

Stylist helps her clients keep up appearances

Image consultant works with people in business, politics, entertainment

By **THERESA SULLIVAN**

Behind a sharp scissors snip, the poof of a makeup brush and the hues of a new wardrobe stands image consultant Cynthia Kyle.

Equipped with more than 25 years of styling experience in serving hundreds of customers, Kyle, owner of Kyle Image Consultants, creates a look for her customers from start to finish.

"I am able to do the cutting, the color of the hair, the makeup, the wardrobe, shopping, closet inventory, eyeglasses. We shop for everything, from head to toe," she says.

Kyle began as a salon owner and hairstylist. The opportunity arose for her to work first in the television industry and then the corporate world. After working those jobs, Kyle saw the need for image consultation and started her business in 2002.

"People were asking me questions about their personal appearance," Kyle says.

She says people looking to climb the corporate ladder wanted an edge over their competition, a look that would help them succeed.

"That's how the image consulting evolved," she explains.

For each client, Kyle accounts for the person's body type, colors, skin tone, job



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Cynthia Kyle began as a salon owner and hairstylist and took on clients in television and the corporate world. In 2002 she started her business as an image consultant.

and lifestyle.

The prices at Kyle Image Consultants are a la carte. A customer can receive a single service, such as a haircut, a makeover or a consultation, or go for the full image. Prices begin at \$45 and go up to \$500.

Kyle, who is the sole employee in her business, meets with customers for hair and makeup services at 950 Penfield Road but also shops with clients and meets them at their workplaces.

"Whatever is easiest for the client," Kyle

says. "I'm all about servicing them and making it easy for them."

Kyle does both corporate and personal work. In the corporate sphere, she assists clients with career advancement, entering the job market and creating the ideal look for an interview. She advises on interviewing and networking skills, interactions with business clients, verbal and nonverbal communication and email etiquette.

On the personal front, Kyle helps her customers increase their confidence and

assists with weight loss. She also works to give customers a fresh look after years of looking the same.

"The image—it's important, even though it's really what's in the inside that matters. But unfortunately we're in a society that does perceive images as important," Kyle says.

Kyle has worked with governors and members of Congress, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Her client roster includes Hulk Hogan, Warner Brothers, ESPN, and Oprah Winfrey's *O Magazine*. She works with Fortune 500 companies as well—from CEOs to salespeople. One of Kyle's most recent local clients was Arild Remmereit, the new music director of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

Kyle says the biggest challenge she faces is the economy. Sometimes budgets are cut, making work a little scarce for a time, she says, but it always rebounds.

"I've seen it happen throughout the years, and you get nervous, but it comes back," she says. "You have to stay positive."

She says her aim is to help others succeed, whether it is in their business or personal life.

"I see the beauty in everyone, and we try to bring that beauty out," she says.

Adds Kyle: "I feel honored that I'm able to do this for people. I love it. Every day I go to work, it's just another good day."

Theresa Sullivan is a Rochester Business Journal intern.

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