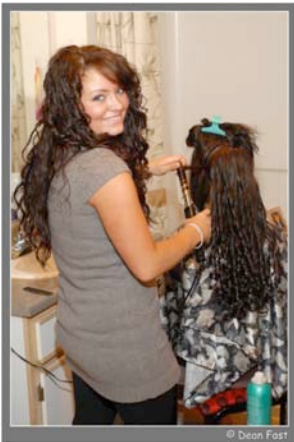


### Graduate Profile:

Jessica Thynes, Class of 2010  
Cosmetology Program  
Milan Institute of Cosmetology  
Fairfield, CA



*"The sacrifices my family made in order for me to stay in school were very difficult decisions. I just kept reminding myself that I would be able to provide a better life for them if I graduated."*

It was Milan Institute of Cosmetology graduate Jessica Thynes's lifelong dream to become a cosmetologist. "I have been in love with this career since I was old enough to cut my doll's hair," recalled Jessica. "I was that girl! I have always loved making people feel beautiful." She intended to go to cosmetology school as soon as she graduated from high school, but life doesn't always go according to plan. Instead, she met her future husband her senior year in high school and fell in love. A year later, they got married, and she put off cosmetology school so that her husband could finish his education in nursing. About five months into her marriage, Jessica found out she was pregnant with her first child Mason. She began working to help support the family. Then her husband Kevin joined the U.S. Air Force to pursue his nursing career. Her life seemed to be taking one turn after another from her original plan. During her family's time at Travis Air Force Base in Fairfield, California, she became pregnant with her second son Jayden. That's when she decided to focus on her career goals again. She began looking for the right cosmetology school to attend so that she could enroll as soon as her baby was old enough. She continued to work in the children's waiting room at the David Grant USAF Medical Center on base during her pregnancy.

### What's New

#### Graduate Profile, Page 2:

Melissa Muongkhote managed to juggle a full time job, evening classes, a family and still found time to study. Read about her journey from day care provider to pharmacy technician.

#### Campus Profile, Page 3:

This issue's featured school is the hybrid campus Milan Institute in Clovis, California. Get to know the city, school director and future plans for the school.

#### Employer Profile, Page 3:

Beaux Cheveux Salon located in Sparks, Nevada, is one of many valued employers of Milan graduates. Learn about what the salon owner, a former Milan graduate, looks for in job candidates.

#### Company Highlights, Page 4:

Find out which campuses have added new programs, student salons or student massage spas.

13 months after Jayden was born, Jessica enrolled at the Milan Institute of Cosmetology in Fairfield. "I'm glad I waited to start school because I took it much more seriously than I would have right out of high school," admitted Jessica. Each of her instructors helped her grow in a different way. "Jade Ward was my Phase 1 Instructor who taught me to believe in myself and build a strong foundation for my career," said Jessica. "She is pretty young, which inspired me. If I become an instructor someday, it will be because she showed me that you can do anything you put your mind to regardless of age." Jessica notes that Instructor Patti Barnes challenged her to do her absolute best and helped her learn everything she needed to know to pass the cosmetology state board exam. "Hayley Whitcomb is one of the most talented Instructors there," Jessica said. "She taught great techniques and made school fun!"

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## Graduate Profile: Jessica Thynes (Continued)

Jessica overcame many obstacles while she was in cosmetology school. Being a mother of two children with a military husband who had to travel often, she had a hard time finding child care. "The sacrifices we had to make in order for me to stay in school were extremely difficult decisions," Jessica revealed. "I just kept reminding myself that I would be able to provide a better life for my family if I graduated." To make things worse, she began experiencing chest pain about 900 hours into her cosmetology program. Not wanting to miss school, she continued to provide services on the salon floor until she began to feel symptoms similar to a heart attack. The 24-year-old finished her last service and then went to the emergency room. Several trips to a cardiac clinic later, she discovered she had two holes in her heart. She attended school the next day with a heart monitor to check the severity of her ailment. Luckily, her doctor decided she didn't need immediate surgery and would be able to complete her training. "It was a very hard time for me, but I had the support of all the students and staff," said Jessica. "They all made me feel very valued. It made me want to get in there and work even harder!"

Jessica went on to become an excellent student. She had exceptional attendance, good grades and met her practical, client referral and salon product sale benchmarks. These achievements earned her the title of Gold Team Member, a coveted role that only three to four students from each session and program per quarter can obtain. Gold Team Members are required to help mentor newer students for 90 days. "It was a great honor to be selected to join the Gold Team," Jessica stated. "It helped me build leadership skills that I can use for the rest of my professional and personal life."

