



**Success Magazine:** April, why did you decide to branch out and open your own salon?

**April Seyboth McAllister:** A & Co. Salon gave me an opportunity to develop a culture, and then create traditions that our clients will only associate with us. Working at other salons, there were so many "corporate" rules that prevented me from giving my clients the experience I thought they deserved. I wanted to create a unique, small, personal atmosphere where stylists could focus on the individual client rather than succumb to the pressure to "get 'em in, get 'em out!"

**SM:** What was your experience prior to this venture?

**AM:** I started working in a salon at age fifteen. I swept hair, answered phones, and spent many hours watching senior stylists create beautiful hair. In 2000, I graduated cosmetology school, immediately started working full time, and quickly set a goal of owning my own salon. After years of mastering the art of hair, I began to study the chapters of how to open a business.

**SM:** What was your goal in starting this business?

**AM:** My goal was to create a team that strives to maintain a relationship between strong social,

professional, and artistic responsibilities. I believe in the positive power of teamwork and discovering new ways to do old things better. I am always achieving goals and setting new ones. Most recently, I've expanded my business into the bridal industry. My goal with this is to network with other bridal vendors and help make all dreams come true for Capital Region brides.

**SM:** What has been the biggest challenge you have faced since opening?

**AM:** My biggest challenge has been trying to find a balance between doing what I love and having a personal life. My salon is the core of who I am, and I always strive to be the best. Instead of stopping to smell the roses, I smell the hair color. But I've recently been blessed with such a supportive group of girls who have helped tremendously with the maintenance of the salon—freeing me up to achieve the balance that is so important for every business owner.

**SM:** How were you able to get the funding to launch A& Co? Did you have a business or marketing plan in place?

**AM:** Luckily, I knew at a young age that I wanted my own salon. I started saving my money even before I was in hairdressing school, at the age of fifteen. Twelve years later, the reality of cost hit me.

However, with the help of family, friends, and a few small loans, I had my grand opening! I didn't have a plan at the time. I just knew that my passion for this goal would help me survive. Since then, I've made a lot of mistakes, learned from them, and we've become a better business because of those experiences.

**SM:** How is A & Co. positioned to be an industry standout?

**AM:** I've recently positioned the business in the bridal industry to create long-term relationships with other professionals. We have been able to exceed brides' expectations while managing to fulfill the daily demands of our other clients. Our strong team of stylists can accommodate bridal parties of any size and we have the flexibility to travel to various destinations on wedding days. Fortunately, all of our brides and regular clients have continued to refer us to their friends and families because we go above and beyond to deliver the service they deserve.

**SM:** What services do you offer?

**AM:** At A & Co. we take pride in focusing on being an exceptional hair salon rather than trying to master every spa service. Healthy hair is always our style and we provide the most advanced ingredients to heal hair in any service that you choose. Beyond offering every traditional hair service available, we also provide bridal services which include hair and makeup applications.

**SM:** What principles and values are at the foundation of your business?

**AM:** My purpose and focus includes the commitment of each stylist to consistently support our culture. The camaraderie that reflects this company is seen by clients all day, every day. These moment of truth interactions leave a positive impression of A & Co. because we are a creative professional team that promotes a cooperative spirit of partnership and a culture of dignity, artistry, comfort, and kindness.

**SM:** What has been most rewarding about this new experience?

**AM:** Maintaining a place where people can relax, feel good, and look fresh again. Our alliance of excellence keeps our focus on the beauty of each individual. Each client leaves our salon with a huge smile and feeling great about themselves inside and out!



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