

HEADLINE:

FROM THE BOARDROOM TO THE HAIR INDUSTRY

By **Brandi Scarber**

While mothering two young children and driving marketing for companies like Honda, Burger King and United Airlines — Kelly Talal is also calling the shots at three kids' hair salons she owns across Georgia.

Juggling all of this may seem lofty, but for Talal, it's the future. Thinking about what the future workforce could look like outside of corporate America, Talal went on a search for a new mission. She purchased her first Pigtails & Crewcuts franchise in Marietta-West Cobb in 2025. And just a few months later, she purchased two more in Roswell and Woodstock.

Although she loves her job, Talal said she was motivated to build something of her own. At first impression, it was the kid-centered concept with sensory safe rooms inside the salon that confirmed it was value-aligned.

Scaling her footprint with Pigtails & Crewcuts was almost as easy. She learned the owner of two other Georgia locations was looking to exit, and after a tour and a breakdown of the finances, Talal was on board. With a strong team behind her at work and hands-on support from her franchisor, Talal was able to scale with as little pain as possible. It was a community-centered affair, just like Talal's salons.

Since acquiring the additional salons, Talal has made operational changes to boost sales, and increase accessibility, consistency, and confidence across her teams. She added Sundays to the schedule to capture weekend demand. Her teams are given CPR, sensory, and ear-piercing training, and continuing education to ensure staff members feel confident handling a wide range of services. Talal also saw an opportunity to expand retail offerings in the salons, which she says improved the guest experience and drove incremental revenue.

Talal is embracing the advent of artificial intelligence and finds it useful in strengthening communication with her team. AI has helped Talal's team bolster sales recaps and correspondence with clients while freeing up employees to focus on providing a strong guest experience.

Talal says she also uses it to monitor financial health and find opportunities to augment. In the long-term, she has plans to future-proof the creative engine behind her salons by building an agent to help create assets.

Her latest priority is revving up community engagement. From hosting Santa during the holidays and working with nearby schools, to running seasonal retail promotions, Talal says she's aiming to deepen relationships with communities and other local business owners.

When she takes a step back, Talal says it doesn't feel like she's added more to her plate. Instead, it's bringing her closer to her family as days in the salon have become a family affair. She says her daughters love spending time in the salons, and have even created their own "play" salon at home — with a vanity they got for Christmas, a notebook, brush, and toy safe.

As Talal continues to grow her Pigtails & Crewcuts footprint across metro Atlanta, she is creating welcoming, inclusive spaces where kids feel safe, parents feel supported, and communities feel connected.

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