



News release

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Hard work, research and SATOP combine to help Seabrook inventor achieve goal

BAY AREA HOUSTON, TEXAS – Many inventions evolve by sheer happenstance. The inventor is in the right place at the right time and possesses the creative imagination necessary to move forward with an idea. Such was the case with Adriana Born, inventor of the aircurler™.

In early 2008, Born's hair was styled by using a hairdryer and a bowl. By placing a segment of hair into the bowl, the cylindrical motion caused by the air flow against the sides of the bowl resulted in a classic "Goldie Locks" curl. Born later successfully duplicated the effect with her daughter's hair using an oatmeal canister attached to a hairdryer. She had found a way to bring the beauty salon look into her home by creating a device usable by practically anyone. The next step was to create a marketable product.

Born and her husband collaborated on several prototypes in an attempt to create the perfect curl. Countless hours of research were poured into the development of the final product. The prototypes were moderately successful in curling hair but did not produce the kind of tight curl that Born wanted. Then, almost absentmindedly as she was working on a new prototype, Born cut a hole in the bottom of a large Styrofoam cup leaving part of the bottom section in tact. Testing the new design, she found that it produced the exact effect she had been seeking.

Attends Houston Inventors Association Trade Show

While attending a Houston Inventors Association Trade Show in August 2008, Adriana attended a presentation given by Nick Gardner, program manager for the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership's Space Alliance Technology Outreach Program.

SATOP is a NASA and State of Texas funded initiative designed to transfer the knowledge and technology of the U.S. Space Program to small businesses, at no charge to them, to solve technical challenges they are unable to solve themselves.

Born demonstrated her latest prototype to Gardner stating that she would like an engineer to evaluate the design of the product to determine how the shape of the air chamber affects the tightness of the curl. Additionally, gaining a better understanding of how the product worked would assist her in making it more aesthetically pleasing.

Request for Technical Assistance submitted

SATOP's Space Alliance Partners include engineers from private corporations, universities, and NASA centers in Florida, New Mexico, New York, and Texas who volunteer their time and expertise to assist small businesses via SATOP. Born submitted a request for technical assistance to SATOP shortly after she met Gardner at the HIA Trade Show. Then Hurricane Ike flooded their Seabrook home on Sept. 13, 2008. In the meantime, SATOP Alliance Partner Jay LeBeau at NASA Johnson Space Center expressed an interest in helping out with Born's RTA. Gardner unsuccessfully attempted to reach her by phone in early 2009. Then, in February, Born discovered that her phone had retained messages in spite of the flooding, and she called Gardner.

In March Born met with LeBeau and two additional engineers. They made suggestions on changing a few key parameters including adjustments to the diameter and shape of the aircurler™, the size of the opening in the bottom of the device, and the angle of the air nozzle as it pointed toward the sides of the bowl to achieve the optimum wind velocity. The engineers' precise calculations were exactly what Born needed.

To market, to market

Through SATOP's assistance, Born ultimately perfected a final prototype which is patent-pending. "Meeting with the SATOP engineers was so helpful. Seeing the physics behind the aerodynamic vortex technology was fascinating," she said, "It's no wonder that only three percent of inventions ever get to market. There is an incredible amount of work involved," Born added. There is an incredible amount of expense, as well, and she and her husband have personally funded the entire venture.

The future looks bright for Born's aircurler™. She's expecting her first order of 3,000 to arrive in time for Christmas shopping and has created a video for marketing purposes. Fox 26 News, through the suggestion of the Houston Inventors Association, interviewed her in early September, and Born will appear Oct. 27 on KHOU Channel 11 on Deborah Duncan's Great Day Houston.

Born's enthusiasm about the aircurler™ seems boundless. She is already formulating ideas for additional inventions, and she readily gives credit to her husband, SATOP and so many others who have helped her in her journey, which began many months ago by sheer happenstance.

For more information, visit www.aircurler.com or SATOP at www.spacetechnsolutions.com.



Seabrook inventor Adriana Born will soon market her aircurler™. Precise design calculations from SATOP Alliance Partners at NASA Johnson Space Center helped her to perfect her prototype.

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership is a member-driven organization that provides the leadership to stimulate regional economic development and employment in southeast Texas. Its members include more than 260 investor companies, business professionals, local governments, and educational institutions encompassing 13 cities, Galveston and Harris counties, and the Port of Houston Authority. Visit www.bayareahouston.com.

Space Alliance Technology Outreach Program is administered by the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership. It is a State of Texas funded initiative designed to transfer the knowledge and technology of the U.S. Space Program to small businesses to solve technical challenges they are unable to solve themselves. Visit www.spacetechnologies.com/bahep.