She continuously challenged herself while in school. One day, she set a seemingly impossible goal of performing 100 services and selling \$200 in salon products in a month. She didn't think she would succeed, but by the second week, she had to increase her salon product sales goal to \$300 because she had already reached her original goal. By the end of the month, she had completed an amazing 113 salon services and sold \$328 in products. She also graduated with a staggering 115 salon client referrals. "I was determined to set records before graduating," declared Jessica.

The day after she passed her cosmetology state board exam, she began working at Renegades Salon and Spa in Vacaville, California. "I absolutely love working there," Jessica revealed. "The other stylists immediately made me feel welcomed, and the owner is a great friend of mine now. My experience so far has been awesome!" She plans to continue working in salons wherever her husband's military career takes her. "I'm going to use moving every three years to my advantage and learn as much about this industry as I can," said Jessica. She plans to continue taking cosmetology classes to further her training and hopes to own her own salon someday. She is also considering becoming an instructor later on in her career.

"If I could give any advice to my fellow Milan Institute of Cosmetology students, it would be to **love** what you do," recommends Jessica. "Put your heart into it. Do it because you enjoy it." She also advises students to stay motivated and to respect their instructors. It's every instructor's job to push students to do their best. "Most importantly, put your one of a kind style into your work," suggests Jessica. "There is a lot of competition out there, but there is only one you!"

## Graduate Profile: Melissa Muongkhot, Class of 2009

Pharmacy Technician Program  
Milan Institute – Amarillo, TX



***"My time at Milan Institute was fun! I enjoyed every minute I was there. Everything I learned has been very useful in my current position."***

After working in day care for a year, Melissa Muongkhot was ready for a change. She wanted a career that had better pay and more opportunity for advancement. That's when she found Milan Institute in Amarillo, Texas. "I decided to go back to school because I wanted a better future for my family, and I knew that staying at the day care center wouldn't get me anywhere," admitted Melissa. Having heard good things about Milan Institute, she made an appointment to visit the school. "I talked to an admission representative who showed me that I would get the most out of my time there," recalled Melissa.

Melissa struggled over the next ten months to balance a full time job, her family and school. She continued to

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## Campus Profile: Milan Institute • Clovis, CA



Clovis Campus Lobby

Since it first opened in December 2005, Milan Institute in Clovis, California, has graduated an impressive 969 students. Currently, 360 students are in attendance. The Clovis campus is one of the few "hybrid" career training schools, meaning it offers both allied health programs (Medical Assisting and Massage Therapy) and beauty programs (Cosmetology and Esthetician). To help provide the Cosmetology and Esthetician students

with hands-on training, the school has a student salon where value-priced beauty services such as haircuts, hair color, pedicures, waxing, facials, microdermabrasion and more are performed by students under instructor supervision. Similarly, Massage Therapy students have the opportunity to perfect their techniques at the student massage spa. A variety of massages such as Swedish, deep tissue, sports, Shiatsu and more are provided by students under instructor supervision.

The school is located in Clovis, California, which lies adjacent to Fresno in the agriculturally rich San Joaquin Valley. Nicknamed "the Gateway to the Sierras," Clovis is just a two-hour drive from the beautiful Sierra National Forest and less than three hours from majestic Yosemite National Park. The city's unique western atmosphere mixed with its family-oriented community has attracted many new residents. As a result, the current population of over 96,000 has more than doubled since 1985.

Guiding and motivating the Clovis campus's staff, faculty and students is School Director Emily Samons. Emily began her career in cosmetology as Team Leader for the Aveda Corporation. She provided training to Aveda™

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## Employer Profile: Beaux Cheveux Salon • Sparks, NV



Beaux Cheveux Salon

Beaux Cheveux Salon in Sparks, Nevada, is one of the many employers of Milan Institute of Cosmetology graduates. The salon is owned and operated by Milan Graduate Sharon Childress, who was able to open the salon in March 2010, just 4 months after she completed the Cosmetology program. Beaux Cheveux caters to clients of all types. It offers a wide range of services including hair extensions, chemical relaxers, multi-tone

weaves, facials, acrylic/gel nails and waxing. Sharon personally provides hair services Monday through Wednesday and nail services Thursday and Friday. She currently rents both space to ten independent contractors, including stylists, nail technicians and an esthetician.

Sharon's dream was to open a salon where it felt good to go to work each morning for both her and her stylists. "We spend too many years working for someone else, being told where we should be and when/how to get there," said Sharon. "It was very important to me to create a fun environment where my independent contractors could thrive." The focus of Beaux Cheveux is always on the client. "Our clients' time at our salon is a chance for them to treat themselves to a break," said Sharon on her salon's customer service. "We try to make sure they feel important while they are here and that they have our undivided attention." Sharon is already thinking of ways to improve her salon. She plans to remodel her hair room with custom-built stations and cabinets. By the time she is finished, the salon will have seven hair stations, six nail stations and one esthetician bed.

