

# Cinderella Makeover 2011 Sierra

**SHEER**  
**ELEGANCE**  
& BEAUTY SALON

[Cheri] asked Sierra what she thought her sons would think of her new look, and she beamed, "My older son will be very excited! He always tells me I am beautiful." Her son is absolutely right and I am sure as do all of that meet Sierra, that beauty runs very deep.

**THE  
BEFORE**

# Cinderella Makeover - 2011

BY CHERI VALENTINE

**E**veryone has a story of who they are. They tell this story and believe this story based on their experiences. Many also believe that their story defines them or confines them to repeat their story over and over again. Sierra could have believed her past would determine her future, and yet she chose to write a new story.

Sierra had no idea that when she began to design a life that was rooted in love for herself and her children, that she would be the inspiration for several women who did not know each other to gather together in a collective effort of love.

That is the magic of planting seeds of intention. When you water and fertilized them, the garden that grows is reflective of those thoughts and energy. Sierra's garden includes an unlikely support system, new job, another level of education, children who are blossoming like their mother, and a makeover. Here's the story that Sierra has begun to create.

About a year ago, Sierra went to Marguerite's Place in Nashua, NH where she met with Patty Joseph, one of the case managers for the women who come there for support in reaching their goals. Marguerite's Place offers safe living arrangements, childcare, a structured environment, and support on many levels. You cannot show up there with no goals and no means of income. The women who are welcomed and nurtured there are motivated and self-sufficient but in need of stability and reinforcement while they are designing their new stories and creating a stable life for themselves and their children.

Sierra is one such young woman. Her story began in Vermont in a very unstructured and abusive family life. She was bounced around between parents, stepparents, grandparents and foster parents. At 16 she became pregnant. She stayed in school and graduated, living on her own with the father of her child, and with no support from her family. She ended this relationship after three years of emotional abuse.

Sierra went into another relationship and in the fall of 2006 went to Nashua with this man. They had a son together. He also had a son from another woman, and Sierra took him in and is raising him as her own. Although this relationship was initially positive, after several years Sierra realized that it was not a healthy relationship. She asked him to leave but it took him a year to do so, and when he finally did, he took everything including the financial support, leaving his sons with Sierra.

On her own without warning left Sierra in a bind. She did her best to keep it together and make it work, but in the end she could not afford the rent and expenses and she found herself without a home. This powerhouse had already gone back to school when her second son, Andrew, was a year old and knew it was time to continue with her education. That is when she heard about Marguerite's Place.

Patty Joseph says, "Sierra knew what she wanted, and had already enrolled at Hesser College to become a medical assistant. She graduated with honors in nine months and then pursued additional certification." Marguerite's Place provided support to Sierra with an apartment, childcare, occasional rides to school, as well as weekly meetings to check in with her goals.

When Patty was asked to recommend a woman for this makeover, she immediately thought of Sierra. "She does everything for her children and never puts attention on herself," said Patty. Because her funds are so limited, all money goes into providing the necessities of daily life for her family, and Sierra does not buy anything for herself including clothes or shoes.

That is where Susan Kanoff, fashion coach ([www.agreatnewlook.com](http://www.agreatnewlook.com)), comes in. Susan is a powerhouse herself when it comes to women in need. Sierra originally only had \$20 to spend on her new outfit for the project. When Susan found this out she did what she does best by reaching out to her community of 'people who care'. Susan was armed with donations she had





## The Wardrobe Experience



gathered from: Cindy Traverso \$40 and a gently used small Coach bag, Sibella DeCarlo \$25.00, Darlene Wermer \$10.00, Luan Giannone \$50 as well as her own generous contribution of well over \$100.

With a background in social work and life coaching, Susan offers far more than an improved wardrobe to women. She brings warmth, energy, innate fashion expertise and a very generous heart to the experience. Included in her list of private clients, are local television personalities. Susan participates in fashion events for women's clothing stores, frequently runs fashion clinics for local groups and also heads a team of 17 local business owners in "The Project Makeover," a nonprofit that provides a comprehensive makeover to women who give so much to others, yet forget to put that same care and attention on themselves. You can listen to Susan's pearls of fashion and life wisdom on Monday nights. She co-hosts The Clothes Line, an Internet radio show focusing on style and fashion. ([www.blogtalkradio.com/susan--kanoff](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/susan--kanoff))



Susan really enjoyed helping Sierra pick out clothes that were flattering to her body shape. "She was sweet, and I could see that the clothes made her so happy!" Susan also acknowledged the saleswomen at Lane Bryant in The Mall at Rockingham. "They were wonderful, and helped maximize the shopping experience."

