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# A Beauty Salon on Wheels

Entrepreneur's  
mobile services  
covers entire city

BY BEVERLY CORBELL  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

After opening her own beauty salon at age 22 and running it for six years, Rita Calloway wanted to reduce her overhead, so she eliminated it altogether. First she bought a big van and retrofitted it to become "Styled by Her Beautique," a beauty salon on wheels. Can't get to the salon? It will come to you.

Calloway said she's been working on the idea for a couple of years and finally got the mobile salon up and running a few months ago.

"The advantages are the convenience and reduced overhead," she said. "I don't have to pay rent or an electricity or water bill. I have to carry a 6-gallon water tank around, but it's easier to fill up than paying a water bill every month."

Having a salon that can travel city streets also means more exposure, she said.

"It's advertising itself when we're driving, and that's pretty effortless."

Calloway grew up in her mother's beauty salon, so going into the business was natural for her.

"I remember growing up, working under my mom," she said. "She was really hands-on with business and I remember being her model when she was in beauty school. I've always been around this industry."

But there are a few drawbacks to a mobile salon, she said, like not having a restroom. She also hasn't learned how to drive the van yet because it has a standard transmission, but she's taking lessons.

"I have less square footage, and with having a driver I have to coordinate, make sure we have parking and gas for the generator," she said "And I have to pack everything up when we're actually driving and when we park, I have to unload and set up. At first it was kind of hard, but now it's pretty easy."

Calloway also loves teaching and occasionally holds "pop-up" shops where she conducts two-day classes to help stylists prepare for state licensing test for natural hair care.

"Natural hair care is the only (state) license that doesn't require any school," she said, "but you cannot use any chemicals for



PHOTO BY BEVERLY CORBELL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Entrepreneur Rita Calloway welcomes customers to her new mobile beauty salon 'Styled by Her Beautique,' one that she can take anywhere in the city.

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