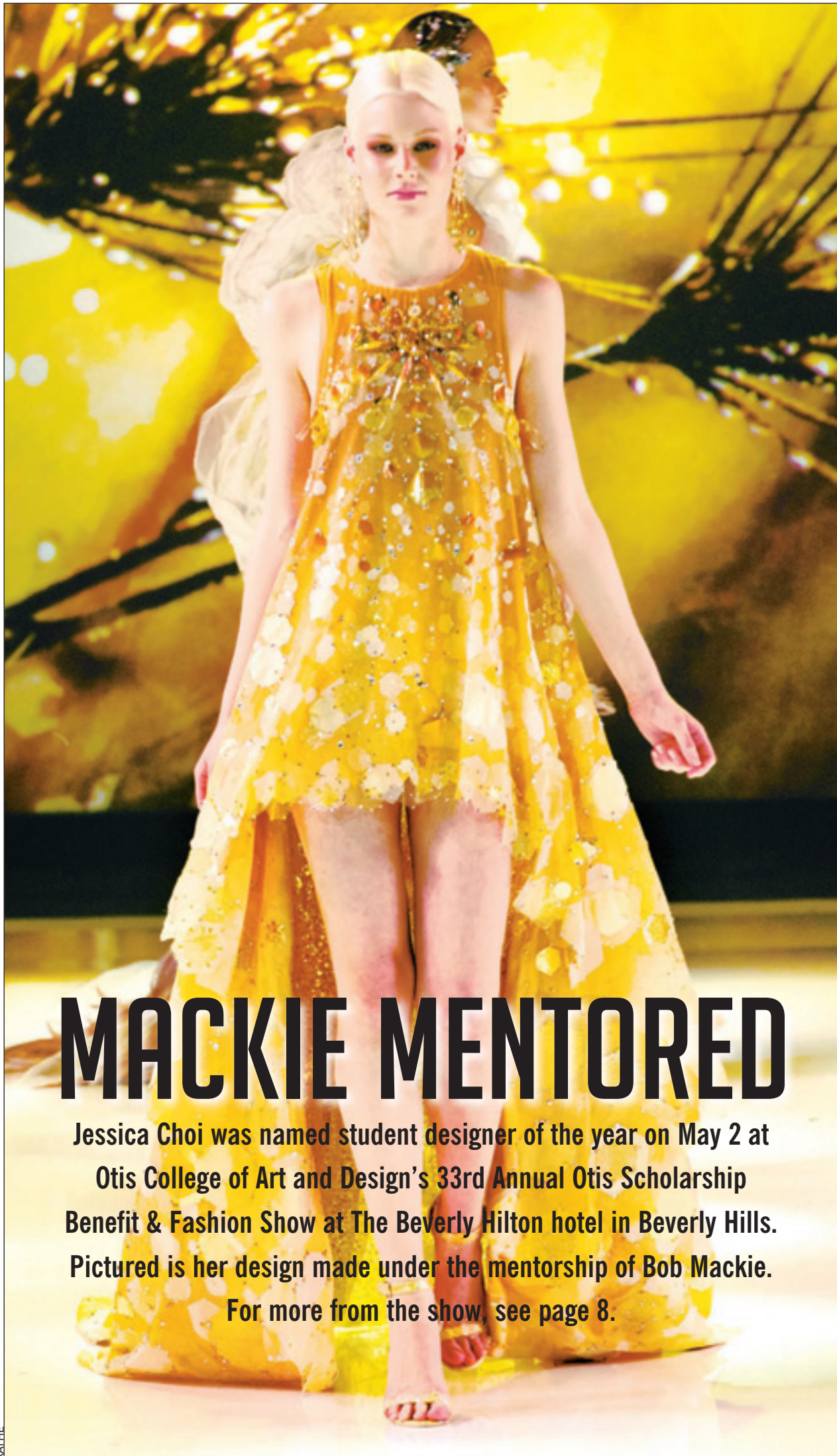


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MACKIE MENTORED

Jessica Choi was named student designer of the year on May 2 at Otis College of Art and Design's 33rd Annual Otis Scholarship Benefit & Fashion Show at The Beverly Hilton hotel in Beverly Hills. Pictured is her design made under the mentorship of Bob Mackie.

