

STEPHANIE KOCIELSKI

VICE PRESIDENT OF EDUCATION AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR FOR JOHN PAUL MITCHELL SYSTEMS



Where are you originally from?

I entered the planet in 1963. My parents are from Philadelphia and that's where I was born, but my parents moved to New Jersey and that's where I grew up. I'm a female combination of Rocky Balboa and Bruce Springsteen - my role models for trying hard and feeling great when you grow.

Where did you receive your initial training?

I went to school at Gordon Phillips Beauty School in Philadelphia and loved every minute. Finally, something interesting!

What additional training have you had?

You name it. I met Paul Mitchell at hair school (I actually shampooed for him). Then I went to my first show and I was hooked. I came into the industry when product companies were just starting, so I've had the pleasure of being trained by the best. Working at a distributorship was fantastic; I got to meet some heroes and learn from them: Trevor Sorbie, Rusks, and of course, Paul Mitchell. I've trained under some fantastic people: Jeanne Braa, Suzanne and John Chadwick, and of course, a great friend and mentor, Mr. Robert Cromeans.

What sort of salon experience have you had?

I've been a hairdresser in four different states and worked in salons for over 26 years. I now have the pleasure to work in the best salon I've ever been in: A Robert Cromeans Salon. As the Artistic Director, I manage the career path of teaching the art of the business.

What sort of platform experience have you had?

While I was in school, I started doing back room support for Paul Mitchell and grew into doing small, local shows and assisting at all the major shows until I got picked to do the majors. I've loved my journey to platform work. I started working at Paul Mitchell in 1985, from shampooing to every job. I got to be good at doing a lot of things, and being dangerous in the salon made it easy. My story lets people see that "you can do it too." Just turn toward a culture that can make you a success, and bring your responsibility and talent.

What sort of print work experience have you had?

Being with the Paul Mitchell family made my dreams come true. I've had the pleasure of being on all the John Paul Mitchell Systems photo shoots since 1989; creating in our advertising campaigns and Vogue ads; and meeting the beauty directors of all the magazines. My favorite was the Paul Mitchell INK campaign. It was a great lesson in the birth of a brand and creative vision with education and art, shared with Robert Cromeans. Still proud when I see it.

What are your specialties?

I am a specialist in the experience, no matter what that might be, from salon to stage. But training the future is my new specialty! I think I'm good at two things: talking and making people feel uplifted. I love to work in a fun environment and do lots of things. I love cutting, coloring, blow-drying, styling, and mostly making myself unforgettable in the guest's eyes and making people feel great.

Have you endorsed or represented a product line? If so, which ones?

John Paul Mitchell Systems - the only one!

What awards and recognition have you received?

Too many to remember, but the biggest award is my current position at John Paul Mitchell Systems. That's an award, not just a job! I'm also very proud of being asked to be your mentor. It's not my past I'm proud of, it's my journey.

Explain your distinctive style or philosophy.

Style: Surreal, crazy with purpose, thinking of the end result and helping people get there, one experience at a time. Making change a constant thing. Philosophy: Being held responsible to a standard can defy you to be a better person. Value a consistent balance and you'll have a great career path. Set goals. Take risks. Hang out with the right people. Be grateful for any chance. Replace what you know in someone else. Have a smile on your face every minute and feel like the luckiest person on the planet.