

CALIFORNIA Apparel News

THE VOICE OF THE INDUSTRY FOR 69 YEARS

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ANDREW ASCH

SMALL, HIGH-END: Downtown Los Angeles wrapped up 2014 with the debuts of more high-end boutiques, and these designer boutiques are coming in all shapes and sizes. The LAEX brand opened a downtown LA flagship store that is 60 square feet. It's a good place to develop an audience, said Alexander Khater of LAEX. For more about the store, see page 2.

2014 Retrospective

From domestic employment figures and the latest import/export data to retail real estate and retail sales, the editors of *California Apparel News* take a look at some of the key indicators for the apparel industry in 2014.

We take a look at the retail outlook through the lens of some of California's priciest retail real estate as well as at some of its successful—and most troubled—retailers.

The balance between domestic manufacturing and off-shore production plays out in the California employment and the national import numbers. The California employment numbers paint a picture of an industry that maintains its position as the nation's apparel manufacturing center as well as lean business making the most of technologically enabled efficiency. And the import numbers tell us where the industry is producing today—and give us an indication where it may be producing tomorrow.

The 2014 Retrospective begins on page 3.

American Apparel Managers Write Letter Urging Board to Keep Charney On After Hiring New CEO

By Deborah Belgum *Senior Editor*

After **American Apparel's** board announced its decision on Dec. 16 to fire Dov Charney as the clothing company's president and chief executive, a group of 30 managers and directors wrote a letter saying they wanted the controversial founder to stay on in some capacity.

The board opted to cut its ties with Charney, who was under investigation for alleged misconduct and sexual harassment, and hire apparel veteran Paula Schneider to take over the top executive spot on Jan. 5.

Charney, who is the company's largest shareholder, has been working as a paid consultant during the investigation, an arrangement that was terminated after his firing as the head executive.

The managers and directors wrote that they were concerned about the future of the company.

"Some of us have been with American Apparel since its first days in Los Angeles in 1998 and many others for over a decade. When we walk through the remarkable and unparalleled 'sweatshop-free, vertically integrated' factory in downtown LA and when we consider the global impact the brand has made on modern culture, we can't help but think

➔ **American Apparel** page 8

Venue Tradeshow Grows With New Dates, New Location

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

Venue Tradeshow took a bow in 2013 as a small, independent trade show devoted to men's streetwear and fashion, but it is growing up.

Miles Canares, Venue's founder, recently announced major changes to the biannual show's schedule and a new location for the show. However, the event will continue to mostly be devoted to men's streetwear and emerging brands.

Canares also announced a new partner. Joining Venue will be Robbie Eala of the **Next Chapter Collective** showroom, which represents streetwear and fashion brands such as **Publish** and **The Kennedy Denim Co.** "It's a strategic move. He will help out with the retail-relations side. He will help me bring on new brands as well," Canares said.

The last Venue show took place in July at the **Cooper**

Design Space in downtown Los Angeles. Retailers such as **Nasty Gal** and **Tradition**, a popular boutique in Los Angeles' **Beverly Center**, walked the show, which was Venue's third run.

The next Venue show is scheduled to run in April or May at **The Reef**, formerly the **LA Mart** showroom building, also in downtown Los Angeles. Canares chose to schedule the upcoming show before June so exhibitors could show looks for the Summer and Holiday seasons, which aren't as heavily trafficked as the Fall and Spring seasons. "It allows us to be a platform for seasons that don't have a platform," Canares said. "We want to give the Holiday and Summer seasons as much energy as a Fall show," he said.

Much of the business at Venue's past three shows has been comprised of retailers making orders for "at-once" merchandise.

➔ **Venue** page 9

MADE IN AMERICA

Mark and Estel: LA Made, Accessible to All

By Sarah Wolfson *Contributing Writer*

Music has been at the heart of the **Mark and Estel** brand since it was launched in 2005 by Mark Tango and Estel Day.

"The 'Swing T' came from a [track entitled] 'Love Song' that Mark and I [composed]," Day said. "Within a month, trend magazines were writing about the tee."

The Malibu, Calif.-based line's signature soft tees proved to be a hit among musicians, and their specialty cutout, ripped leggings were worn by songstresses Lady Gaga and Gwen Stefani. Early on, Mary-Kate Olsen, style icon and fashion designer of **The Row**, began wearing their designs.

With 12 seasons under its belt, the company has evolved to include a wider range of options in style and size. For Spring/

Summer 2014, Tango and Day introduced the expanded line at **Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week** with new ready-to-wear pieces including sheer off-the-shoulder tops, intricate braided knit dresses, hooded capes and tie-dye bell-bottoms. For their Spring/Summer 2015 show, the designers returned to **New York Fashion Week** with the expanded Mark and Estel brand as well as the original T-shirts and dresses, which have been renamed **M&E Knits**.

M&E Knits is a reinvention of staple silhouettes in 100 percent cotton fabrications as well as some stretch lace. The 200-piece collection retains some elements from Mark and Estel but adds new loose fits to the collection. Wholesale prices start at \$49 and go up to \$400. M&E Knits are currently available at select retailers.

➔ **Mark and Estel** page 2

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



New CEO at Bebe ... p. 2

New exec at Shawmut ... p. 9

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Wiggett Named Bebe CEO

Jim Wiggett's temp job has been made permanent.

Wiggett joined **Bebe Stores Inc.** in June as an interim chief executive officer for the San Francisco Bay Area-headquartered contemporary mall retailer. On Dec. 15, he was named as the permanent CEO for Bebe, said Manny Mashouf, the company's founder and chairman of the board.

"Jim has made considerable progress in executing our turnaround strategy. We have been impressed with his leadership and results orientation during his interim assignment

and are highly confident in his ability to lead the company. We look forward to the future successes that Mr. Wiggett will bring to the Bebe brand."

