

Milady provides beauty education for all

The name **Milady** has always been synonymous with beauty education. In 2007, the company celebrated its 80th birthday in the beauty and wellness industry, and it doesn't appear that it's slowing down for one second. In fact, it's safe to say that this business is only getting better with age. **Dawn Gerrain**, president of Milady, a part of **Cengage Learning**, recently spoke with *Beauty Industry Report* about some of the exciting changes taking place with the company.

Beauty Industry Report (BIR): Dawn, first off we would like to wish you and the Milady team a happy belated birthday!

Dawn Gerrain (DG): Thanks! My team and I are really proud of how much we've been able to accomplish in recent years and proudly acknowledge that we wouldn't be where we are today without a number of trailblazers in the industry, particularly **Nicholas F. Cimaglia**, founder of Milady.

BIR: Milady is represented at numerous educational events, conferences and meetings, and there's been a few times where we've overheard the phrase, "This isn't your grandmother's Milady." What's your take on that?

DG: In the past, it was easy for people to view Milady as only a provider of books for students attending a beauty and wellness school program. Yes, we pride ourselves on being the premier publisher of educational resources for thousands of schools across the country, as well as the primary resource for students to review content and achieve overwhelming passing rates on their state boards, but there's a lot more to us.

BIR: Like what?

DG: Well, we've really worked to ensure that our products and services meet the needs of today's customers. Our products are hipper, edgier and have much more technology than ever before. We have also been perceived as providing only basic education. Last year, we launched a new product, **theEdge by Milady: metroluxe edition** that goes well beyond the basic techniques, and this spring, we're launching **theEdge: muse edition**. In addition, in 2006, Milady was proud to incorporate a number of professional services into our business model,

such as consulting, in-salon training, individual technician coaching, as well as providing one of the industry's leading training academies for salon/spa owners.

BIR: That's excellent, as there can never be a shortage of those who can always use a helping hand to achieve success in their business.

DG: Exactly! And that's not all. We are constantly soliciting feedback from those throughout the industry to find out what some of their issues are, what they could use on a day-to-day or month-to-month basis and how we can best utilize our resources to provide them with solutions for those needs. That's actually one of the ways we developed our **Business Fundamentals Partnership Program** and **MiladyU**.

BIR: What is Business Fundamentals?

DG: Business Fundamentals is the school industry's premier partnership program. It is designed to provide a comprehensive solution to participating schools for business training. Students learn what tools top salon and spa professionals use to attract clients, increase their sales and grow their income.

BIR: And MiladyU?

DG: MiladyU is our answer to providing "one stop shopping" for students, teachers, technicians and owners alike to purchase and access online courses from the comfort of their own computer. We offer online licensing preparation for the student, teacher training modules for instructors and in 2008, we launched 10 new courses that will prove to be a fantastic resource for fulfilling continuing education requirements for professionals, as well as provide important business training in an efficient and interactive way for owners. Soon we hope to launch an online infection control course to meet the needs of licensees who need refresher training.

BIR: It seems as though this is your answer to how the industry is changing overall along with changes in technology.

DG: Absolutely, but keep in mind that we at Milady believe that this is an evolution of things to come and not a revolution. This industry consists of the most creative, visual and hands-on people and that will never change; nor would I personally want that to change, as it is one of

the many reasons I love the job I'm in. With that said, I feel strongly that it is our responsibility to innovate and have those solutions ready for when the time comes, making sure EVERYONE is taken care of by providing an array of solutions for a variety of needs.

BIR: How is the overall quality of education available in beauty schools?

DG: The quality of education being offered in schools is astounding and we're a part of that. Teachers are embracing new technologies and the change in students overall from decades past, and are definitely up for the challenge to ensure they're in a nurturing environment and succeed not only in school, but when they get out, as well. In the future, it's going to be about various learning styles and convenience, and we'll gladly have the answer for both. Not only will we continue to provide the most respected and highest quality textbooks in the marketplace, but we will also provide CDs, DVDs and instructor tools.

At the end of the day, we succeed when everyone else succeeds. If teachers are having a hard time developing lesson plans or coming up with activities for their classes, we have resources for them. If students are worried about passing their state boards, we want them to know that we invested so much into their tools that they should feel confident they learned what they needed to learn. On the flip side, if a hair stylist in a remote area of the country needs to fulfill continuing education requirements or wants professional development and has limited resources, then we're there for them.

BIR: Any last thoughts for our readers?

DG: Milady's overall goal is to be the go-to resource for the entire industry. We're committing ourselves to helping every single person from the moment they're a student to when they pass their state boards and need continuing education to the owners that could use some business advice. We don't call ourselves Global Leaders Providing Lifelong Learning Solutions for nothing.

You can reach Milady at 800-998-7498, ext. 2700, or via email at delmar.milady@cengage.com or visit www.milady.cengage.com.

