



**BUILDING
COMMUNITY**

AHP/*Roots*

We are beyond thrilled that you've raised your hand to be part of building community in the hair industry!

Thank you for joining us! Associated Hair Professionals (AHP) is dedicated to supporting every hair professional to ensure you have the most gratifying and successful career possible. We know we will go much farther together than any one of us can individually.

That's why we've created AHP Roots, a way to build community within our profession.

Each month, in communities across the country, hair professionals will gather to support each other, talk about issues affecting their business, and raise each other up in both good times and bad. AHP will provide topics for discussion and the tools and resources necessary to create lively and supportive conversation as you come together as a local community of hair professionals. It takes a village, and AHP is here to help you along the journey.

There's magic within you and we cannot thank you enough for sharing it with our industry!



Let's shake things up,

Ali J. Davidson

Director of AHP

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WHAT IS A ROOT?

The foundation. The beginning. Where the real, internal change begins.

An AHP Root is a group of hair professionals who get together once a month to create an intimate community in which they can learn from each other, lean on each other, and grow with each other.

WHY AHP ROOTS?

In business, people say change must start at the top and trickle down for real progress to be made. But the hair industry, as you well know, isn't made up of average business people. Hair professionals are business people with flair! AHP firmly believes the hairstylists and barbers working behind the chair—the ones AHP exists to support—are the root of our industry, and together we have the power to change and shape our industry into its best self. The hair industry, at its best, will be known for the community and camaraderie among hair professionals. That kind of richness must come from the roots. AHP Roots are going to change our industry by bringing hair professionals together for **real talk, real connections, and real community.**