Wiggett had served as an adviser to the brand and was appointed as its interim CEO after Steve Birkhold, Bebe's former CEO, resigned after spending 18 months trying to turn the company around.

In Bebe's last financial quarter, the first quarter of its fiscal 2015 year, which was reported on Nov. 6, the company

showed a slight 0.7 percent increase in same-store sales. Net sales were \$102.2 million, which represented a 6.5 percent decrease from \$109.3 million reported in the same quarter last year.

Bebe also recently announced that Lawrence Smith, its senior vice president and general counsel, will leave the company on Dec. 16. Smith will receive a severance payment of \$502,500, which comprises one year of his annual base salary plus his target bonus.—*Andrew Asch*

LAEX: LA's Tiniest Flagship

Flagship stores are supposed to be big—emporiums that can stretch across the ground floor of a giant hotel or a city block—but Alexander Khater, owner/creative director of the 2-year-old downtown Los Angeles brand **LAEX**, planned to turn conventional wisdom on its head with the first LAEX flagship, which opened Dec. 8 at 218 W. Eighth St., on the corner of Broadway, in downtown Los Angeles.

It's 60 square feet. Others would have passed it by, but the space presented an irresistible challenge to Khater, who worked as a visual designer for **Emporio Armani** in Milan from 2008 to 2009. "It's a window display, but it's a store," he said of the unique space, which he characterized with the Twitter hashtag *#cantgetanysmaller*.

At the tiny flagship, he sells tops from his LAEX brand. He also sells accessories that he designs, such as plastic cardholders, and leather bags. Since the space is reminiscent of a newsstand, he plans to offer magazines at the space eventually.

Khater designs items for LAEX at a workshop a couple of blocks away. But as

downtown Los Angeles becomes more of a fashion neighborhood, he thought it would be a good idea to attract more eyeballs to his brand. LAEX is down the street from the recently opened flagship for the **Skingraft** label and a less than 5-minute walk from the **Ace Hotel** and the hub of high-end boutiques that opened around it.

Khater wholesales his tops from \$25 to \$50. They are designed for Los Angeles—casual but fashion forward, he said. They hang on a bar in the mid-section of the store, which Khater designed. The flooring is plywood. There is custom-made shelving and **Plexiglas** shades that cover LED lights, which change color.

LAEX is one of several tiny spaces on the 200 block of West Eighth Street. One is the **Farago** art gallery. Another is **Artesana**, a store devoted to a new take on traditional Mexican popsicles, called paletas. Khater said in the 1930s these spaces served as street-front cafes. Eventually, Khater hopes to open more newsstand-style boutiques. "We want to build a cult following," he said of LAEX. "It can only happen organically."—A.A.



GET SMALL: Alexander Khater at his 60-square-foot boutique

MADE IN AMERICA

Mark and Estel *Continued from page 1*

rently sold in more than 300 retail locations in the U.S. and internationally, including in Japan, Germany, Great Britain, France, Spain, parts of Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.

The M&E ready-to-wear collection was inspired by their new single track, "Malibu Anthem."

Recent additions to the collection are casual pieces made from athletic and casual fabrics such as jersey, fleece and denim treated to mimic the appearance of silk, chiffon, leather, wool and metal. Wholesale price points can go up to \$1,500 but average around \$100.

The rocker-chic-meets-everyday-casual collection features three-piece suits, two-piece outfits, oversized dresses, kimonos, sweaters, blazers, bottoms and bustier gowns with trains.

"The purpose is to make a fit that women love and feel comfortable in. If you can wear a three-piece suit made out of sweats and still look [sharp], why not?" Day said.

In Los Angeles, this season's ready-to-wear line is currently exclusively sold at

Madison on Robertson, where Tango and Day have created a special installation in the store window.

Both the Mark and Estel and the M&E Knits collections are made in Los Angeles, which makes it easy to fill reorders and honor special requests. In fact, Tango and Day will remake any style from a past collection for a retailer and for individual orders, as well as produce pieces in any size requested for a custom fit. "We can do one piece at a time for reorders or we can do an entire wholesale order of many styles for a store. In other words, we have no minimums," Day said.

The designers said they believe every woman—in any size—should have the ability to wear what makes her feel good. "Since we source and produce in Los Angeles, we are able to tailor our garments to fit our customers, regardless of size," Tango said. "We have a wide range of clients, from teens to adults, so we always keep them in mind and want to make clothing so anyone could wear it."

For more information, email markandestel@markandestel.com. ●



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APPAREL EMPLOYMENT

Looking Beyond the Numbers

California continues to be the apparel manufacturing center of the United States, thanks to a steady interest in quick-turn delivery and made-in-America production. But that position is maintained by an increasingly lean employment base. The state is also home to a sizable number of manufacturers that import or produce offshore but employ a team domestically to design, sell, import and ship the finished product.

The California Employment Development Department tracks apparel employment in a number of ways. The state agency tracks apparel-factory employment as “cut-and-sew apparel factories” and as “apparel knitting mills,” which are vertical manufacturers that produce apparel from fabric knit in-house. The EDD also tracks employment at textile mills.

According to the agency, employment at cut-and-sew apparel factories stood at 48,500 in October, the most recent data gathered by the EDD. At apparel knitting mills, employment remained relatively steady at 1,300 jobs for most of the year before dropping to 1,200 in October. And textile employment stood at 8,000 in October. Los Angeles County remains the region with the largest concentration of apparel jobs, with 41,000 jobs as of October.

But according to the **California Fashion Association**, the EDD numbers don’t fully reflect the scope and breadth of California’s apparel and textile industry. In March, the CFA released a fashion industry profile report sponsored by **CIT**, which found that in Southern California alone, the fashion industry employed 97,384 people working in apparel, textile and wholesale jobs. The report further says that there are more than 190,000 direct and indirect apparel jobs in California.

