



JO MOUSSELLI

President and Founder of Xtreme Lashes® LLC

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THIS SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR HAS ALWAYS CONNECTED WITH WOMEN, FROM HER CAREER AS A KINDERGARTEN TEACHER – GARNISHING THE TRUST OF MOTHERS AND THEIR FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL JITTERS – TO CONSOLING MOTHERS WHOSE CRITICALLY ILL CHILDREN WERE UNDER HER CARE AS A PEDIATRIC ICU NURSE AT TEXAS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. MOUSSELLI HAS ALWAYS, WELL, NURTURED.

Today, she runs her company, Xtreme Lashes, like the intensive care unit. **Mousselli has seen her company expand from her home and spread across the globe into 24 countries**, with Greece joining her empire shortly. Xtreme Lashes currently has over 40 employees, 20 trainers located nationwide, with Mousselli's husband, her daughter and son also involved.

WHY LASHES?

When I was a registered nurse in the ICU, I worked hand in hand with women, including the nurses, pediatricians, mothers, aunts and grandmothers of these patients. The eyes are the windows to the soul. When women look good and feel good, they are more confident. There's no time to apply makeup in this environment, so I decided to offer something to women that was hassle-free. What better way to do this than with the eyes?

BUT HOW DID YOU GO FROM ICU NURSE TO LASHES? DID YOU INVENT THE LASH EXTENSION?

I came across the concept of lash extensions, which was something developed in Asia, and I pursued it. I did research in the US and could not find much information. I struggled to find techniques that were safe and hygienic, so I talked to my husband, a chemical engineer, and with our daughter we col-

laborated and developed the technique and application process. Emphasizing safety, hygiene and hands-on training. Doctors and nurses are trained daily in process and procedure. A step-by-step process. I applied this to the training.

HOW LONG DID DEVELOPMENT TAKE?

We researched the product and developed the process in about a year, so we launched in 2005.

HOW HAS GROWTH SURPRISED YOU?

We are growing beyond any of my expectations – in just a little over 3 years, 5,000 clients trained, and over 24 countries. We have 40 corporate employees and are proud to be Houston-based and owned. What's impressive to me is that I didn't expect to have so many professionals despite the rigorous credentials. *(Xtreme Lashes limits sales exclusively to licensed and credentialed health and beauty professionals. Credentials are required.)*

HOW DID YOU GO FROM AN ICU NURSE TO THIS?

When I was leaving the ICU, it was easier to let the women know what I was going to do; it was more difficult to convince a male doctor. I went from saving babies lives to this. I left right after Katrina, so needless to say it was not an easy time to convince a guy that this was therapeutic. I also conducted a survey at the hospital prior to leaving and included all the women employed there; asking if they would have this procedure if it were available. The answer was a unanimous YES. This really helped me finalize the decision to start Xtreme Lashes.

DO YOU OR YOUR DAUGHTER USE THEM?

Oh, yes, it's very addictive! If I get them removed I look at my lashes and say, oh my god, my lashes are so short! But I don't feel like I need to wear any makeup now. I can wash my face and go.

PLANS FOR 2009?

We already have the largest selection of eyelash extensions and consumer products on the market. In 2008 we added some cosmetic products, and in '09 we will expand on high-performance cosmetics developed to go with our eye shadows, eye treatments and more. We'll also launch a new campaign to promote our lash stylists' success.