



DOG GROOMER OPENS NEW SPACE IN COON RAPIDS

Head to Tail Grooming Serves Dogs of All Ages, Breeds, Sizes and Temperaments

Head to Tail Grooming is a full-service salon for dogs. Located in Coon Rapids, the business is owned by former researcher McKenzie Schafer.

Schafer worked in animal research for several rewarding years, but she found that line of work to be emotionally draining. An animal lover at heart, she transitioned to becoming the coordinator for a doggie daycare center and eventually began renting a booth at a local dog grooming business. She dreamed of opening her own storefront, but didn't know how to get started.

One day while eating breakfast before work, she came across an advertisement for Open to Business in the Anoka County newsletter. Schafer immediately knew what she wanted to make an appointment. "When I read the blurb about this free resource for opening up my own business, it was describing everything I had been daydreaming about," she said.

Schafer connected with Open to Business Advisor Kathleen DuChene. The pair worked together to identify resources to start up the business, covering everything from sales tax to licensing requirements. Schafer researched multiple locations and evaluated them based on criteria such as the average household income of the community and the distance from the nearest existing dog groomer. After Schafer identified the perfect space, DuChene helped her review the lease and provided business and financial planning resources.

The Open to Business program was a catalyst for Schafer, helping her access everything she needed to plan for her start-up in one place and in the right order. She said DuChene was helpful because she is a small business owner, too. "When I felt overwhelmed or didn't know what to do, she would share from her own experience," Schafer said. "I would always walk away feeling focused."

With solid plans in place, Head to Tail opened in August 2016. Schafer has been spreading the word about the business by participating in community events like the Coon Rapids Pet Fair and a police fundraiser for K-9 officers. Business is already steady enough that she knows the marketing is working. She says what sets her salon apart from others in the area is the one-on-one attention her customers receive.

"It's a smaller, quieter salon, which helps the dogs have a better temperament during grooming," Schafer said. "It's a salon where dogs of all ages, breeds, sizes and temperaments are accepted."

Customers can visit Head to Tail Grooming at 2841 Northdale Blvd NW in Coon Rapids. Or find them online at <http://www.head2tailgroomingmn.com/>.