Indirect apparel jobs include independent fashion designers, graphic designers and showroom owners, as well as the support businesses that focus exclusively on the apparel industry such as software developers, equipment leasing, distribution, compliance and fashion education.

“We have 440 educators in the 21 [fashion] schools,” said Ilse Metchek, president of the CFA. “There are [approximately] 786 independent showrooms [including] footwear, accessories and apparel. You have 970 wholesale trade agents and brokers just for textiles. All these things are not in EDD numbers.”

According to the **Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.** numbers, last year

CALIFORNIA			
	TEXTILE MILL PRODUCTS	APPAREL KNITTING MILLS	CUT & SEW APPAREL MANUFACTURING
November 2013	8,500	1,400	53,100
December 2013	8,100	1,300	52,100
January 2014	8,100	1,300	52,200
February 2014	7,900	1,300	51,900
March 2014	7,800	1,300	51,100
April 2014	8,000	1,300	51,200
May 2014	8,000	1,300	50,200
June 2014	8,000	1,300	49,800
July 2014	8,000	1,300	49,100
August 2014	7,900	1,300	47,500
September 2014	7,900	1,300	49,400
October 2014	8,000	1,200	48,500

Source: California Employment Development Department

LOS ANGELES COUNTY	
	APPAREL MANUFACTURING
November 2013	45,300
December 2013	44,400
January 2014	44,600
February 2014	44,400
March 2014	43,800
April 2014	44,500
May 2014	43,800
June 2014	43,500
July 2014	42,500
August 2014	40,700
September 2014	41,900
October 2014	41,000

there were more than 7,000 “core industry” businesses operating as textile mills, apparel sewing contractors or wholesale jobbers. There are 961 “non-core” businesses such as textile-mill products, accessories and product-development services and another 2,900 related businesses such as contracted consultants, support services, and wholesale agents and brokers. These 2,900 companies are businesses that specialize in working with apparel companies but are not classified as apparel-related in any government statistic.

Plus, Metchek said, the EDD numbers include staff positions but not freelance jobs.

“EDD reports only those numbers that are reported on W2s. The Household Income report includes the 1099ers but does not define their industry, only their job definition. We have to ferret all this information out ourselves,” she said.

Another factor that is not reflected in the EDD’s employment numbers is the skill level of the jobs that remain in California. Manufacturers based in California but producing offshore require more tech-savvy employees, who command higher salaries, Metchek said.

“What we’ve done is increased the level of our salary base,” she said. “We’re no longer a minimum-wage industry. That’s the encouraging part.”—*Alison A. Nieder*

RETAIL SALES

Tale of Two Specialty Stores: Urban Outfitters and The Wet Seal

2014 has been a year of headlines for **Urban Outfitters Inc.**

The Philadelphia-headquartered company lived up to its hipster image when it announced in September that it is the largest purveyor of vinyl records in the U.S. (The claim was later rebuked by record executives and *Billboard* magazine, which say e-commerce giant **Amazon.com** sells the most vinyl.)

It stoked outrage in the same month when it stocked a blood red–stained **Kent State** sweatshirt, which it offered for \$129. It quickly took the sweatshirts off the shelves after fielding critiques from people angry at the store for making light of the 1970 shootings at the Ohio university.

Financially, the specialty retailer’s most recent fiscal year started out well but ended with the top executives hoping that its **Urban Outfitters** division would perform better. The sometimes provocative company runs a fleet of 539 stores, which include nameplates of the more romantic **Anthropologie**, the bohemian **Free People**, wedding- and party-dress shop **Bhldn**, and home and garden store **Terrain**.

Urban Outfitters started its fiscal year by reporting good sales for its fourth quarter, which ended Jan. 31, 2014. Total company net sales increased to \$906 million, or 6 percent over the same quarter the previous year. Same-store sales increased 1 percent. Richard A. Hayne, the specialty retailer’s chief executive officer, noted being pleased with the Anthropologie and Free People divisions. However, he was cautious on the performance of the Urban Outfitters division.

Fast forward to the beginning of the 2014 holiday season, Hayne had a similar story to tell investors. Anthropologie and Free People were doing well, but the Urban division needed work.

“I am disappointed by the results at the Urban Outfitters brand,” Hayne said in a statement. “There is much work to be done to improve the merchandise margins and store performance at the Urban brand, but I see positive signs as

shown by strong results at the brand’s direct-to-consumer channel.”

2014 has been a tough year for the juniors business. On Dec. 4, **Deb Shops**, a Philadelphia specialty retailer, filed for bankruptcy. New York–headquartered **Aeropostale** reported Dec. 4 that its same-store sales had declined 11 percent for the third quarter of its fiscal 2014 year.

But business seems to have been particularly tough at **The Wet Seal Inc.** During a Dec. 10 conference call, Wet Seal executives announced that if the company could not resolve its liquidity problems, it could explore bankruptcy. For its third quarter, Wet Seal’s same-store sales declined 14.5 percent. Net sales totaled \$104.3 million compared with \$114.9 million in the same quarter the previous year.

The past few years for the company have been tumultuous. There was a bruising proxy battle that consumed the retailer in 2012. John D. Goodman, the chief executive officer, hired after the proxy battle, was fired in September and replaced by Ed Thomas, who ran the company from 2007 to 2011.

However Jeff Van Sinderen, a retail analyst for **B. Riley & Co.**, forecasted that things will continue to be tough for the juniors retailer. On Nov. 17, he wrote a research note that downgraded Wet Seal’s stock to neutral from buy.

