



Events in the Industry, Benefits and Awards

Sep 1, 2008
American Salon

Neill Corporation Hosts Serious Business in New Orleans

For the eighth year, the Neill Corporation presented its Serious Business conference in New Orleans, hosting 1,200 attendees for a two-day program that featured experts in sustainable and progressive business practices. The highlight of the carbon-neutral event was the groundbreaking Hairdressers Unlocking Hope Benefit Hair Show, which raised almost \$82,000 for Hairdressers Unlocking Hope, an organization that builds homes for victims of Hurricane Katrina with Habitat for Humanity. During the show, seven world-renowned hairdressers—Antoinette Beenders, Vivienne Mackinder, Nick Arrojo, Van Council, Robert Lobetta, Christiaan and Tim Hartley—took the stage to pay homage to the legendary Vidal Sassoon, each creating a personal interpretation of one of his classic haircuts.



Keynote and breakout speakers included Saatchi & Saatchi's Judah Schiller; author and founder of Noise Marketing, Noah Kerner; consultant, entrepreneur and author Matt Mason; customer service authority John DiJulius; Arrojo; Heath Smith, co-founder of the Jackson Ruiz companies, which owns Jackson Ruiz SalonSpas; coaching, team-building and entrepreneurial training expert Wendy Watkins; sustainable business development specialist Mark Wuttke of the Wuttke Group; New York City-based Aveda salon owner Scott Buchanan; Creative Director of the Neill Corporation Michael Baker; executives from Modern Salon & Spa Group; and Jeanine O'Neill-Blackwell, partner and chief learning officer of management company Beauty Basics.



LEFT TO RIGHT: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) Judah Schiller, Noah Kerner, Matt Mason, John DiJulius, Heath Smith, Michael Baker, Jeanine O'Neill-Blackwell, Wendy Watkins, Mark Wuttke, Scott Buchanan, Nick Arrojo, Tim Hartley, Christiaan, Robert Lobetta, Antoinette Beenders, Vidal Sassoon.

Industry visionary Vidal Sassoon closed the event by recounting his rise to fame and the lessons he learned along the way, and by sharing his experience working with Hairdressers Unlocking Hope. —L.A.