For more from the show, see page 8.

E-commerce Retailer ModCloth Takes Experimental Steps Offline

By Alyson Bender *Contributing Writer*

Online retailer **ModCloth** has been defying bricks-and-mortar retail with more than \$100 million in annual revenue with its online business model, but that's about to change.

The company's chief executive officer, Matt Kaness, described 2015 as an "experimental" year for ModCloth. Kaness said the company plans to keep exploring bricks-and-mortar in the future, but there is no concrete strategy set yet. "We're looking to test other formats before we make any big decisions around what the future of offline is," Kaness said. "Right now, we're still conceiving it."

Kaness was hired in January 2014 to help set up company spending and resources and further the lifestyle brand's strength and reach. While technology continues to be an integral part of the business, ModCloth is exploring the possibilities of taking its online world into the real world.

In early April, ModCloth experimented with bricks-

➔ **ModCloth** page 2

California Manufacturers Look for Ways to Beat Drought

By Andrew Asch *Retail Editor*

California's **State Water Resources Control Board** took emergency measures to act on California's harsh drought last month, ranging from restaurants not serving water unless requested to prohibitions against using potable water to wash down driveways and sidewalks.

But the state's restrictions have yet to affect California's apparel makers, even though dye houses and commercial laundries rely on heavy water usage to make apparel items such as jeans to T-shirts and special-occasion dresses.

So far, state agencies have not made specific directions to the state's fashion producers to change their production methods. Nor has the drought been a major topic of conversation among factory managers, according to interviews with fashion executives. Still, several California fashion businesses are already experimenting with ways to cut back the amount of water used.

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Fast A/R Funding Buys Continental Business Credit

Fast A/R Funding, a 6-year-old specialty finance company based in Calabasas, Calif., has acquired **Continental Business Credit** for an undisclosed amount.

Continental Business Credit, which provides factoring services and asset-based financing from its headquarters in Woodland Hills, Calif., will continue to operate under its current name as a business unit of Fast A/R Funding. Together, the two companies will serve more than 150 clients.

"This is a win/win opportunity," said Lee Hirsch, who founded Continental Business Credit in 1989. He will be president of the

business unit and will oversee growth strategies and client expansion.

"The acquisition allows our clients to benefit from service enhancements while continuing the longstanding relationships with the Continental team," Hirsch added. "I have an abundance of respect for Fast A/R Funding's team, and I look forward to expanding our marketplace and the clients we serve." With the acquisition, Continental will have access to a significantly stronger capital base, enhanced back-office services and technological advancements, Fast A/R Funding executives said.

"This acquisition is a chance for us to expand our reach into new market areas, including apparel, and other consumer product markets while realizing the benefit of a network of clients that have counted on Continental Business Credit for nearly three decades," said Matt Begley, chief executive officer of Fast A/R Funding.

"Our technology base and streamlined processing will allow their clients to more quickly access funding while still dealing with familiar Continental personnel. Going forward, our combined portfolio size will also allow us to complete larger loans to existing

and new clients."

Fast A/R Funding was founded in 2009 by Jonah Schnel, who remains the company's executive chairman. "We saw a unique opportunity to acquire a strong, local brand in the traditional factoring space here in Southern California. By utilizing our significant capital reserves, technology platform and financing expertise, we know both Fast A/R Funding and Continental are poised for substantial growth in the years to come," Schnel said.

Financing for the acquisition was provided by **Wells Fargo Capital Finance**.

—Deborah Belgium

Europe's Tariff on Women's U.S.-Made Blue Jeans Inches Up

Europe has slightly increased a retaliatory tariff that it imposes on women's blue jeans imported from the United States.

As of May 1, the additional tariff, which is added to the already 12 percent tariff on U.S. denim pants, went from 0.35 percent to 1.5 percent. That makes the total EU tariff on women's blue jeans imported from the United States rise to 13.5 percent, compared with 12.35 percent last year.

