



EDUCATION

How to Earn a Degree in Beauty

By [American Salon Staff](#) • Aug 11, 2022 09:00am

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(Courtesy)

Long overdue, there is now a higher education program to pursue a career in beauty—not a beauty school, but a university college degree. Created in partnership with L'Oréal, Mesa Community College and Arizona State University, [Lead](#) is designed to elevate and empower the beauty professional, helping to eliminate the stigma surrounding the profession. Here, Francis Tesmer, CEO of ROLFS Global, shares more on the program and how beauty professionals, or anyone interested in a career in beauty, can benefit.

Where did the idea for Lead begin?

My lifelong passions are social justice, economic growth, affordable education and making the world a better place. Through extensive industry research, I realized the absence of higher education, which has led to the lack of respect, financial prosperity and stigma around beauty professionals—the very professionals that are trusted

of respect, financial prosperity and stigma around beauty professionals, the very professionals that are trusted with one of the most important aspects of every person's life—self-esteem and self-image. I knew it was time for a new era and an elevated future for this industry.

What went into launching the program?

I began conceptualizing Lead 11 years ago, a degree program that delivers a comprehensive skillset for the beauty professionals of the future to take their career to a whole new level. The industry-focused curriculum includes courses in business, finance, communication, science, entrepreneurship, innovation, marketing, leadership, ethics, evidence-based decision making, and many more beyond the cosmetology school training, which are essential for a successful career in all aspects of this industry.

Why is this program important to you on a personal and professional level?

On a personal level, I am truly passionate about women empowerment. The majority of beauty professionals are women, and for too long there has been this perception that being a beauty professional is a last resort for those who did not want to go to college to pursue a degree. Many parents do not view it as a valid profession. This lack of validation is harmful to the women who make such a huge impact in everyone's daily lives. It is time they get the respect and the financial stability they deserve.

On a professional level, beauty is a \$500B industry and is continuously growing. There has never been a more perfect time to elevate the industry, creating beauty professionals of the future and enhancing the endless possibilities for career advancement.

How did you select Mesa Community College, Arizona State University and L'Oréal to be partners on this endeavor?

L'Oréal is the leader in the beauty industry and has always championed the elevation and advancement of the beauty profession, making them the perfect partner. Mesa Community College is one of the largest, most reputable community college districts in the U.S. Arizona State University is No. 1 in innovation and is the largest public university in the country. It is not by chance that we chose to work with two of the top schools in the country, both of which are very forward-thinking and place a very strong emphasis on innovation, providing excellence through education and empowering the professional growth of students.

How does Lead differ from other educational programs offered to the beauty community?

This is not a beauty school. This is a degree in beauty. For the first time in the world, beauty professionals can earn an associates and bachelor's degree in beauty, enabling them to thrive in today's ever-evolving beauty industry. Lead equips the beauty professionals of the future with skills beyond the technical that they learn in beauty school. This college degree program will revolutionize the way the world views the professionals in our industry.

Who can join this program, and which types of careers can come out of it?

Lead is for everyone who desires to earn a college and university degree in the fastest and most cost-effective way. Current and graduated cosmetology students can use their license to receive college credit toward their associates degree, enabling them to graduate in less time. High school graduates who are interested in a career in beauty can finally pursue a higher education pathway in the beauty industry. Individuals from other industries who are considering a career change are also invited to join the revolution.

The beauty industry is reinventing itself, and it demands more leaders with entrepreneurial spirit and experience than ever before. This pioneering degree progression, available online and/or on campus, is designed to create an elevated future filled with prestige and financial stability for the community of 1.7 million beauty professionals, preparing them for a wide range of career opportunities that meet and exceed the ever-

Beauty professionals, preparing them for a wide range of career opportunities that meet, and exceed, the ever-evolving expectations of modern customers and markets. If you are considering a career in beauty, as a beauty professional or beyond, Lead is for you.

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