity and diversity in training:
 - The topic was introduced by both Adrian and Danylle as they sought advice on how to balance changing social norms with traditional gendered education, and how to expand student's world views and perspectives to mirror the system's goal of equity and inclusion.
 - Traci Bonine reflected on her own experience and career journey, and noted that an individual is not going to show bias unless there's underlying bias. She implores us to accept people as they are, who they are, and what they are, just as we embrace all of that in our students. Traci had INCREDIBLE feedback on that
 - Hailey Harbitz added that Jackson instruction team treats all individuals with respect and dignity, and she believes that a haircut is a haircut... we service whoever is in our chair.
 - King Onah contributed his personal experience with a recent guest in Pipestone. This individual had a hair type the instructors weren't entirely familiar with, so a

collaborative approach to the service was necessary. He reiterated how important the hands-on skills are to practice when dealing with many types and textures of hair.

- Traci Bonine circled back and suggested a community partnership with are professionals to help round out areas where our instructing staff is weak
- Danylle reiterated the excellent partnerships we've established with our advisory board, and leaning on those individuals to serve as guest speakers is valuable for our students and programs.

Conclusion of Meeting:

- Closing comments and appreciation expressed from Danylle and Adrian, with an invitation to our advisory committee members to visit our student salons and see our excellent study bodies in action
- Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Adrian Ness
Reviewed for accuracy by Danylle Espenson
April 25, 2022

CC: Paula Paplow, Craig Peters