"This is not going to hit anybody's pocket in a big way," said Elise Shibles, an attorney in San Francisco with the international trade law firm **Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg**.

The 1.5 percent retaliatory tax is a pittance compared to 26 percent additional tariff imposed on U.S. women's denim pants on May 1, 2013.

The extra 26 percent tariff was part of a trade dispute that centered around the Byrd

Amendment, by which the United States collected extra duties several years ago on EU-made items that were considered to be unfairly traded goods that affected U.S. manufacturers. Even though the Byrd Amendment was rescinded, the United States continued distributing the money collected under the Byrd Amendment, to which the EU objected.

Because of this, the World Trade Organization authorized the EU to increase tariffs on certain U.S. items for a one-year period, with the option to renew the tariff—either increasing it or decreasing it.

Because the United States reduced by nearly 50 percent the distribution of Byrd Amendment duties, the EU decided in 2014 to reduce the extra denim tariff, which was costing some Los Angeles denim makers as much as \$250,000 during a six-month period.

To combat the added tariff, several denim

makers hired Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg to find a technical way to get around the new tax.

Attorney Elise Shibles filed a legal challenge with the tax and customs department in the United Kingdom about how women's denim pants were classified. She won a ruling that said women's denim pants could be classified as women's cotton pants if their dye is not colorfast, which is considered a denim quality.

Because the U.K. is part of the European Union, other EU countries have been honoring the new classification.

Shibles said U.S. denim makers continue to classify their blue jeans as cotton pants if the dye is not colorfast to avoid any unexpected tariff increases.

"Duty rates fluctuate every year," she said. "You don't know what is going to happen."

—D.B.

ModCloth *Continued from page 1*

and-mortar retail by turning the lobby of its downtown Los Angeles office into a three-day pop-up shop. At the pop-up, customers could try on clothing samples and talk styling with employees. ModCloth did not actually stock product besides a few small home goods but offered free two-day shipping on all goods purchased.

The experiment was successful enough to roll out the concept to other cities this year and next, although a company spokesperson said dates and locations are still being determined.

ModCloth began was a project by high-school sweethearts Susan Gregg and Eric Koger in 2002, and they continued to grow the business from their dorm rooms at **Carnegie Mellon University** in Pittsburgh. Now married, Gregg (now Gregg Koger) serves as chief creative officer. Koger served as CEO until Kaness was hired. The company employs more than 500 in offices in Pittsburgh, San Francisco and Los Angeles.



label side of the business still trails behind the branded business in overall revenue, the company plans to grow the private-label business over the next few years.

The company drives engagement with its customers through multiple programs beyond affiliates. One of its successful programs is "Be the Buyer," which was established in late 2009 and invites customers to vote for the products they want to see on the site. To date, they have garnered more than 21 million votes. Another program that has been a hit is "Fit-For-Me," which is a community-fueled feature in which users enter their measurements in order to see top-rated products recommended by other customers who are similar in size. "Fit-For-Me" was established in November 2013.

Another successful strategy has been the company's approach to the size range it offers. The retailer strives to make a point that it carries sizes for all women and hires models of all sizes to showcase its clothing. The company's

"#fashiontruth" campaign "celebrates the individual beauty of all women," and as part of its efforts, ModCloth signed the Truth in Advertising pledge for the Brave Girls Alliance "to encourage fashion companies and advertisers to stop excessive and harmful photoshopping," according to a company spokesperson. ●



ModCloth releases up to 50 new products every day and is backed by \$48 million in venture capital. The e-tailer carries more than 7,500 designs from more than 1,200 brands at any one time. The company's growing private-label business, which began in the fall of 2013, also offers a broad range of sizes, including plus. While the private-



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CFF, TALA Award Scholarships to Local Design Students

Industry executives celebrated the next generation of design talent on April 30 at the **California Fashion Foundation and Textile Association of Los Angeles** annual scholarship awards luncheon.