As for this chapter in Sierra's story, who had never had her mother or any other woman help her shop for clothes, the experience was pure joy. "She helped me pick out clothes that were flattering for my body type, and to feel more comfortable in my clothes that fit. She picked out styles I would not normally choose and I noticed how I looked and I felt like a mom

and a professional. It felt good. Susan is one of the nicest persons I ever met!" Sierra enthusiastically told me.



**Susan Kanoff**



**The Starting Team:** Anita Poulin, Patty Joseph, Cheri Valentine & Sharon Ward's clever self-portrait. Susan Caldwell directs in the background.



On Tuesday, March 22, 2011, Sierra arrived at Sheer Elegance Hair & Beauty Salon to complete the makeover that began with her clothes. She arrived with two new outfits to showcase after her hair and makeup is complete.

There is an excitement in the salon as several women have come together to give of themselves to this project and this amazing young woman.

This team includes, Guylian Tall, owner of Sheer Elegance, Anita Poulin, the stylist, Maria Rawlings, makeup, Sharon Ward photographer, Patty Joseph, case manager from Marguerite's Place, Cheri Valentine, writer and love coach, and Susan Caldwell, brainchild behind the makeover and Applaud Women, and several behind the scenes contributors.

Instantly I am drawn to Sierra's radiance as she is sitting in the chair with silver foils adorning her head. Sierra's inner beauty shines through and my heart is filled with love. This is the collective sentiment shared by everyone involved in this makeover, each offering their own specialty of support.



**Sierra & Patty pose for another before photo**

## The Hair - Anita Begins with a Combout & Initial Trim



Photos Courtesy of Sharon Ward Photography. [www.sharonwardphotography.com](http://www.sharonwardphotography.com)





**The Foils -**  
Anita adds some blonde highlights to add depth and brightness around Sierra's face.

a bad or long day come in exhausted, when they leave, they feel so much better. As women, our hair is everything – the right style makes you feel so much better.”

**The Cut -**  
Anita cut several long layers to give Sierra's



Anita Poulin has fifteen years of experience as a hair stylist and has been at Sheer Elegance for nine years. She generously donated her time to color, cut, and style Sierra's beautiful long locks. She used Schwarzkopf products, adding summer blonde highlights, which added depth as well as brightness around Sierra's face, blending nicely with her warm, medium brown hair color. Anita explained, “The maintenance will be easy and she won't see strong roots as her hair grows.” She cut several long layers into Sierra's hair, taking only a few inches from the length. She dried her hair then flat ironed it straight, and the results were stunning. Sierra loved it, and when I asked if she would be able to maintain the style she told me, “Yes, I dry my hair and style it for work.”

Anita loves working with color because there is so much you can do with it, even “a few little touches of highlight, anything lighter than your natural tone, can make a difference.” What she loves about being a hair stylist is “you see people who've had



hair better shape. She then dried and straightened Sierra's hair with a flat iron.

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## The Hair After



At Left: Anita puts finishing touches and Above: Anita, Sierra and, Guylian Tall, owner of Salon Elegance, admire the results.

**A**fter hair is finished, Sierra meets with Maria Rawlings, an independent hair and make-up stylist, with space at Marc Anthony Hair & Nail Salon in Nashua, NH. Maria is working on creating her own line of organic cosmetics using all natural ingredients, yet for today uses what is in her existing artist's toolbox. She patiently explained the steps to Sierra so that she could duplicate her new look on her own and the rest of us learned a few tricks as well.

**The Makeup -** Maria patiently explained the steps so that Sierra could recreate her new look on her own.







At Left:  
Maria  
spackles  
blemishes  
then  
applies  
liquid  
foundation

First Maria spackles the blemishes then uses a brush to add a neutral liquid foundation by Lancôme'. For eye color, Maria applied purple to the lids and dotted on silver to soften the effect. Rather than using pencil, she dipped an artist signature brush into water, and then used the same purple shadow color to line the lash line. It produced a much softer effect. She applied light strokes using a glimmer stick from Avon under the eye. Maria likes to use this because it is soft and forgiving with eye tissue

For blush, Maria suggests that you can use any color as long as you stick with your tone and can match it to your clothes. "Tap the brush on your hand to get out excess before applying. Begin in the center of the cheek under the pupil of your eye, and feather outward," Maria explained as she demonstrated on Sierra's lovely face. To apply the mascara, Maria first held the wand vertically to get all the lashes, and then horizontally.