Read on for more "Building Community" inspiration

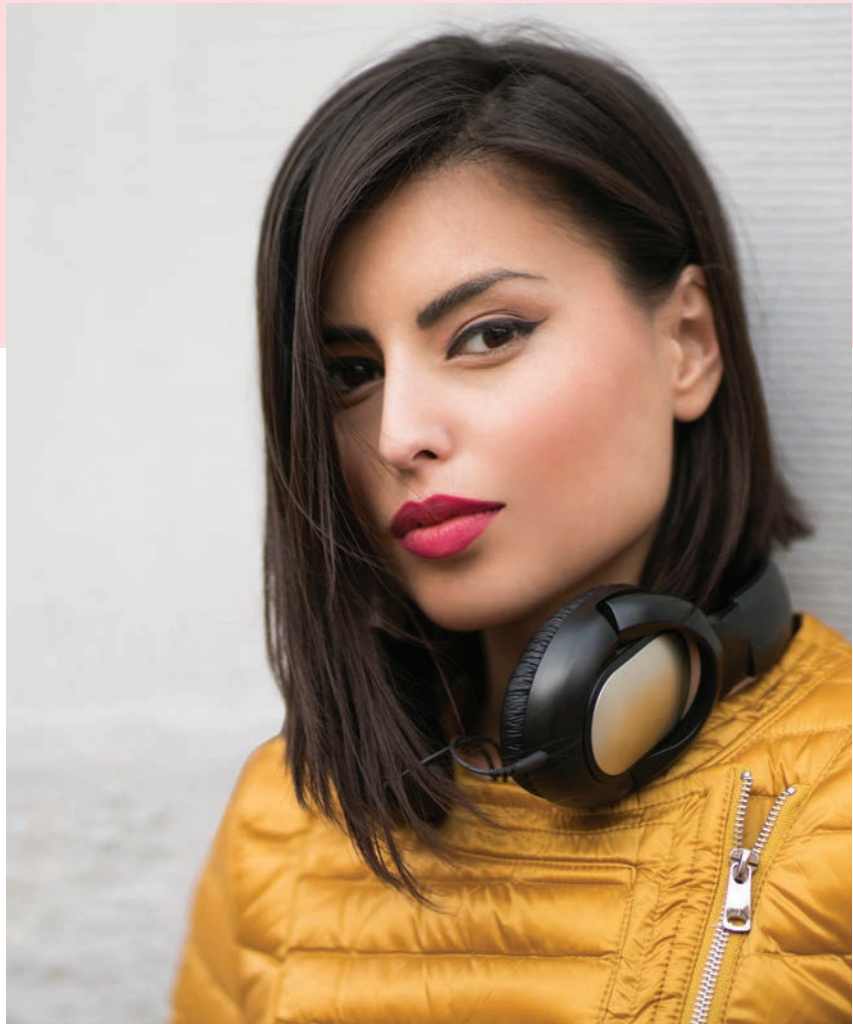
YOU'RE AMAZING; LET'S SHOW THE WORLD

As hairstylists, we are visionary trend setters. We don't just mimic the looks on fashion runways; it is our peers that put them there! We show our clients the latest trends and classic good style. We teach them how to style their hair, what products to use, and which tools are essential. Maybe you haven't stopped to think about it, but—most importantly—we teach our clients how to treat us.

What have you done today, this week, this year to teach your clients how to treat you as a professional? Did you attend an advanced class and learn some new cutting techniques? Did you donate any of your time, skill, or money to a charity or person in need? Have you sought out new means of marketing or fine-tuned your business best practices? Are you a member of our industry's professional association—Associated Hair Professionals? How are you showing your clients that you take your career seriously?

Many of our industry leaders talk about "elevating our industry." It sounds great on stage or from the front of a classroom, but what does it really mean?





What does it mean to elevate our industry?

In the simplest sense, we want hairstyling to be regarded with the respect and appreciation it deserves. We want governing bodies to recognize that what we accomplish behind the chair cannot safely be done by kitchen beauticians. We want hairstylists to walk around with their heads held high, knowing they are educated, respected, appropriately compensated, day-makers capable of changing lives.

Why should you care?

Most of us march to our own beat and, for the most part, try not to be concerned with the opinions of others. We've all seen those sassy sayings, "Unless you're paying my bills, keep your opinions of my life to yourself." Well, let's be honest, our clients are paying our bills. (And everyone is a potential client.) We need the world to view our profession with the esteem it deserves in order for hairstylists to be compensated financially and emotionally for the true value of our skills.

How do we do it? How do we "elevate our industry?" The short answer is "together." Elevating an entire industry requires an entire industry—every single hairstylist. The simplest way to show that you are at the core of our industry, dedicated to education, professionalism,

and challenging the standard, is to be a member of the only national association solely dedicated to ensuring each hairstylist's success—Associated Hair Professionals.

Every legitimate profession has an association that works to improve the standards of excellence in that industry. From the American Dental Association to the American Psychiatric Association, members of professional associations are up to date on the latest and greatest education in their field because associations do the legwork to ensure the information is credible and to make it readily available to members.

Associations show unity within an industry. They create autonomy and raise the status quo. Networking is fostered and suddenly we're all working together and reaping the benefits of a group effort. There's a

place at the table of success for all of us. Pull up a chair! Being a member shows you've made a serious investment in your career, believe in your profession, and have stock in our industry. If you simply mention to a client that you're an Associated Hair Professionals member, they will look at you differently. At the very least, they will ask you what that means and you can blow away all their preconceived notions of hairstylists with your response.

It is time we show our clients how to treat us. It is time we demonstrate that we are professionals. Hairstylists are amazingly talented and artistic business people and it's time we're recognized as such. Elevation is the only direction we want our industry to trend, and we can do it together.

1.2 MILLION STRONG





IMAGINE THE POWER OF 1.2 MILLION WORKING TOGETHER

Is it still considered a “march” if only a few people show up to walk together? Is a protest even noticed if only a few people participate? How impactful is a “rally” of one? Marches, protests, and rallies are only effective because of the number of people participating. Change is accomplished when humans work together. The power in numbers is undeniable.

Imagine the power of 1.2 million people working together—all the good that could be accomplished! That’s how many licensed beauty professionals there are in the United States. With that kind of weight, the beauty industry should have more than enough advocates to ensure legislation affecting our industry is only passed if it’s in the best interest of our industry. Yet, silly rules and regulations come down on us all the time, we’ve lost hundreds of cosmetology schools to overbearing laws, and we’re still threatened with deregulation. How is this possible?

