

# Beauty and brains

## New Aesthetician Associate program a possibility at WCTC

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PEWAUKEE — At the Sept. 12 Waukesha County Technical College District Board meeting, a resolution to submit a concept review for an Aesthetician Associate of Applied Science Program was brought forth. The request is the first of two steps in the Wisconsin Technical College System's program development process. Since the request was approved, the District Board has officially authorized WCTC to place the Concept Review on the WCTC Board Agenda for the Nov. 7-8 meeting. In the request to the District Board, it states that the demand for such a program grew out of expressed need from current members of WCTC's cosmetology advisory committee.

"The aesthetics was just a natural extension of what we're currently doing," said Joan Hader, associate dean of the cosmetology program. "We're still working with local businesses that hire aestheticians to see what the actual programming will look like."

As the WCTC Cosmetology program has grown, employers have expressed a need for aestheticians to expand the range of services they offer. To better serve the needs of local employers, WCTC aims to add an Aesthetician Associate of Applied Science option to its human service related offerings. From 2018-23, it is expected that there will be a 2.9 percent (85 openings) increase in the number of aesthetician-related jobs. Throughout the U.S., a 7.4 percent (44,082) increase is projected.

"It caught my interest when I saw some data that said aesthetics was one of the top fastest growing job areas," said Hader. "My own staff here was commenting that it might be a nice area to look at, but we were getting most of the feedback from our business partners."

WCTC also surveyed 23 establishments in Waukesha County to gauge a need for the AAS program. Of the 15 that completed and returned a survey, 14 said that they would hire a program graduate, and 10 said they would encourage current employees to par-



Submitted photo

Current cosmetology students at WCTC providing facial services in one of their classes this past fall.

ticipate in the program. All 15 respondents hire entry-level aestheticians.

"What I was surprised by was that there is really a wide range of people that use aesthetician services," said Hader. "It holds applications to the longevity of the program if we decide to adopt this program at WCTC."

### From basic to advanced

The AAS program would consist of both a basic and advanced component. The advanced component would build on the basic option. The basic program would teach students skin anatomy and physiology, relevant Wisconsin laws, skin histology, specialized massage, and facial and body treatments among other topics. Once completed, students will have met the requirements to take the Wisconsin State Aesthetician Licensing exam. Advanced topics include how to work in a medical setting under the supervision of trained medical professionals.

"This is sort of a new area that we're exploring," said Hader. "It's been in the back of my brain for a few years now."

The tentative program startup date is fall of 2018. Hader says that there are already two people who have reached out and expressed interest in the AAS program. Currently, WCTC's cosmetology program is a popular one, with about 80 students completing the coursework each year in a newly renovated salon.

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