Sierra does not like lipstick, so Maria used Maybelline Super Stay in rosy mauve, letting the first coat dry, then added the gloss. It was subtle and finished the natural look perfectly. "Wow, it looks beautiful. It does not look heavy," Sierra exclaimed when her look was revealed to her.

At Right:  
Maria applies  
purple eye  
shadow with  
dots of silver  
to soften the  
effect.



Above: Maria applies mas-  
cara and at Right: Maria  
puts the finishing touches on  
with lipstick.



Article continued on page 100

## The Makeup After



Above: Sierra is clearly happy with the results.

W

With hair and makeup complete, Sierra changed into her first outfit, a casual daytime look of jeans, a bright floral blouse topped with a green jacket that zippered. Sierra wore a cute

black wedge shoe. The outfit was completed with jewelry designed and created by Wendy dePenasse ([www.natures-gemsshop.com](http://www.natures-gemsshop.com)).

Sharon Ward ([sharonwardphotography.com](http://sharonwardphotography.com)) was on hand all day capturing the visual story of Sierra's makeover. With the completed look, she took several shots from all angles of Sierra until she finally relaxed. Sierra is not one for having the attention on her, so she was completely outside her comfort zone having a camera snapping and flashing, all eyes on her.

Sharon was at ease standing on chairs to take some pictures from a higher vantage point. "Using a bounce flash adds full and subtle light, although my preference is to use the ambient lighting in its natural environment," Sharon explained as she clicked away capturing Sierra in several expressions.

Sierra changed into an outfit of black pants with a black cardigan worn over a lovely deep purple and black blouse edged in black. Again, the outfit was completed with jewelry created by Wendy dePenasse, and Sharon captured the look in several shots.

Although Guylian Tall, the owner of Sheer Elegance who

generously allowed her shop to be taken over by a bevy of characters participating in this chapter of Sierra's story, was busy with her clients, she was a visible part of the whole scenario. My initial impression walking into the salon located at 15 Congress Street in Nashua, NH (off Northeastern Blvd, and next to Citizens Bank) was, "Wow. The energy in here is great! It is open, bright, inviting, approachable, and very welcoming." My first impression was confirmed throughout the entire morning.

Guylian and the three stylists who work there all agree that they want to contribute to Marguerite's Place. Patty Joseph, Sierra's case manager, often brings the moms and their children into the salon for haircuts. As Guylian expressed, "when your hair looks good, you feel good, and this helps with their confidence for interviews. After 24 years in the business I still love what I do!"

Sierra could not have known when she decided to create a new story for her life and especially for her children, that she would be experiencing the generosity, creativity, and inspiration from so many characters, and yet we all agreed there was no where else we would have wanted to be that day! Susan Caldwell expressed, "when you invest in the right people the investment grows exponentially and affects the world."

Last year, another young woman from Marguerite's Place was the recipient of the makeover. I asked Patty how she was doing and it was so gratifying to hear that she is doing well. "Stacy graduated from the program and is now living in one of the condos, saving money for her own home. She is still working at her job of nine years, and doing very well and doing it on her own."

After two years of living in Marguerite's Place apartments, the women graduate, yet those who are truly motivated and financially capable can rent 1 of 10 condos for 5 years. This gives them time to put some solid things in place for their families – most are saving for a home of their own.