It’s possible because we don’t actually have the benefit of 1.2 million professionals advocating for our industry. What we currently have are 1.2 million individuals. Those individual voices aren’t nearly as powerful as a collective one shouting a unified message. Just because half of beauty professionals consider themselves independents, it does not mean we can’t all work together to

keep this industry at a standard we’re all proud to represent.

So how do we bring our voices together? There are already organizations within our industry working to unite us. All we need to do is decide we each want to take an active part in elevating our profession and get involved. Some professional associations working to support the beauty industry include Associated Hair Professionals, Cosmetologists Chicago, American Board of Certified Hair Colorists, Professional Beauty Association, Intercoiffure, International SalonSpa Business Network, and American Association of Cosmetology Schools. Each association has a slightly different membership focus (e.g., individual professionals, independent salons, manufacturers, chain salons, schools, etc.) and offers different benefits tailored to those members. All of these associations, however, are ultimately working to improve the beauty industry.

We are fortunate in our industry to have a number of professional associations that want to support each aspect of our industry, from individual beauty professionals to salons, manufacturers, and schools. The beauty industry has the framework in place to have one seriously powerful voice. To do that, however, each of us needs to get involved so we really are 1.2 million strong.



“Snowflakes are one of nature’s most fragile things, but just look what they can do when they stick together.”

–Vesta M. Kelly





WE ALL STARTED SOMEWHERE

A Love Letter to My Cosmetology School

By Ali Davidson, director of Associated Hair Professionals

More than a decade later, I still remember the day I enrolled in cosmetology school like it was last week. My mom and I went to “tour” the school. Well, my mom was going to tour the school; I was going with every intention to sign up.

My parents had been trying to talk me out of becoming a hairstylist for months. My dad even asked one of the hairstylists in our little town to try and talk me out of it at my upcoming appointment. At that next appointment, Travis, the hairstylist, told me about the early mornings and late nights with all the physical labor in-between he had experienced as a hairstylist. However, Travis also casually mentioned traveling as a platform artist for L’Oréal and opening his first salon. My dad’s plan totally backfired.



“Surround yourself with the dreamers and the doers, the believers and the thinkers, but most of all, surround yourself with those who see the greatness within you, even when you don’t see it yourself.”
–Edmund Lee

I was fresh out of high school with a 3-month-old baby at the time. My parents’ concerns weren’t unfounded. But I wanted a fun, creative, artistic career ASAP. My parents wanted college. When I refused to drop the idea of cosmetology school, my mom finally agreed to accompany me to see the school.

Sitting in the school owner’s office, my mom asked, “Doesn’t a hairdresser need to have some natural talent to make it through school and be good at this?” Oh yeah: I was quite the tomboy. Man, have I come a long way since then! As it has done for so many, the beauty industry changed my life. At De’Rielle Cosmetology Academy, I was told I had potential and was given hope for a better life. My instructors looked at me as moldable, buildable, a person of value. They treated all of

us students that way. Everyone was encouraged in the unique way that spoke to them. We were all unique individuals; each of us had a story, but we learned to appreciate each other and sympathize with each other, and our eyes were opened to the potential in all of us. I left school each day with stars in my eyes, over-the-moon excited for the possibilities in the beauty industry awaiting me. When I graduated, I was a different person—educated, confident, and strong.

My classmates and I graduated as better people than we were when we enrolled in cosmetology school. We’ve gone on to literally change clients’ lives with services we’ve provided and been able to support our families with income from the beauty industry. Some of my classmates have become business owners with incredible

salons, providing jobs for even more hairstylists. And some are passing on the gifts we all received at De’Rielle as educators themselves.

Every day in the beauty industry is an opportunity to change someone’s life. As hairstylists, we are in a unique position to touch people far deeper than their hair. As members of the beauty industry, we have incredible opportunity for creative, diversified, fulfilling careers. Maybe not every day is exciting but there is something exciting in every day. If ever you feel your passion for this incredible industry dimming, think back to the first time you set foot in your cosmetology school. I would bet my last dollar that you have grown tremendously since that day and that school. This industry changes lives.

