



DI BIASE HAIR EXTENSIONS USA  
EXTENDED REVOLUTION

As Featured In:

# AN EXTENDED REVOLUTION

## *New Solutions for the Many Challenges of Hair Loss*

by: Janine Thornhill, for the AHLC

I recently had the privilege to get acquainted with the co-owners of Di Biase Hair USA, Dale Aho and Vikki Parman. Dale and Vikki have been a huge supporter of The Link since our premier issue. Now it's your turn to get to know them.

**AHLC:** Could you give us a little background about your company?

**DALE:** We are the United States distributor for Di Biase Hair of Naples, Italy. Di Biase Hair was founded by Aniello (Nello) Di Biase, whose family was one of the pioneers in the hair extension industry. With Di Biase Hair, Nello is carrying on the family name and brings decades of experience, talents, and ideas. Vikki has been a hairdresser for 30 years and is known in the industry as a stylist, educator, business owner and sales rep. She lives and breathes hair and hair products! She is energized by the free-spirited personalities that inhabit this wonderful business. In addition to her expertise in extensions, she is also a colorist and is trained in advanced cutting techniques.

I come from a completely different background, having practiced as an attorney for over 30 years. After spending my career solving client problems and dealing with attorney personalities, I was ready for a new challenge and found it when the opportunity to work with Vikki and Di Biase Hair came along. With our different styles, backgrounds and experiences, we are able to blend our unique but complementary skills. It's been a very rewarding experience

**AHLC:** How would you describe your business objective?

**DALE:** Of course we want to continue to grow. We just built a beautiful training facility in our home state of Michigan and intend to expand with dedicated training centers in other locations. Through a core of distributors, sales reps and national educators, we are getting to where we want to be.

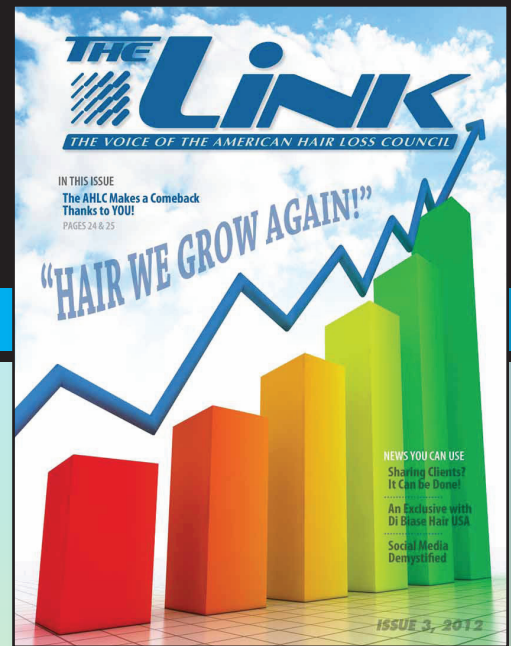
**VIKKI:** But our mission is much broader. Before I began with Di Biase, I realized that the hair extension market in this country was being under-served. There were a lot of stylists that would love to be trained but they simply could not afford the training it took. In my opinion, this contributed to some of the destructive practices that have tarnished the image of the hair extension industry. Rather than become certified, stylists took other avenues to getting in on the extension business. That being said, we have made it our mission to be accessible. We hold certification classes throughout the country, without extraordinary cost. We provide quality. Not only quality products but quality service and training.

**AHLC:** What is it that separates the better hair extension companies from the others in today's market?

**DALE:** There are tremendous challenges in the hair extension industry. The processing is largely a human effort, from selection, to hand drawing, to deciding which hair to include. Nello himself says you have to realize that this a human business; machines are involved but so much of it depends on human hands and eyes. Not to mention, there are other factors that are beyond anyone's control such as the proliferation of hair products in supplying countries. Also quality is, to an extent, subjective in any event. But what separates the best is pride, pride in the product, pride in the service and pride in the education we provide.

For us, that pride derives from the enthusiasm and dedication that Nello brings to his company as well as the extensions his company produces. When you talk to him, you can hear in his voice and see on his face that he has created something special. When he is showing off his hair, with that great big smile, he is like a proud father beaming over a child who has just done something very good. He will tell you to look at the hair for its brightness and feel its softness and texture. Even to smell it for its natural scent of soap. Our extensions don't have the slightest hint of odor since our processing uses less chemical treatments than many extension companies. It is this pride in workmanship that fuels our company. **AHLC:** What role do hair extensions play within the hair replacement industry?

