

profile on michael muia



By Rob Neff

Michael Muia, owner and operator of Michael's Hair and Day Spa, reaped the benefits of sound advice in his life. Now a highly successful businessman, he's dedicated to helping others realize their dreams of success.

"My parents wanted me to go to university, but also encouraged me to learn to do something with my hands, so that I'd always have a trade to fall back on." At 13, Michael started working at a local salon, and continued to work there for almost eight years. He soon discovered that he really enjoyed the business and decided to pursue a career in hairdressing.

At an early age Michael Muia was set firmly on his lifelong career path. He immediately fell in love with the hairdressing business. That passion has never left him.

"I opened my first business in 1983," he tells me. In 1990 Michael and Rose opened their second location on Victoria Avenue and in 1998 they opened Thunder Bay's first day spa. "A day spa includes water therapy treatments, such as hydromassage, body wraps and body scrubs."

Since 1998, Michael's has continued to break new ground in business. Since then, they have introduced the city's first party pedicure room, free WiFi in the salon and the use of mini lap tops for their client's use while enjoying their services. Most recently Michael's welcomed their newest addition to the spa, May Naimian, who operates Laser Plus Clinic.

Though he's forged a wonderful career in the hairdressing business, Michael's very early ambitions pointed in a very different direction. As a boy he dreamed of becoming an electrician. Though his career paths changed dramatically, Michael's handyman skills continue to serve him well.

"I'm pretty handy. I can do carpentry, electrical work and a little plumbing," He says. "When we renovate, we pretty much do everything ourselves. We've had five major renovations here since 1998. It keeps our salon fresh and exciting. People love to see something new when they come in."

Michael draws inspiration from some icons in the hairdressing field, and credits their influence for much of his own success. "I'm constantly inspired by people like my friend Wayne Grund, a hairdressing artist and motivator, Irvine Rusk and Vidal Sassoon."

As a result of that experience, Michael seizes every opportunity to act as an innovative mentor to others. In 2010, Michael's Hair Design and Day Spa received the prestigious Minister's Apprenticeship Employer Award from the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities of Ontario, which celebrated the company's twenty-year relationship with the apprenticeship program. This year, Michael's was also recognized by the Canadian Hairdresser magazine for his Lookschool Makeover Contest, an on line competition featuring the work of each of his stylists and aestheticians.

Michael's supports a wide range of local charities and organizations. Their salon has raised over \$40,000 for Northern Cancer Research. They have also contributed to Heart and Stroke, Children's Wish Foundation, the Royal LePage Run for Women, the Luncheon of Hope, Bachelor Auction, Queen of Hearts Golf Tournament and others.

Life is by no means all business for Michael Muia. Family is at the core of his life. He cherishes every moment spent with Rose, his wife of twenty-five years, and sons Michael Jr. and Nicholas. "My life changed when my first child, Michael, was born. That changed the way I see things. Today I love golfing and fishing with my kids. Do I have any unfulfilled goals? I'd love to go fly-in fishing with my boys. I also want to take them to Dallas, go golfing, and go watch the Dallas Cowboys in their new stadium!"