“Although every possible effort is being made by the much-improved [Wet Seal] leadership, those critical elements of the turnaround have not yet materialized,” he wrote.—*Andrew Asch*

Target, Macy’s Navigate Tough Year

As 2014 came to a close, **Target Corp.** was still dealing with the massive data breach of 2013 and taking steps to bring back the Minneapolis-headquartered company’s cheap chic glory days of the 1990s.

On Dec. 15, 2013, Target announced that personal data such as payment-card information from 70 million of its customers had been stolen by hackers. In May 2014, Gregg Steinhafel, the ailing retailer’s chief executive officer, was pushed out of his leadership role.

QUARTERLY PROGRESS OF COMPARABLE-STORE SALES				
	4th Qtr.	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.
MAJOR RETAILERS				
MACY’S	+1.4%	-1.6%	+4.0%	-0.7%
TARGET	-2.5%	-0.3%	-1.3%	+1.2%
SPECIALTY STORES				
URBAN OUTFITTERS	+1.0%	0	0	-1.0%
WET SEAL	-16.5%	-16.9%	-12.4%	-14.5%

Source: company reports

Target’s board was not only angered about the big-box retailer being caught flat-footed after the data breach, but they also were alarmed by the retailer’s debut in Canada, which was deemed to be poorly executed.

Steinhafel was replaced by Brian Cornell, a **Pepsi Co.** executive. Since then, Target has hired more executives to develop and protect its online world. One of the new executives is Jacqueline Hourigan Rice, who was hired in November as senior vice president, chief risk and compliance officer to lead the company’s efforts in developing its online ethics, compliance and data

privacy.

On Dec. 17, it was announced that Casey Carl, president, omnichannel and senior vice president, strategy, will assume the role of chief strategy and innovation officer. His team will include Paritosh Desai, who will serve in the new job of senior vice president, enterprise data, analytics and business intelligence.

Target also said that it would pilot a new retail concept. In September, it announced **Target Express**, 19,000-square-foot small-format stores, which are 14 percent smaller than typical Target stores. Some of the new stores are scheduled to open in the San Francisco Bay Area. Another is scheduled to open in the San Diego area in 2015.

For its most recent third-quarter financial report, which was reported Nov. 19, same-store sales increased by 1.2 percent, which was better than forecast. Comparable-store sales reflect digital sales growth of more than 30 percent in the third quarter, according to a Target statement.

2014 was a year of growth and innovation for **Macy’s Inc.** In September, it announced that it was going to support new digital payment platforms such as **Apple Pay** and also pilot same-day-delivery programs.

Also in September, the retail giant announced that it would hire 86,000 seasonal workers, 3.6 percent more than the holiday season the previous year. But in its last financial release, the third quarter of its 2014 year, Terry J. Lundgren, Macy’s chairman and chief executive officer, reported that same-store sales declined 0.7 percent for the quarter and that it would slightly revise the forecast for its 2014 earnings. Lundgren said, however, that he was bullish about Macy’s fourth quarter.—*A.A.*

RETAIL EMPLOYMENT

Key Seasons Provide Lift

Retail employment in apparel and accessories stores across California remained steady for much of the year, with upticks in employment in the months leading up to retail's busiest seasons—Back to School and Christmas.

According to the California Employment Development Department, employment

numbers rose from November 2013 to January 2014 (peaking at 205,000 in December) then fell to 179,300 in February. The monthly figures steadily increased until August, when employment topped at 178,600. After a dip in September, the employment figures began rising again until October, the most recent month tracked by the EDD.—*Alison A. Nieder*

RETAIL EMPLOYMENT: CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES STORES

	STATEWIDE	LOS ANGELES COUNTY	ORANGE
November 2013	202,100	59,600	18,100
December 2013	205,000	59,000	18,400
January 2014	179,300	53,500	16,100
February 2014	173,900	53,000	15,600
March 2014	172,700	52,800	15,500
April 2014	174,300	53,500	15,600
May 2014	172,700	53,100	15,500
June 2014	176,100	53,800	15,800
July 2014	177,700	54,800	15,800
Aug 2014	178,600	54,900	15,900
September 2014	175,100	53,800	15,600
October 2014	177,600	54,600	15,800

Source: California Employment Development Dept.

Calendar

Jan. 4

Accessories The Show Fame Moda

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 6

Jan. 5

Agenda

Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, Calif.
Through Jan. 6

Intermezzo Collections

Piers 92/94
New York
Through Jan. 7

Jan. 8

Surf Expo

Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, Fla.
Through Jan. 10

"Starting a Fashion Business" workshop

California Market Center, A792
Los Angeles

Jan. 11

Los Angeles Fashion Market

California Market Center
Gerry Building
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Lazr

The Vertigo Building
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Retail's BIG Show, NRF's Annual Convention

Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York
Through Jan. 14

Jan. 12

Los Angeles Fashion Market

Cooper Design Space
The New Mart
824 Building
Lady Liberty Building
Primrose Design Building
Academy Awards Building
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Designers and Agents

The New Mart
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Select Transit

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

DG Textile Expo Fabric & Trim Show

Hotel Pennsylvania
New York
Through Jan. 13

Brand Assembly

Cooper Design Space
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 14

Jan. 13

Premiere Vision New York

Pier 92
New York
Through Jan. 14

Indigo

Pier 92
New York
Through Jan. 14

Printsource New York

Metropolitan Pavilion
New York
Through Jan. 15

Jan. 14

SoCal Materials Show

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through Jan. 15

Jan. 15

Swim Collective

St. Regis Monarch Beach
Dana Point, Calif.
Through Jan. 16

Jan. 16

Imprinted Sportswear Shows

Long Beach Convention Center
Long Beach, Calif.
Through Jan. 18

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

For calendar details and contact
information, visit ApparelNews.net/calendar.