**VIKKI:** Of course hair loss comes in different forms and hair extensions can be utilized with success with most of them. The ability to use extensions depends only on the creativity, training and skill of the provider. Our keratin bonds are flat and light in weight. This makes them particularly adaptable for work in this field.



One segment of candidates for extensions are women who experience hair loss due to hormonal causes or other factors associated with aging. For many of these women, adding volume and length can be a rejuvenating experience. We give them back a look that they thought had permanently disappeared. The transformation can be remarkable. One of our greatest rewards has been working with post-cancer patients, even those who have experienced scalp cancer. One of our national educators, Toma Rhodes, has a special passion in this area and is working with us in building advanced training focused on reconstructive work. For these individuals, it is of course necessary that hair loss has been stabilized after chemotherapy. Because our bonds are flat and already light they can be split many times making the attachment nearly weightless. This makes it possible to work above the occipital adding volume to the existing hair or to cover those spots where the hair has been lost. Finally, extensions may sometimes be used as a transition treatment program in some forms of alopecia. This is an area where the benefits would depend on individual circumstances as determined by the treating health care professional.

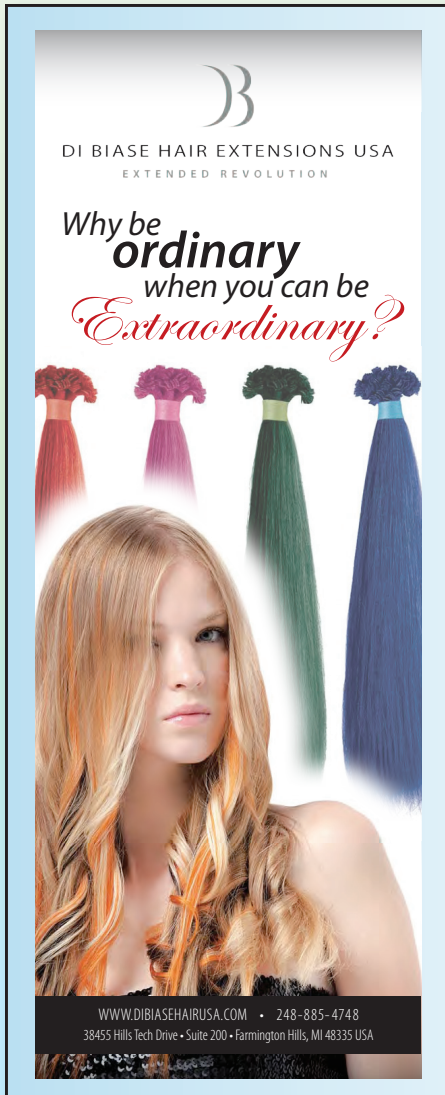
**AHLC:** There is a concern that hair extensions result in traction alopecia. How would you address those concerns?

**VIKKI:** There is simply no reason that anyone should lose hair due to extensions. It's all in the training and certification. When hair loss occurs, it is either because the stylist did not properly apply the bonds, did not properly instruct the client on maintaining the bonds or because the bonds were improperly removed. A house painter should not perform a medical operation and a non-certified stylist should not put in extensions. Either would result in damage.

I believe that competency in hair extension application requires, at minimum, a two-day certification program but ideally, the program should be even longer. It takes time, repetition and guidance to become even basically competent. And you can't just give a stylist a book to read for theory and client care. It's important to go through the training manual in detail as well as to respond to questions that are bound to arise. The problem is that there are many stylists out there who are self-taught, learned from a friend or who watched a do-it-yourself video on YouTube. There are also hair extension companies who contribute to the problem by providing short, inadequate training courses. We even heard from a stylist that paid \$100 to an extension company to receive a certification by phone. These kinds of activities are the heart of hair loss occurrences from extensions.

**AHLC:** Di Biase Hair, USA has been an advocate of The Link since its inception. We appreciate your support and look forward to working with you more. Any closing thoughts?

**DALE:** We've just finished attending the American Hair Loss Council conference in Fort Lauderdale. What a wonderful event that was. We were totally impressed with the quality of the members and learned so much. Anyone with an interest in hair loss would be well advised to join the council and attend a conference.



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WWW.DIBIASEHAIRUSA.COM • 248-885-4748  
38455 Hills Tech Drive • Suite 200 • Farmington Hills, MI 48335 USA



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