We all have no doubt that Sierra and her boys will be following in this track. She started as an LNA, is now a certified medical assistant, and would love to earn her bachelor's degree to be an RN. Ideally, her dream is to be a Nurse Practitioner and own her own home. In the meantime, all her spare time is spent with her boys, Taylib – 3 years old, Andrew – 8 years old, and Xavier – 9




## Cinderella Has Arrived



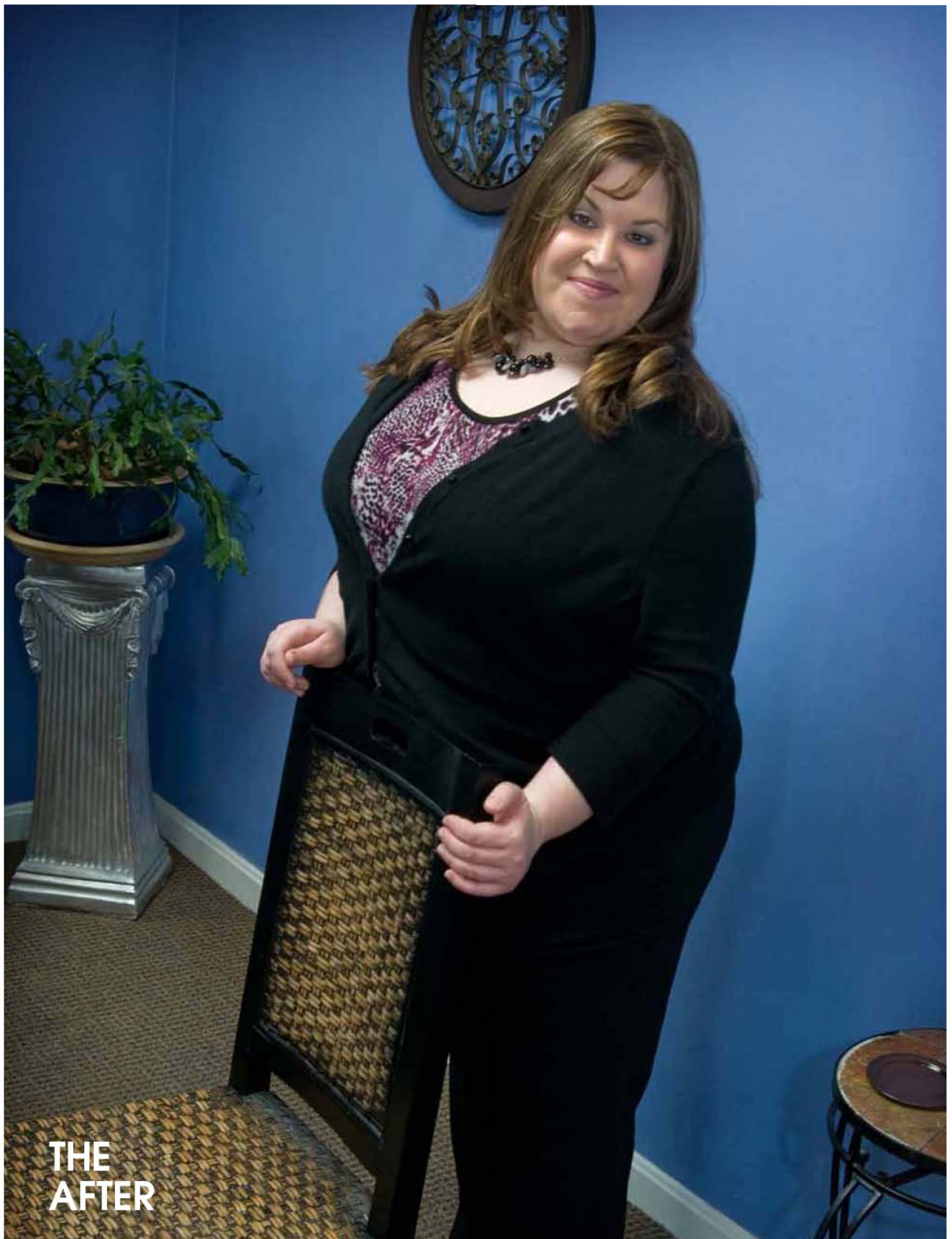
years old. Taylib and Xavyer's father has begun to be a presence and some help in their lives – a testament, no doubt, to the power of Sierra's love.

Sierra enjoys playing Wii and board games with her kids and to do arts & crafts projects too. "In the nice weather, we play ball and go to the park. I now have weekends off from work, and I love it because I have more time with my kids," Sierra beams. "I wouldn't be where I am without Marguerite's Place," she tells me appreciatively. Marguerite's Place supports those who support themselves, and no doubt it was Sierra's determination to write her own script that brought that support in view

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## THE AFTER

Photos Courtesy of Sharon Ward Photography. [www.sharonwardphotography.com](http://www.sharonwardphotography.com)

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