The event, held at the **California Market Center**, honored the work of students from **El Camino College; California State University, Los Angeles; California State University, Long Beach; California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising; Pasadena City College; Santa Monica College; Otis College of Art and Design; Woodbury University; Mt. San Antonio College; Long Beach City College; and Los Angeles Trade-Technical College.**

The event featured several guest speakers, including Annabelle Lee, designer and owner

of the young contemporary brand **See You Monday**, who greeted the students as “my fellow evolutionaries,” explaining that “when you create something, you tend to create your own evolution.”

Keri Ingvarsson, the new co-owner of **Gen Art**, explained how the art, film and fashion organization came to relaunch in Los Angeles.

“LA really is the Rome of the modern-day art and fashion world,” she said. “You feel the energy here.”

Ilse Metchek, president of the **California Fashion Association**, which oversees the CFF, had some no-nonsense advice for the students.

“That’s my big suggestion for you: Get a job,” she said.

Tammy Chatkin, the executive vice president of **24Seven**, offered the group some tips for landing that job.

“There’s no such thing as a dream job,” she said. “There’s the right place for you at the right time of your life. Whether you’re answering phones or picking out fabrics, do it 150 percent.”

Chatkin also advised the students to do their research before the interview, find a mentor in the industry to “say thank you the old fashioned way,” to continue to learn, particularly about new technology, and to “be yourself and have fun. It’s an incredible industry.”

Past president of TALA Ann Davis, a textile sales representative for **Eclat**, presented



Ilse Metchek, left, with Gen Art’s Keri Ingvarsson and Erica Kraus



Annabelle Lee, designer and owner of See You Monday

the 18 awards. For the final award, the Betty Baumgardner award, Davis introduced Allisa Villani, granddaughter of the award’s namesake, a patternmaking instructor at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College and longtime supporter of TALA

and the scholarship awards.

Villani, who said her grandmother “loved fashion and animal prints and skinny jeans and bling,” concluded the event by telling the students, “I look forward to buying and wearing your fashions and keeping you in business for years to come.”—*Alison A. Nieder*



Loucine Tahmasian, Pasadena City College, winner of the Fineman West & Co. LLP Fashion Star award



Kit Kwok, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, winner of the “Love Barbara” from Barbara Lesser Rising Star award



Amanda Albus, California State University, Los Angeles, winner of the California Market Center Rising Star award



Karen Stump, California State University, Long Beach, winner of the STC-QST Rising Star award



Sharon Garcia, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, winner of the SwatFame Fashion Star award and the Tukatech Technology award, pictured left, with Tukatech’s Ram Sareen



Dustin Jasso, Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising, winner of the Cooper Design Space Fashion Star award and the Gen Art Future Entrepreneur award



Minika Ko, Santa Monica College, winner of the Karen Kane Fashion Star award and the CIT Financial Services Future Entrepreneur award



Ju Yun Choi, Otis College of Art and Design, winner of the YMA National Fashion Scholarship Fund award



Willis Park, Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising, winner of the Betty Baumgardner Best Use of Textiles award



Lune Lee, Otis College of Art and Design, winner of the KWDZ Manufacturing Fashion Star award, pictured right, with KWDZ’s Vera Campbell



Jenine Juri, Woodbury University, winner of the Lectra Fashion Star award, pictured right, with Lectra’s Toni Lublin



Allison Cervera, Mt. San Antonio College, winner of the Stony Apparel Corp. Fashion Star award and the California Apparel News Best Presentation for Media Use award, pictured right, with Stony Apparel’s Dean Wiener



Uchchi Emenogu, El Camino College, winner of the AIMS 360 Rising Star award



Taylor Sandell, Long Beach City College, winner of the UPS Fashion Star award



Betty Baumgardner’s granddaughter Allisa Villani and Ann Davis

TECHNOLOGY

Me-Ality to Focus Fashion Tech Biz on Uniform Market

The market for work uniforms is giant, said Tuoc Luong, chief executive officer of fashion technology company **Me-Ality**, which is headquartered in Santa Clara, Calif.

