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Pro Beauty CENTRAL

Artist Spotlight: Emily Chen

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Emily Chen (@emchenhair), Hairstylist, Educator, SalonCentric #ItTakesAProTeam Artist and owner of Brooks & Harlow Salon in Victor, N.Y., has made a name for herself with her massive color projects and dry-cutting expertise. Naturally, a flood of career opportunities in education, online tutorials, and teaching on the main stages of acclaimed hair shows followed.



The first-generation Taiwanese-American enrolled in cosmetology school in 2002 at the age of 16 while still a junior in high school, and hasn't looked back. Chen's work ethic and ambition carried her through the opening of her own salon in 2018, the survival of her salon in 2020, and winning the Hairbrained Video Awards Color Video of the Year in 2022.



SalonCentric: What values from your upbringing do you credit for helping you achieve your success today?

Emily Chen: "I think a huge part of my determination and drive early on in my career came from a desire to prove to my family that doing hair can be a successful career path. As a first-generation Taiwanese-American, my parents sacrificed everything to come to the U.S. to offer a better life for me and my sisters, so I can't blame them for not being thrilled by my decision to forgo college and go right into doing hair. But fast forward to today, I think I've proven my point and my family now is super proud and supportive."

SC: Who in the industry would you like to send a love note to for having an impact on your career?

EC: "Honestly, so many. I will never forget my one-year apprenticeship under Elan McDowell who taught me how to teach. Kati Whitledge helped me so much through my first few years as a salon owner, Nikki Le was a godsend during the pandemic, Kelly Cardenas is a legend, and has been a huge inspiration for me. And although I've never had the opportunity to meet her, I hope I someday get to because I'm a huge OG fan of Britt Seva."