

Ocean County Vocational Technical School

Working in the Field

Sharing Success Stories



Student's Name: Amanda Kingsley
OCVTS Program: Cosmetology
Instructor: Deb Gall
Employer: September's Hair Salon, Brick, NJ
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Class of: 2010
Center: Toms River
High School: Toms River East
College: Ocean County

In Amanda's own words: Ever since I was a little girl, I had known I wanted to be in the beauty industry. Every time we were assigned any type of school project involving careers, I always chose a hair salon. As I got older and had to start seriously considering my future options, I did my research on local cosmetology programs. I talked to numerous graduates of the cosmetology program at OCVTS and heard nothing but great things. I started the cosmetology program at the Toms River location in the fall of 2008, which turned out to be one of the best decisions I have ever made.

At OCVTS, we learned the basic curriculum requirements such as cutting, coloring, the knowledge behind it, styling, etc. My instructor, Mrs. Gall was amazing. Going into my state board test, I felt completely prepared. She had all sorts of reviews, practices, everything you could imagine to make sure we knew what we needed to know. However, Mrs. Gall went beyond that. With her being in a salon herself, she gave us advice that you would never find in a textbook. Mrs. Gall also gave us the "behind the scenes" skills so to speak. She taught us how to do the skills required, and how to deal with the actual clients. The program also included trips, which were amazing experiences and added more passion for the career. Best yet, Mrs. Gall believed in all of us. She never once doubted us and constantly encouraged us to be the best that we could be, and it worked!



I am working at September's Hair Salon in Brick. We are a large salon with about eighteen people working there. Everyone is wonderful, and we get along so well. It really makes the salon feel like a second home. Most of the stylists have been there for well over five years. We have had in-salon education classes, which are so important! We also have traveled to take classes and meet Guy Tang! Having a group of girls who feel like family makes me never feel like I am actually working.

I think it is so important to find the right salon for you. It makes all the difference. I started out at September's four years ago as an assistant. I had zero clientele. That was the hardest part because I wanted so badly to be a stylist. Working at a salon with little walk-ins made that extremely difficult. I would often get frustrated and believe doing hair was not for me. In 2015, that changed, when I made it my New Year's resolution to buckle down and try my best to get my book built. For me, social media was amazing! The best piece of advice I could give would be to use social media to your advantage. At one point, 99% of my clients I acquired from Instagram. I would spend hours doing things online to be recognized, and it really helped. Within seven months, I went from no clients to a full book. So, post, post, post!



Another piece of advice I had been told time and time again is... never ever stop learning! The world of hair is constantly changing. There is always something more to learn, so never think you know it all. That also happens to be my favorite thing about this field. I learn something new every day I go to work, and to me, that makes every day that much more rewarding. I am extremely happy with where I am at in my career right now, but I will never stop trying to work for more. Big things are planned ahead!

"Phenomenal, enthusiastic, motivated, intelligent," four words Mrs. Gall used describing Amanda when nominating her as an OCVTS success story.

Amanda Kingley, Stylist, aka amandarosepaintsheads!