

The journey to beauty in Durham: how a beauty supply store builds community

By Brooklyn Brown & Celia Farmer

On paper, her name is Sade Jones, but the people of Durham know her simply as Ms. Beauty. Jones received this title when she started working at Beauty World, a beauty supply store in Durham, in 2014.

Jones, 33, is a sales associate and hair specialist at Beauty World. Most days she can be found in the hair section, which includes weaves and wigs.

“I love it here because I love makeup,” Jones said. “I love fashion. I love hair, and I started doing hair at a young age, 12 years old. So, this is my passion, you know? To make people look beautiful.”

Jones said Beauty World’s mission is to make anyone who steps into the store feel supported and beautiful. Owner Abraham Kim advocates for this same mission.

“For many, beauty is a journey of experimenting with different things and learning how to improve their confidence by enhancing their look,” Kim said. “We want everyone to know that we support who they want to be and or who they want to become. And this is the reason why we make it our business to know and learn about products, hair, braiding, weaving, wigs and so much more.”

Ginger, 23, of North Carolina, and Stella, 23, of Florida, visit Beauty World often and see Jones and Kim’s mission in action.

“I like to just feel nice and feel good about myself,” Stella said. “[Beauty World] gives you that. It gives you a chance to have a variety of whatever you need to make yourself feel beautiful and look nice.”

Beauty World prides itself on the specialization and representation of products they have for their customers. Kim delights in finding unique beauty products that his customers want but cannot find at most stores.

Customers like Ginger know how important Beauty World is to the community.

“Durham does have a decent minority population,” Ginger said. “You can’t go to other stores to get [products] so at least they have somewhere to come get the stuff they need.”

Beauty empowerment is an important aspect of Beauty World, but serving the community also remains at the heart of everything Beauty World does.

“The Durham community and other



Sade Jones, commonly known as Ms. Beauty, shows customers the process of curling a wig at Beauty World. It is her passion to make people feel beautiful and confident in themselves. (Photo by Celia Farmer)

regional communities are very important to our business as we would not be here without the community’s support,” Kim said.

Jones wouldn’t have coined the name Ms. Beauty if it weren’t for the relationships she has built with customers over time. She said she values each customer and their needs.

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“We have everything and we help different races,” Jones said. “We have different people come in, and some people don’t think they can wear weave. Then we break it down to them, and then they get into the weave, and then they start wearing it. That’s why we stand out because most people be like, when they go to other stores they don’t get the proper customer service. We help everybody.”

Kim said that Beauty World created quite the noise because the store values

relationships in the community with local beauticians, stylists and barbers.

“The relationships you make along the way have been quite the story for us,” Kim said. “From beauticians, barbers, stylists to local customers and new customers, being able to assist their journey has been very rewarding. Seeing people visit Beauty World and for us to be able to put a smile on someone’s face and share a laugh with them has been very rewarding.”

Beauty World also contributed some philanthropic work to the community. Kim said the store has worked with the Durham County Department of Public Health to bring services to those in need.

“We hope to have more community events in the near future, and we are seeking partners and other organizations that may want to get involved,” Kim said.

Next time you pass by Beauty World, at 1418 Avondale Drive, take some time to stop in. Not only do they have all the beauty products you could ever need, but they have passionate employees who want to make you feel your best regardless of your age, gender or race.

Just take it from Ms. Beauty:

“We don’t turn nobody away,” Jones said. “We don’t care how you look. If you come in and you need our help, we’ll help you.”