Just to consider its scope, think restaurant workers, delivery people and maintenance crews and how they are part of the landscape in almost any business scene, Luong said. He estimated that one-third of Americans wear uniforms to work.

He said Me-Ality has established a new focus: serving the work uniform business. In April, it announced a partnership with Canadian company **Unisync Corp.**

B. James Bottoms, Unisync’s chief executive officer, said that Me-Ality’s sizing technology will help the company become even more efficient.

“Their sizing solutions have enabled us to implement leading-edge fit technologies for our customers, which have significantly improved service and dramatically reduced returns,” Bottoms said in a statement.

The new focus represents a shift for Me-Ality. It stresses a business-to-business focus. When it started in 2012, Me-Ality ran a business-to-consumer focused company. The company’s 10-by-10 booths, reminiscent of airport security scanners, were rolled out in more than 65 malls across the U.S.

People’s measurements were scanned with Me-Ality’s proprietary technology. People kept their clothes

on during the scan, and their measurements were not revealed. Instead of giving out sizes, Me-Ality’s service supplied recommendations as to which retailers, brands, style and size would offer the best fit. Because a consumer’s measurements are not publicly identified or matched to the individual, a person’s privacy is guaranteed, Luong said.

Currently, Me-Ality only maintains two booths, one at a **Levi’s** store at the Levi Strauss Plaza in San Francisco, which is the headquarters of **Levi Strauss & Co.** Another is at the **Bloomingdale’s** store in Santa Monica, Calif., Luong said. The technology company ended its booth campaign because it successfully put together a database of one million people’s sizes, which helped the company finesse its sizing service. The booths became constraining. They took up valuable real estate at malls, and a clerk had to be employed to operate the machine.

Next year, Me-Ality will introduce a hand-held scanning machine, which will end the company’s dependence on 10-by-10 booths to run its service, Luong said.

Me-Ality also hopes to partner with omnichannel retailers and offer their sizing service at physical stores and online shops. With Me-Ality sizing services, consumers will have the most accurate sizing information at their fingertips, and retailers will be able to cut down on returns, Luong said.—*Andrew Asch*

3D-Printed Fabric and Washable LED Screens Among the Innovation Awards Winners at Techtextil

New developments in technical textiles and machinery were highlighted and honored during the recent **Techtextil** and **Texprocess** shows in Frankfurt, Germany.

Among the **Techtextil Innovation Award** winners with apparel-related developments was San Francisco-based wearable technology startup **Switch Embassy** introducing a washable LED screen, which can be used for apparel, accessories and home décor.

German sewing-machinery maker **Nähmaschinenfabrik Emil Stutznacker GmbH & Co. KG** introduced a high-performance sewing machine that is capable of producing multi-layer woven and non-woven fabrics at speeds of 3,000 stitches per minute.

3DWeaver is a 3-D printer capable of producing three-dimensional woven structures developed by London-based designer and engineer Oluwaseyi Sosanya.

The Innovation Awards also recognized new developments for industrial and medical applications, such as Swiss interdisciplinary research institute **Empa**’s embroidered electrode, which can be used to record the electrocardiogram (ECG) of patients with heart and circulatory problems.

All the winning products were on display during the May 4–7 run of **Techtextil** and **Texprocess** at the **Messe Frankfurt** exhibition center in Frankfurt. Organized by trade show giant Messe Frankfurt, the shows focus on technical textiles and sewn-products processes. Both shows are also held in the U.S. The next **Techtextil North America** will be held in Houston in June, and the next **Texprocess Americas** will be held in Atlanta next year.—*A.A.N.*

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Water *Continued from page 1*

Pacific Blue Dye House, headquartered in Los Angeles, has experimented for years with environmentally sustainable ways to power its factory and make clothes. In December 2009, the company unveiled a solar-energy program that supplies more than 80 percent of the energy needs of its 30,000-square-foot facility.