Submissions to the calendar should be faxed to the Calendar Editor at (213) 623-5707. Please include the event's name, date, time, location, admission price and contact information. The deadline for calendar submissions is the Tuesday prior to Friday publication. Inclusion in the calendar is subject to available space and the judgment of the editorial staff.

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REAL ESTATE

Retail Rents Climb in Beverly Hills

During the past year, rents on several prime Los Angeles shopping streets have stayed the course and not risen over last year.

But that was not true in Beverly Hills. Try to find a spot on North Beverly Drive, and store owners will be paying as much as \$20 per square foot—about twice as much as what shopkeepers were paying two years ago. “That street has been one of the stronger streets in retail,” said Philip Klaparda, senior associate at **Dembo Realty** in Beverly Hills, which tracks local retail real estate activity.

Cos, or Collection of Style, the higher-end men’s and women’s label made by fast-fashion retailer **H&M Group**, just opened up a spot at 357 N. Beverly Drive. The brand, launched in 2007, is known for its functional, modern designs with a clean look.

And model turned fashion mogul Kimora Lee Simmons is opening a store for her **KLS** label in the next four months or so once the city permitting process is wrapped up, Klaparda said.

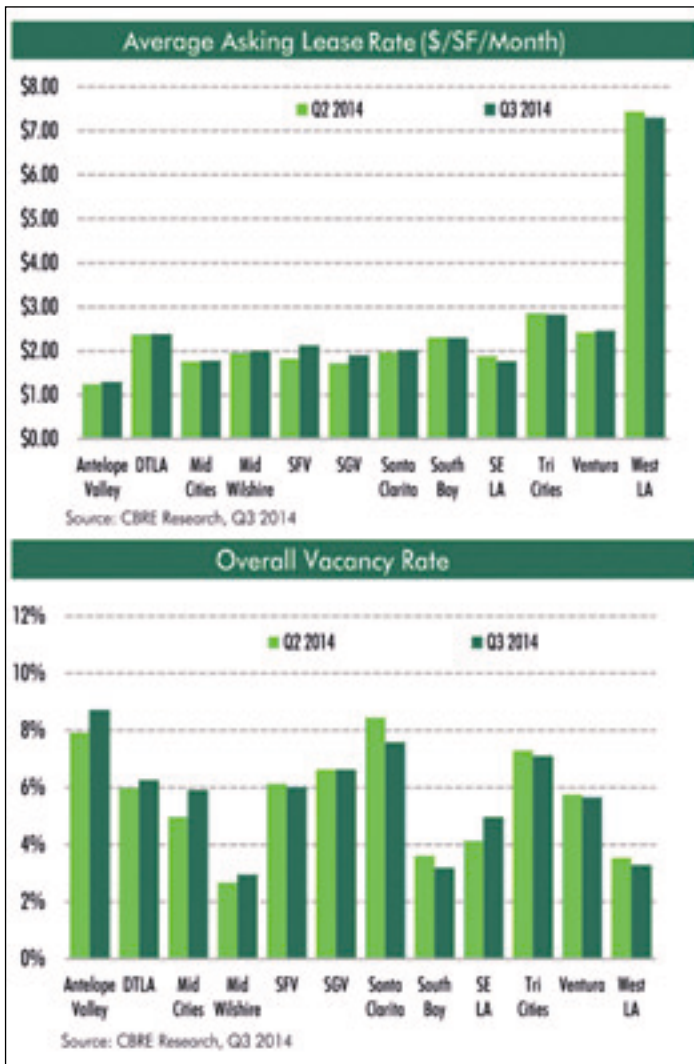
Even though rents are rising on Beverly Drive, they appear tame compared with those on the luxury retail center known as Rodeo Drive, where leases fetch \$50 to \$60 per square foot. Vacancy on the street is near zero. One of the latest brands to arrive has been **Burberry**, which moved from its Wilshire Boulevard locale to a new building it rents at 301 N. Rodeo Drive.

Robertson Boulevard has seen its retail rents stay relatively even with last year—going for \$12 to \$15 per square foot. However, it is still a game of musical chairs on the street. “The street doesn’t look as attractive as it will in the next six to 12 months,” Klaparda said, noting there are some leases being negotiated with retailers that will add more value to the area.

Hale Bob moved out of a large space at 104 S. Robertson Blvd. to a smaller outpost across the street at 123 S. Robertson Blvd. **Nanette Lepore** has left as has **Monika Chiang**, which opened its first free-standing store here in 2011.

In the Greater Los Angeles area, retail vacancy rates dropped slightly from 6 percent last year to 5.7 percent this year, according to commercial real estate-services firm **CBRE**.

Areas that have low retail vacancy rates include West Los Angeles (3.3 percent), the South Bay area (3.2 percent) and the Mid-Wilshire district (3 percent).—*Deborah Belgun*



IMPORT/EXPORT

Vietnam Makes Great Inroads in Apparel Exports to U.S. Stores

Vietnam is looking like the little engine that could.

Even though the Southeast Asian nation has a population of 93.4 million people, not even 10 percent of the Chinese population, it is becoming an increasingly popular place for apparel manufacturing. The country’s wages are about one-third to half as much as those in China, and its workers are known for their fine, detailed work.

During the first 10 months of this year, Vietnam saw its apparel exports to the U.S. mushroom 15.5 percent over last year to \$9.3 billion. Vietnam is America’s second-largest apparel provider, accounting for 9.2 percent of all clothing sold here.

However, China is still the dominant engine when it comes to providing U.S. consumers with clothing to put on their backs. The country’s apparel and textile exports to the United States inched up 1.5 percent during the first 10 months of this year to \$41.5 billion, or 39 percent of all U.S. apparel and textile imports. Making a strong showing were Chinese yarn exports, up 10 percent, and fabric exports, rising 6.6 percent.

