



First-ever beauty & wellness roundtable brings CEOs together to help solve the industry's job crisis

By: Lynelle Lynch



During the pandemic, an estimated 20% to 25% of beauty and wellness employees left the workforce. Businesses attempted a return to a state of normality but found themselves without the staff to support client demand.

In response, the industry's leading beauty and wellness associations came together as the Unite as One (UAO) coalition to address this challenge.

Beauty Changes Lives, a member of Unite as One coalition, hosted a CEO roundtable in Chicago, representing the first time that C-suite executives representing all segments of beauty and wellness—including service (salons/spas), manufacturing,

distribution, retail, and education—had come together to work on identifying solutions.

Facilitated by award-winning author, change-management futurist, and former L'Oréal Managing Director Minter Dial, the three-hour working session included over 25 of the industry's top executives.

The group uniformly validated the severity of the problem and the need to make millions of young people—who are already beauty and wellness enthusiasts on social media—aware of the wide range of available career opportunities.

Three themes emerged.

CEO Roundtable

Roundtable participants

Phil Horvath, President & CEO | Chatters

Reuben Carranza, CEO | Amika

Sue Trondson, Vice President | Aveda

Lynelle Lynch, CEO | Bellus Academy

Jan Arnold, Co-Founder | CND

Jane Wurwand, Founder & CEO | Dermalogica

Carolyn Aronson, Founder & CEO | It's a 10

Filip Spacek, President Professional Products Division
North America | L'Oréal

Tatum Neill, Artistic Director | Neill Corporation

Pete Castellanos, Executive Vice President | Paul
Mitchell

Robert Passage, Chairman & CEO | Pivot Point
International

Christina Russell, CEO | Radiance Holdings

Michael Heines, Chairman of the Executive Board |
Salon Service Group

Luke Massery, CEO | Scrip

Nick Stenson, Senior Vice President | Ulta

Anna Manukyan, Senior Director | Ulta

Karen Short, CEO | Universal Companies

Mary Atherton, Director of Communications | Wella

Larry Silvestri, Senior Vice President | Tricoci

Charles Brown, CEO | CLICS

Tony Gordon, Owner | Gordon Salons

Brandon Hutchins, President Professional Brands |
Beauty Industry Group

Bob Maconi, Director | Harms Software

Eric Bakken, President & CEO | Hair Cuttery

John Moroney, Vice President | Olaplex

Megan Murray, Senior Director | Ulta

Victoria Gallo, Director | Wella

Kristin Firrell, Vice President | Paul Mitchell



Theme One

Our audience would likely consider us as a career opportunity if they knew more about us. Post-pandemic Gen Z enters the workforce with very different considerations than past generations. They value flexibility, self-expression, meaningful work, diversity, and the ability to control their earnings based on their time commitment—all things that our industry, compared to traditional post-secondary education, can offer. As beauty and wellness compete against other service industries and college, the executive group agreed on the need to show how well we align with the Next Gen's core values of freedom, creativity, and purpose. Additionally, Gen Z regularly and actively engages with beauty and wellness on social media.

Theme Two

We can't win over the students if we don't win over their parents. Outdated myths and stereotypes (think "beauty school dropout") are pervasive and entrenched. While parents may be familiar with beauty and wellness from their visits to salons and spas, most have never considered the industry a viable career option. We know that success takes hard work, determination, passion, and intention, and the



executive group agreed that we needed to showcase the rigor and professionalism of our careers (which generally require licensing). We also needed to highlight opportunities to make a highly competitive income limited only by individual efforts.

Theme Three

We need to share our personal stories. Our personal stories are about dimensions of success—overcoming adversity, finding a community to belong to, and achieving career satisfaction. Our industry is full of personal stories that reveal what careers in beauty and wellness look like. Our compelling stories put a face on our industry, address misleading stereotypes, and change hearts and minds. The

Unite as One Coalition Members:

The American Association of Cosmetology Schools, Associated Skin Care Professionals, Beauty Changes Lives, Cosmetologists Chicago, Intercoiffure America Canada, International Nail Technician's Association, International Salon Spa Business Network, International Spa Association, Professional Beauty Association, Professional Beauty Federation of California, Pro Nails Association.

beauty and wellness industry has over one million socially active members—and by helping them share their stories (we touch and connect with millions of consumers every day), we have a unique opportunity to make sure our stories are heard.

Following the roundtable, the Unite as One group launched KNOW SECRETS (www.knowbeautysecrets.org), an industry advocacy campaign sharing the real stories of beauty and wellness professionals across social media. Future roundtable meetings will utilize our new dialogue to support the industry and drive the campaign's success.

About the article author

Lynelle Lynch is intimately involved in beauty and wellness as the owner of Running Y Ranch Resort—a destination spa, fitness and golf resort, and CEO of Bellus Academy group of leading beauty and wellness career schools.

Lynelle's volunteer work includes being President & Founding Member of Beauty Changes Lives—a non-profit to empower beauty and wellness professionals through scholarships, mentorship and advanced education; Chairman of the Career Education Colleges and Universities—dedicated to connecting the Higher Education Act to jobs; and Board Member and Immediate Past Chair of the La Jolla Playhouse, a leading regional theatre which has sent over 30 productions to Broadway.