

Personal Essay

For as long as I can remember, I've been in a salon. Growing up, the beauty industry was always where I wanted to be. My mother was a massage therapist, and while I waited on her to finish up with her clients, I would watch the cosmetologists give blow outs, or drool over the list of the salon's client services. For the longest time, I had my heart set on being a cosmetologist. That is until, my mom moved to a salon with an esthetician. Watching all the beautiful women walking out of her booth, caused me to hop on the table any chance I could get! I loved the feeling of being pampered, but what I love even more was the way my skin felt afterwards. Whenever I got older and moved to Charleston with my husband, I was strongly encouraged by my family to attend the nearby Paul Mitchell school. While I still wanted to eventually go back to school to be an esthetician, I can recognize a good opportunity when I see it. I enrolled in school, and was genuinely excited for what was to come! However, on my first day of classes, I met Ms. Shannon, a master esthetician who was to teach my class the basics of cosmetology. Hearing her talk about her experience as an esthetician only solidified my plan of returning later for my own esthetician license. I knew exactly what I was going to do, finish school, get a job and some experience in a salon to pay of my loans and then eventually save up enough to return to school for my true passion, skincare! I had it all figured out, that is until we actually started the hands on portion of our training. Being on my feet for over six hours a day and constantly lifting my arms above my head was taking a toll on my body. I tried to ignore it and push past, but it got to a point where I realized this career would no longer be an option for me one night when I had to go to the ER for severe back spasms. With some X-rays I discovered that what I had thought was just scoliosis was actually, spina bifida. My sixth vertebrae never attached and at that point, I just knew that being a cosmetologist wasn't the right path for me. I started physical therapy shortly after that, multiple days a week and even practicing at home on my days off. I was committed to getting my life back on track, I didn't want my health issues to limit what I could do with my life. After months of hard work, I was finally cleared to rejoin the workforce! I was able to get a job at a Jersey Mikes near my apartment, and I actually worked long hours on my feet. With my husband being in the military, I knew we were due to be restationed soon, I just had no idea where, my only hope was that it was somewhere with a good esthetician program! When we got our orders for VA, I wasn't sure how I felt. I didn't want to be so far from my family in SC, but I was excited to start this new chapter of my life. I looked at esthetician schools before I even looked at houses! I found a few possibilities in the area but none stood out to me like The Institute of Epidermal Cell Therapy. The small class sizes, were so refreshing to hear about, after coming from a huge school like Paul Mitchell the thing that was most important to me was a personalized education. I've worked really hard to get where I am, and I can't see myself doing anything other than being an esthetician! I want to make people feel beautiful and more confident in their own skin! There's nothing else I have a passion for like skincare, and all I want is to learn more. My education means a lot to me, and I think The Institute of Epidermal Cell Therapy would be the perfect fit!