

ASU partners to develop beauty and wellness degree program

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The partnership with Mesa Community College and ROLFS Salon provides the opportunity for students to earn two degrees and professional experience

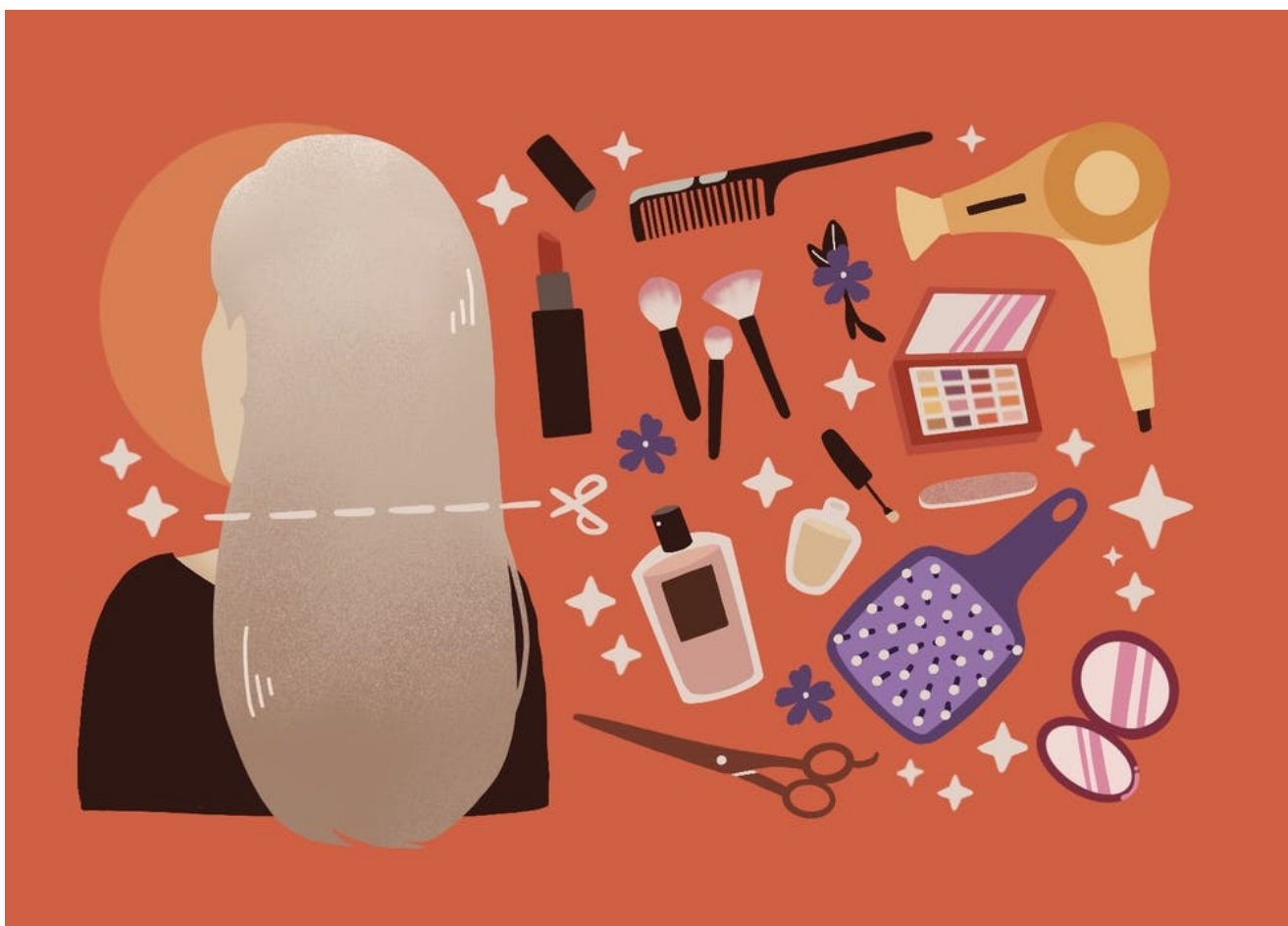


Photo by Kyra Saley | The State Press

“ASU and MCC are working together to provide degree programs for beauticians, treating them to an accelerated program with skills in business and health.” Illustration published on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2020.

By Anusha Natarajan | 11/03/2020 8:27pm

ASU teamed up with Mesa Community College and ROLFS Salon to develop a new beauty and wellness degree program based on experiential and classroom learning that began this fall.

Through the program, students follow an accelerated course to earning their associate degree in science in beauty and wellness at MCC and their bachelor's of applied science degree in health entrepreneurship and innovation with an emphasis on personal care at ASU.

The ROLFS Salon has provided 12 students with full-ride scholarships to cover all their educational expenses for the program.

Carie Allen, occupational program director for general business programs at MCC, said the associate degree is to provide additional knowledge about managing and running a business to those who already hold a beautician license in areas like cosmetology.

“The idea is to give them the educational background they need to become a manager or owner of a spa or salon,” Allen said.

Allen said the program offers an opportunity for students to earn credit for their prior work, such as attending licensing programs in areas like cosmetology.

“That is a great incentive for students who have done these training programs at their place of employment to get them a little bit of a head start on getting the academic degree that will put them in the forefront in their career goals,” Allen said.

Judith Karshmer, dean of the Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation, said the health entrepreneurship and innovation degree touches on essential skills to become a successful entrepreneur.

“The degree really provides the learner with understanding the whole process of innovation, how to become an entrepreneur, how to take health and wellness to understand marketing and advertising,” Karshmer said. “All those things make a holistic understanding of health within today's context.”



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In addition to taking classes, students will also participate in immersive learning opportunities, such as working at ROLFS salons the Phoenix metro area for training and earning credit toward their degree.

Francis Tesmer, ROLFS Global CEO, said there are many ways for students to gain that experiential learning through travel and laboratory work.

“The salon has all the technology, such as virtual reality and just many, many things,” Tesmer said.

Karshmer said it is important for students to have some sort of experiential learning while earning their degree.

“We have a goal in the college that every student who graduates will have some kind of internship experience,” Karshmer said.

While COVID-19 is still affecting learning modalities, students have been adapting to the situation by taking their classes online.

Allen said the first cohort of students are taking classes like personal finance and social media marketing online at MCC and will complete their associate degree there in the spring. Students will then attend ASU in Fall 2021.

Tesmer said this gave students the opportunity to learn about the challenges of maintaining a business during this time.

“If I want to be a beautician, I need to know something a lot more about health, safety and sanitation,” Tesmer said. “For our industry, it was a perfect realization.”

Going to a beauty school and obtaining a beauty license is not enough to grow and develop one’s career, Tesmer said.

“With the power of education, we are especially helping women and single mothers of girls to be educated, to do what they love and to be successful at it,” Tesmer said.

Karshmer said it is important to support and be responsive to the needs of the community and that that is what the new program aims to do.

“We are nothing if we are not trying to help whoever gets to the next level of a profession or career of becoming and contributing citizens of the world,” Karshmer said, “It’s about bringing people in and helping them be successful. “

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