TRENDING FORECAST: THE MOVEMENT

By Ali Davidson

I walked into a quiet, stark white, spacious room with enough empty plastic seating for close to 100 attendees. Having just stepped off the International Beauty Show floor with all its bright lights, loud music, colorful booths, and bustling commotion, entering this dull classroom was a shock to the system. Little did I know, the true shock to the system had yet to happen.

I thought I was attending "All About Business" where, as the show program promised, I would, "Join Ryan Teal as he shares how you can find your personal success for your salon. Ryan will share his philosophy and give tips on how to be a successful salon owner in today's business climate." Silly me, I assumed I would be told to keep my books neat, reward my staff, do some marketing, blah, blah, blah. Honestly, I didn't expect to learn anything I hadn't heard before but I was just excited to hear from Ryan Teal (@ryan_teal).

It was in this hollow room designated for business education that I first witnessed the truly

beautiful movement that is beginning to ripple through our industry. We always hear the chatter about "raising the bar" and "elevating our industry." Well, this movement is causing exactly that. If the movement hasn't yet hit your town, start it today.

So what is the "movement" that I witnessed in this unglamorous trade show classroom? It is hairstylists breaking down salon walls, putting their egos aside, ditching the competition mentality, and actually bonding together for the common good of the hair industry.

During the class, Teal presented some fun advice, mostly motivational, infused with trademark Ryan Rants. However, the energy palpably intensified when he spoke about how the Teals have fostered a community of salons that get together for education, networking, support, and inspiration in their hometown, Portland, Oregon. Yes. Read that again if you need to. These salons have stopped seeing each other as competition and are getting their hairdressers together to learn from one another.

Philip Ring (@phildoeshair) was in the audience and shared how he's taken the idea of salons breaking down their walls and getting together for informal education to his home at the time in Phoenix, Arizona, as well. A similar phenomenon is taking off with Jeff South's Club Intrigue events, which went national in 2016. Teal also shared how, clear across the country in Florida at the Premiere Orlando trade show, an underground group of industry leaders rented an Airbnb for an education-sharing session after trade show hours. Beautiful. These are the types of things that will make our industry stronger.

A few class attendees shared other beautiful connections happening within the hairdressing communities in their towns—salons sharing supplies, cross-referrals happening, education being shared. Some hair celebrities popped into the classroom to show their support (DJ Muldoon and Ira Pope among them) and I swear the air was buzzing. The energy was contagious. All of a sudden, the classroom wasn't so big and disconnected. When class



time ran out, no one wanted to leave. We all wrote our Instagram handles on a flip chart and took pictures with promises to follow each other and stay in touch.

This is the movement—a movement toward true community among hair professionals. As long as people keep growing hair (and even if they don't), there are enough clients to go around for everyone. Why not share our skills and experience with each other so our entire industry can raise the bar? Our industry is only as advanced as our weakest link.

The newest hotshot to hit Instagram is not someone to be jealous of; he's someone to thank for the inspiration he contributes to our industry. When your salon manager hires a clueless, recent graduate, it's not the time to look down your nose. We've all been there. Step up to the plate and be a mentor. When a client calls for an appointment but none are

available, refer them to another salon. That's keeping business in our industry and saving the client from a DIY disaster that benefits no one. When our peer wins a NAHA, we should all celebrate the heck out of that incredible work that encourages us all to step up our game.

The number one takeaway: we as hairstylists are in competition with unlicensed do-it-yourselfers, not one another. The hairstylist at the station beside you, the one renting the suite down the hall, and even the professionals working at the salon around the corner—these are your comrades. These are your allies and support system. The hair industry is experiencing a movement, independent of manufacturers, paid events, or fancy marketing telling us what to do. We are moving back to a hair *community*. The movement is beautiful. Climb aboard—this is how we raise the bar.



“Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life.”

–Amy Poehler

SO, WHAT'S NEXT?

1. Throw competition out the window!
2. Get involved with your local AHP Root, this month and next
3. Don't just go—show up! Get real, honest, and raw.

And don't be a stranger! AHP Roots are supported by Associated Hair Professionals. We'd love to answer any of your questions and lend all of our hands to your AHP Root community's success.

800-575-4642 | Roots@associatedhairprofessionals.com

Start an AHP Root in your town and we'll make sure you have everything you need.