Other countries that are major apparel

➔ Import/Export page 7

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Import/Export

Continued from previous page

exporters to the United States this year are India, Indonesia and Bangladesh. India's exports rose 6.4 percent to \$6 billion. Indonesia's exports declined 3.4 percent, but it still shipped an impressive \$5.1 billion in goods to the United States.

Even though Bangladesh has been plagued in the past with clothing-factory fires and a building collapse that killed 1,129 garment workers last year, it is another popular spot

for apparel production because of its rock-bottom wages. Still, it saw a 1.54 percent dip in its apparel exports to \$5 billion.

Overall, the United States saw its apparel and textile imports increase 3.28 percent during the first 10 months of this year over last year for a total of \$102.9 billion.

The United States made modest gains in an attempt to export more garments and fabric overseas. During the first 10 months of this year, exports went up 2.65 percent to \$20.5 billion. Almost half of that went to Canada and Mexico.—*Deborah Belgum*

U.S. Textile and Apparel Imports

Jan. 2013 through Oct. 2014
(in millions of dollars)

	2013	2013	2014	YTD
		Jan.-Oct.	Jan.-Oct.	% Change
World				
Yarn	3,734	3,187	3,181	-0.18
Fabric	7,899	6,615	7,015	6.03
Made-up	23,417	19,697	20,360	3.36
Apparel	82,403	70,169	72,386	3.16
Total	117,453	99,668	102,941	3.28
Canada				
Yarn	434	376	319	-15.29
Fabric	795	668	656	-1.80
Made-up	361	304	301	-0.89
Apparel	551	459	502	9.49
Total	2,142	1,806	1,777	-1.59
Mexico				
Yarn	385	334	293	-12.21
Fabric	534	454	490	7.87
Made-up	970	821	892	8.73
Apparel	3,848	3,257	3,296	1.17
Total	5,738	4,867	4,971	2.16
India				
Yarn	187	157	157	-0.27
Fabric	399	341	370	8.67
Made-up	2,959	2,461	2,655	7.88
Apparel	3,259	2,817	2,988	6.10
Total	6,804	5,776	6,170	6.84
Pakistan				
Yarn	17	15	15	2.36
Fabric	116	96	98	1.88
Made-up	1,495	1,274	1,279	0.41
Apparel	1,499	1,288	1,274	-1.06
Total	3,125	2,673	2,666	-0.24
China				
Yarn	725	604	667	10.39
Fabric	2,087	1,740	1,855	6.59
Made-up	13,909	11,709	11,900	1.63
Apparel	31,478	26,901	27,147	0.91
Total	48,199	40,955	41,569	1.50
Korea, South				
Yarn	325	280	272	-2.68
Fabric	602	504	525	4.13
Made-up	119	98	83	-15.24
Apparel	246	206	217	5.30
Total	1,292	1,088	1,097	0.86
Hong Kong				
Yarn	1	1	2	117.33
Fabric	11	9	9	-3.94
Made-up	46	39	58	50.54
Apparel	156	132	143	8.76
Total	214	180	212	17.76
Taiwan				
Yarn	154	130	152	16.40
Fabric	387	329	359	9.01
Made-up	196	166	155	-6.56
Apparel	370	324	313	-3.51
Total	1,107	949	978	3.04
Japan				
Yarn	184	157	174	11.12
Fabric	442	366	382	4.46
Made-up	36	30	25	-18.76
Apparel	43	37	39	5.03
Total	705	590	620	5.08
EU27				
Yarn	704	601	627	4.21
Fabric	1,484	1,237	1,337	8.09
Made-up	962	797	862	8.13
Apparel	2,356	1,926	2,170	12.65
Total	5,507	4,561	4,995	9.51
ASEAN				
Yarn	286	244	235	-3.68
Fabric	395	333	338	1.55
Made-up	961	813	891	9.61
Apparel	18,541	15,818	16,750	5.89
Total	20,182	17,208	18,214	5.84
CBI				
Yarn	0	0	0	836.11
Fabric	3	2	2	-7.24
Made-up	1	1	1	-12.35
Apparel	810	682	720	5.57
Total	814	686	723	5.50
LDDC exc. Haiti				
Yarn	9	8	8	0.49
Fabric	9	7	8	12.70
Made-up	281	247	267	7.89
Apparel	7,919	6,838	6,664	-2.55
Total	8,218	7,101	6,947	-2.17

U.S. Textile and Apparel Exports

Jan. 2013 through Oct. 2014
(in millions of dollars)

