



February 2026

# Student Connection



CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER

## Karissa Tritsarolis

### Cuyahoga Heights



Karissa Tritsarolis is a student at Cuyahoga Heights High School and is enrolled in the Cosmetology program at CVCC, where she is instructed by Melissa Fox. When the opportunity to attend CVCC became available, Karissa knew right away she wanted to take advantage of it—and cosmetology was her top choice. “I’ve always loved working with hair,” she shared. “Growing up, I was constantly doing my mom’s hair, and I dye and style my own all the time. A couple of years ago, my mom got me a nail kit, and I completely fell in love with doing nails too. Hair and nails have been a passion of mine for a long time, so this felt like the perfect step toward learning more and possibly building a career in the field.”

One of Karissa’s favorite parts of the program has been meeting new people from other school districts—she’s the only Cuyahoga Heights student in her class—along with learning new techniques such as color theory, proper curling methods, and how to do a professional blowout. “I’ve already learned so much about hair and nails,” she said. “I love Ms. Fox so much. She has so much knowledge and experience, but she’s also incredibly understanding. If you’re having a hard day, she’s someone you can really talk to.”

After high school, Karissa is considering pursuing a career in the hair and nail industry, but she’s also interested in becoming an elementary school teacher, possibly in art or a related subject. She sees clear connections between both paths, noting that concepts like color theory apply to cosmetology as well as teaching. No matter where she ends up, she values the confidence and joy that come from making people feel good about themselves—something she knows she’ll carry with her. She also appreciates knowing she can always do hair and nails on the side, regardless of her long-term career choice.

Outside the classroom, Karissa stays busy making and selling press-on nails, playing the piano, participating in the Scarlet Angels and color guard at Cuyahoga Heights High School, and spending time drawing, reading, and listening to music. She also hopes to become more involved in theater in the future. When asked what advice she would give students considering CVCC, Karissa said, “Make sure you choose a program that truly interests you, because you do have to put in the work. But if it does interest you, don’t pass up this opportunity. CVCC has taught me so much about cosmetology, but even more than that, it’s shown me how many opportunities are out there—both in this field and beyond. I’m learning so many life skills.” Keep up the great work, Karissa!

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