

Changing times haven't changed Simonson's focus

BY ELIZABETH MILLARD
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When Kyle Simonson first opened an Anoka-based salon and spa in 1983, the venture was all about renewal — for herself and her clients. Thirty years later, that mission hasn't changed.

"Our philosophy is about change, and about making an investment in yourself," she said. "We think that speaks to all ages."

When she launched into the industry, Simonson said it was useful to have a gender-neutral first name, especially since men owned most salons. In a male-dominated field, her name provided an ability to "sneak in" and gain a foothold.

Now, she's an established presence with three Simonson's Salon & Spa locations, and consistent recognition from industry trade publication *Salon Today Magazine* as one of

America's fastest-growing salons. Simonson believes that maintaining integrity is the secret to her success and will fuel more growth in the decades ahead.

"One of our guiding principles is 'win-win-win,'" she said. "Any policy, service or product has to be good for guests, for our team and for the company. As long as we satisfy those three, then we'll succeed."

Simonson said the salon and spa business has changed over the past three decades as society has become more litigious, and everyone is more cautious as they work to avoiding lawsuits. But that hasn't changed her bedrock mission to provide renewal-level services to clients.

"Every day, we have lots of opportunities to disappoint people," she said. "And every day, we work hard to make sure that we don't."



DAVID GREENE/TIMESPULSE FOR BUSINESS JOURNAL

Kyle Simonson, left, opened her first salon and spa in 1983. Her daughter Deidre now joins her in the business.

Elizabeth Millard is a freelance writer.