	2013	2013	2014	YTD
		Jan.-Oct.	Jan.-Oct.	% Change
World				
Yarn	5,177	4,410	4,443	0.76
Fabric	8,865	7,516	7,830	4.19
Made-up	3,760	3,150	3,164	0.46
Apparel	5,863	4,898	5,065	3.42
Total	23,666	19,973	20,503	2.65
Canada				
Yarn	437	370	376	1.73
Fabric	1,329	1,133	1,126	-0.61
Made-up	1,662	1,394	1,393	-0.04
Apparel	2,043	1,700	1,739	2.29
Total	5,471	4,597	4,635	0.82
Mexico				
Yarn	693	600	546	-8.92
Fabric	3,530	2,983	3,285	10.11
Made-up	619	517	559	8.05
Apparel	907	755	843	11.76
Total	5,749	4,855	5,233	7.79
India				
Yarn	46	38	35	-7.55
Fabric	54	43	53	22.43
Made-up	20	17	18	2.54
Apparel	52	44	39	-11.58
Total	171	142	144	1.48
Pakistan				
Yarn	19	16	11	-29.78
Fabric	3	3	3	16.62
Made-up	4	3	3	-10.97
Apparel	14	13	10	-20.68
Total	40	34	27	-21.08
China				
Yarn	845	726	622	-14.32
Fabric	438	364	343	-5.83
Made-up	61	52	50	-4.82
Apparel	47	40	46	17.15
Total	1,391	1,182	1,061	-10.23
Korea, South				
Yarn	150	127	116	-8.42
Fabric	86	71	74	4.39
Made-up	49	40	52	28.90
Apparel	100	85	74	-13.18
Total	386	322	315	-2.23
Hong Kong				
Yarn	34	30	27	-11.12
Fabric	211	171	169	-1.08
Made-up	41	35	28	-20.79
Apparel	89	76	80	5.96
Total	375	312	304	-2.54
Taiwan				
Yarn	24	20	10	-48.72
Fabric	60	51	58	13.73
Made-up	17	15	17	16.07
Apparel	23	20	22	9.39
Total	125	105	106	1.54
Japan				
Yarn	102	85	94	10.37
Fabric	232	202	163	-19.40
Made-up	112	95	76	-19.69
Apparel	286	250	226	-9.45
Total	732	631	559	-11.49
EU27				
Yarn	532	447	493	10.33
Fabric	912	776	816	5.16
Made-up	334	280	304	8.61
Apparel	730	608	602	-1.01
Total	2,508	2,112	2,216	4.94
ASEAN				
Yarn	241	203	199	-1.91
Fabric	233	197	210	6.85
Made-up	85	72	65	-9.14
Apparel	91	77	67	-13.06
Total	651	549	542	-1.29
CBI				
Yarn	6	5	5	5.64
Fabric	70	58	56	-3.53
Made-up	90	70	66	-6.17
Apparel	90	75	67	-10.85
Total	255	208	194	-6.82
LDDC exc. Haiti				
Yarn	24	21	21	0.21
Fabric	15	13	14	10.63
Made-up	34	30	23	-22.22
Apparel	129	107	100	-6.75
Total	202	171	158	-7.30

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Textiles and Apparel. Numbers rounded to nearest million



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American Apparel *Continued from page 1*

about how it came to be," they wrote.

"Each of us can tell countless, sometimes unbelievable stories of how, against all odds, we cobbled things together to help build a completely unique, globally recognized brand—and the common thread in all of our accounts is Dov Charney. In some stories, he drives us crazy while in others he mentors and encourages us, but one thing is undisputable—his vision, drive, determination and persistence have been the momentum behind every major progression this company has made since its inception in 1986. He brings energy, imagination and authenticity that no other single person can possibly come close to, and it's motivational and inspiring to us all. Plainly put, Dov is what makes this thing tick.

"We were alarmed to learn of the board's decision today to not reintegrate Dov into a leadership role in the company. This decision was made without consulting even one of us regarding the impact it could have on the company, its employees and shareholders. We are the people in the day-to-day trenches that know what this company needs in order to reach its immediate and long-term potential and to fulfill its responsibilities to its shareholders.

"We believe the best-case scenario for the future of American Apparel is to put a strong CEO in place that can focus on structure, efficiency and optimization of the daily operations of the business. The vision of the CEO should be in line with that of the global workforce as well as the shareholders of American Apparel. Also, the CEO would be a supportive counterpart to Dov, who we feel should lead the creative vision, growth and sales strategy of the company.

"It's not about the title he has. Rather it's about respecting the hard work that he continues to contribute and allowing the company to benefit from his strengths. Most importantly, he needs to be in the factory, in the stores and in the trenches with us all. We understand and agree that there is a need for a constructive and pivotal evolution within the organization.

"We aren't holding onto the past. We are eagerly looking

toward the best possible future for this extraordinary company, and we will continue to use our best judgment to protect and grow the business.

"The turnaround and subsequent success of American Apparel has the opportunity to be a brilliantly triumphant story, and we believe Dov, its visionary founder, our friend and leader, should be a decisive part of it."

There has been no reaction by the board, which is paving the way for Schneider to move into the top executive spot next year. The seasoned apparel executive has been at the helm of

ning **Paula Schneider Consulting**.

"American Apparel has a unique and incredible story, and it's exciting to become part of such an iconic brand," Schneider said in a statement. "My goal is to make American Apparel a better company while staying true to its core values of quality and creativity and preserving its sweatshop-free, 'Made in USA' manufacturing philosophy."

In a press release, American Apparel said Charney was terminated for cause in accordance with the terms of his employment agreement. Most recently, Scott Brubaker has been working as the clothing maker's interim chief executive. He will continue as chief executive until Schneider takes over in early January. Brubaker will stay on as a consultant to ensure a smooth transition.

"The company needs a permanent CEO who can bring stability and strong leadership in this time of transition, and we believe Ms. Schneider fits the bill perfectly," said David Danziger, co-chairman of the board.

Charney, who founded American Apparel in 1998, was suspended as the company's president and chief executive on June 18 for alleged misconduct and violations of company policy, a company statement said.

Under terms of an agreement signed by Charney on July 9, a special committee appointed by the board oversaw an internal investigation conducted by **FTI Consulting**. Based on the investigation, the special committee said it decided that it would not be appropriate for Charney to be reinstated as CEO or as an officer of the company.

For years, American Apparel has been losing money, with net losses totaling nearly \$300 million in five years.

For the first nine months of the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, net sales were \$455.4 million with net losses totaling \$40.8 million.

The company is the largest apparel factory in the United States, employing more than 3,000 workers at its downtown location. With 245 retail stores, it employs a total of 10,000 people in 20 countries. ●



American Apparel's headquarters in downtown Los Angeles

several Los Angeles companies.