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## Graduate Profile: Melissa Muongkhot (Continued)

work 40 hours per week at the day care center, where she was also able to keep her son during the day. In the evenings, her husband took care of him while she attended Pharmacy Technician classes. On the weekends, everyone spent time together as a family. "It was really tough to throw in some study time, but I did it!" said Melissa about her busy days as a student. "I knew that I wasn't in it alone and that my husband would support me with every move I made."

With the help of her caring instructors and the support of her family, Melissa successfully graduated from the Pharmacy Technician program. "Melissa was an excellent student," said Milan Institute School Director Kyla Justus. "She had great attendance and grades as well as a positive attitude and determination." About her time in school, Melissa said, "My experience at Milan was great; I enjoyed every moment that I was there." Her instructors did their best to provide a comfortable learning environment for everyone. Although many students were on different levels, those who needed more individual attention received it. "The instructors I had were very helpful in preparing me for the State Board of Pharmacy," said Melissa. "I learned more than I thought I would, and all of it has been useful in my current position."

She is now employed as a Pharmacy Technician at Plum Creek Specialty Hospital in Amarillo. The hospital provides comprehensive medical management of medically complex patients needing an extended stay in an acute care facility. It offers a wide range of services and treatments including pulmonary management, complex wound management and rehabilitation. "I love my job!" said Melissa. "Even though I haven't been here long, I'm learning new things every day. My co-workers have been very helpful." Originally she had chosen the Pharmacy Technician field because she wanted a career where she would always be needed. "A hospital needs someone to fill medications for its patients just like it needs nurses and doctors," said Melissa. She plans to stay in the field for the next several years.

Melissa has some advice to give to prospective and current students. "Even if you already have a job, you should consider your options," recommends Melissa. She believes that everyone wanting to expand their career goals and improve their life can do it with a little perseverance. To her fellow Milan Institute students, she says "No matter what obstacles may come, keep your head up and go for your goals."

## Company Highlights: School News

**Milan Institute, Nampa, ID:** New student massage spa opened in December 2010. The school is adding Dental Assistant and Pharmacy Technician programs in April 2011. The programs are pending accreditation approval.

**Milan Institute of Cosmetology, El Paso, TX:** New student salon opened in January 2011.

**Milan Institute of Cosmetology, San Antonio-South, TX:** The school added a Massage Therapy program\* in January 2011. \*License Number MS1035 – 707 SW Military Drive, San Antonio, TX 78221.

## Campus Profile: Clovis, CA (Continued)

locations in both California and Arizona for five years in addition to teaching retail and marketing classes to high school juniors and seniors. In 2006, Emily moved with her husband to the Central Valley and joined the Milan Institute organization as a Career Services Coordinator at the Visalia campus. Thanks to her outstanding commitment to her fellow staff members and students, Emily was promoted to School Director of the Clovis campus in November 2010. "We have amazing, creative students who continue to wow us with their spirit and success," said Emily. "Everyone at this school is dedicated to helping our students reach new heights."

Due to an overwhelming response from the community, the Clovis campus recently expanded. In November 2010, it added 6,860 square feet bringing the total to 29,209 square feet. The additional space was used to create an allied health wing to help separate it from the student salon floor and Cosmetology/Esthetician classrooms. As the school continues to provide job-ready graduates to the Central Valley, interest in its career training programs is expected to grow.

## Employer Profile: Beaux Cheveux (Continued)

Having graduated from the Milan Institute of Cosmetology Reno campus herself, Sharon began hiring fellow graduates. "I know firsthand that Milan students receive great training, including an education in business fundamentals," explained Sharon. "I also receive input from the instructors on which students are the most motivated." To date, she has already hired ten Milan graduates.

Sharon knows just what to look for when renting a booth in her salon to an independent cosmetologist. "I look for personal appearance, how well the candidate is put together when he/she walks through my door," said Sharon on the interview process. "First impressions are everything in this industry. If you aren't presentable to your clients, you've shot yourself in the foot before you've even started the service." She also pays attention to the candidate's communication skills. "Good communication with our clients is 85% of our success!" she revealed. She also favors candidates who have a strong drive to succeed.

Her advice to current Milan Institute of Cosmetology students is, "Do your research before you choose a salon. Find your niche and stick with it. You have to be willing to put in some hard work." Beaux Cheveux Salon is located at 455 Greenbrae Drive in Sparks, Nevada, and can be reached at (775) 358-1233.