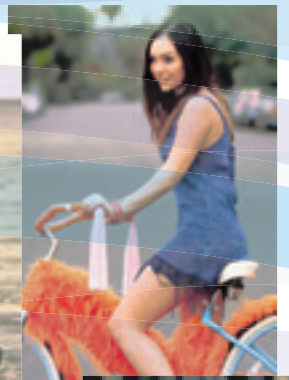
She was the president of the **Warnaco Swimwear Group**, whose principal label was **Speedo**, and she was president of **Laundry by Shelli Segal**.

When **The Gores Group** purchased Los Angeles junior-swear maker **Big Strike Inc.** in 2011, the private investment group gave the top executive position to Schneider, where she remained for almost two years. Since then she has been run-

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Shawmut Names New CEO

Shawmut Design & Construction has worked on many high-marquee projects on Rodeo Drive, including the remodels of **Tory Burch**, **Tom Ford** and **Jimmy Choo**. It has also done work on the **Saint Laurent** flagship on Rodeo and **Louis Vuitton**, which is scheduled to take a bow in the first quarter of 2015. Off of Rodeo, it also has worked on **Topshop** stores in San Diego's **Fashion Valley** mall and the **Uniqlo** emporiums in **South Coast Plaza** in Costa Mesa, Calif., and **Beverly Center** in Los Angeles.

The Boston-headquartered Shawmut recently announced a new chief executive officer. Les Hiscoe, who has served as president of the company, was named to the position.

Current CEO Tom Goemaat announced his retirement on Dec. 8 and pledged to helm the company until July 1, 2015, to ensure a smooth transition.

"It feels like the right time for me to step away," Goemaat said in a statement. "After over 15 years of leading this company, it's time to let the next generation of talent take Shawmut into the future. I am excited to hand the baton to Les, who has been a wonderful partner to me and has the necessary vision and energy to continue driving Shawmut forward."

Hiscoe was instrumental in opening Shawmut's Los Angeles office in February 2013. While Shawmut has a long track record in Southern California, the new office was a statement that the company is intent on building more business here, a Shawmut representative confirmed.—*Andrew Asch*

Venue *Continued from page 1*

dise. Canares said he thinks producing Summer and Holiday shows will further support that business.

Future Venue shows will have to balance growth with preserving the friendliness of a small show, Canares said. He hopes the show will grow by 30 more booths. A 10-by-10 booth will cost around \$2,000. Most trade shows charge more than double that price for a similar space.

Jacob A. Seedman, owner/designer of the **Shalom Cultural Peace Project**, headquartered in the area of



VENUE: Wolf & Man's Jared Ito and Brian Chan with Joseph Ortega, right, at the Venue show in July



Miles Canares

Santa Cruz, Calif., said he hopes Venue will continue to be friendly to emerging and new brands. "They're trying to help small brands grow, and that's a big thing these days," he said.

Venue does business in a trade-show category that is gaining popularity. **Agenda** is scheduled to run Jan. 5-6 in Long Beach, Calif., and will showcase 1,000 brands. The biannual **Los Angeles Men's Market** is held at the **California Market Center** in downtown Los Angeles during **LA Fashion Market** in March and October. Like Venue, it produces shows during the Spring and Holiday seasons. ●

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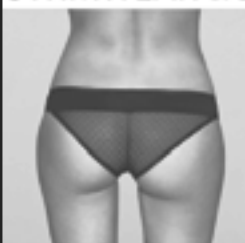
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SR. PRODUCTION MANAGER at SAMSUNG in COMMERCE, CA

Supervise costing, pre-production, domestic/overseas production, and QC. Vendor sourcing & order allocation including negotiating Capa. 10 yrs production experience req'd with strong organizational, analytical, multi-tasking, problem solving, & communication skills. Must be team player with a can-do attitude.
Email resume to recruiting@scta.samsung.com

Technical Designer

We're growing! Miller International, Inc., designer of Cinch®, Cruel Girl®, Southern Thread® and Miller Ranch® has an immediate opening for a new Technical Designer. Out of state candidates welcome to apply, as long as you are willing to relocate to our wonderful city; Denver, Colorado. Send resume and cover letter to merchjob@miller-international.com

BOOKKEEPER

We are seeking for an individual with strong bookkeeping skills for our Retail business. Extremely detail oriented, reliable, flexible and multi-tasked. Must have experience with bank recon, A/R and A/P. Must be proficient in Quickbooks and Excel. Knowledge in AIMS a plus. Email resume @ mel.johnnywas@gmail.com or fax to (323)231-5231

Jobs Available



Sales and Production Assistant

We are looking for a Sales & Production Assistant. Contributing to the production process. Build relationships with vendors and internal customers. 1-3 years' experience in apparel/accessory production and sourcing. Please send resume to: sales@urbanexpressions.net.

GRAPHIC/CAD ARTIST

Creative individual to develop new artwork for Textiles, screen prints and sublimation. Must be able to create cads and line sheets as well as other graphic needs that arise. Proficiency in illustrator and photoshop a must. Please E-mail resume to Rose@BBoston.com

EDI & LOGISTICS COORDINATOR

We are looking for an experienced EDI & Logistics Coordinator to join our team. Receiving & processing EDI orders. Creating UPC's. Preparing shipping docs, arranging pick up. Must have knowledge of GXS Inovis Catalog. GXS Di Central. 3-5 years' experience.
Please send resume to careers@moda-luxe.com.

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PRODUCTION PATTERNAKER

Min 8 years production pattern making and specification experience for Junior market. PAD system exp. required.
Please send resume to: HR@stonyapparel.com

Pattern Maker & Sales Rep

Seeking a full time PATTERN MAKER, creating tops & dresses. Efficient on Gerber V8 System & must communicate clearly & follow directions as needed. Also seeking SALES REP for luxury lifestyle brand including high-end apparel & fine jewelry. Send resume to cyrus@vmt-losangeles.com

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