Recently, Dotan Shoham, the co-owner of Pacific Blue Dye House and its in-house contemporary knit brand, **Gypsy 05**, has been seeking ways to curb the facility's water use. He claims to have cut down on his water use by more than 25 percent this year.

Water-saving steps include cutting shifts in the factory. Pacific Blue used to run a night shift but now is only open 10 hours each day. Washing cycles have been cut down. Garments are hang-dried rather than machine-dried to cut back on wash cycles. The staff has become vigilant about fixing leaks in pipes in the facility. Shoham has directed his staff to sweep factory floors rather than wash them down.

"I wish one day we will find a waterless dye process," Shoham said. "We need to cut everywhere from all angles. ... The sooner we wake up, the better. We are heading into tough times."

Other manufacturers have been experimenting with other ways to save water.

Kevin Kelly, chief executive officer and co-owner of the **US Blanks** basics manufacturer in downtown Los Angeles, said his company works with businesses that make it a policy to conserve water. "We try to use dye houses and facilities that have recycled-water capabilities or are moving strongly in that direction," he said. The company also uses recycled yarns that do not use as much water to produce garments. A US Blanks priority will be using raw materials that do not require as much water to produce.

Volcom, the high-profile fashion and action-sportswear brand, remodeled its Costa Mesa, Calif., headquarters in 2013. With the remodel, it installed low-flow toilets and sensor faucets that only draw water when a hand is placed under the faucet, said Derek Sabori, the brand's vice president of sustainability. The company is also working to reduce water usage in its supply chain, all of which is located overseas.

Eco Prk, a Paramount, Calif.-based laundry, offers a chemical-free process that

uses oxygen to wash indigo or dye, said Kevin Youn, chief executive officer of the company. He estimated that traditional laundries use 25 to 45 gallons of water to make a garment. He said his laundry can cut water use by 95 percent.

While news of the drought dominates current headlines, people in California's fashion industry have been conscious of the state's water issues for decades and have been active in discussion with local governments on conserving water, said Ilse Metcheck, president of the **California Fashion Association**, a trade association for California's garment industry.

"This is not a new issue," Metcheck said. "In the past we have investigated the options."

Options for factories have included using reclaimed water. In the late 1990s, Metcheck said, she and colleagues had expressed interest in factories using more with reclaimed water, or water that has been cleaned up and recycled after previous use, but there was not enough political will to make it a reality then.

Factories could be using reclaimed water more in the future, said Newsha K. Ajami, who is the director of urban water policy at Stanford University's **Water in the West** program.

"Water that comes in direct contact with human beings has to be of the highest quality," she said. "Solutions will be different from one region to another and from one sector to the next." She forecasts that municipalities and water districts, where most of the policy action will take place on the local level, will start having conversations with their business customers and industrial stakeholders on different options for conserving water.

New directions have been taken by the **West Basin Municipal Water District**, which serves Southwest Los Angeles County. It is a water district that has been supplying recycled water to businesses and institutions such as **Los Angeles International Airport**, she said.

"This is a challenge and an opportunity," Ajami said of the drought and its effect on California. "We should rethink the way we manage our water resources and move toward more sustainable solutions."

The **Los Angeles Department of Water and Power** has noted that it will help businesses review their facilities to confirm if they can use recycled water, said Kim Hughes, a spokesperson for the LA DWP. Recycled water is delivered through separate piping systems. ●

Calendar

May 15

California College of the Arts' Annual Fashion Show
California College of the Arts
San Francisco

May 19

Apparel Sourcing Show
Grand Tikal Futura Hotel
Guatemala City, Guatemala
Through May 21

May 27

Peru Moda
Jockey Exhibition Centre
Lima, Peru
Through May 29

June 1

Coast
Miami
Through June 2

June 3

Dallas Apparel & Accessories Market
Dallas Market Center
Dallas
Through June 6

FIG

Fashion Industry Gallery
Dallas
Through June 5

June 5

NAWBO-LA's 29th Leadership & Legacy Awards Luncheon
JW Marriott (LA Live)
Los Angeles

June 6

Black & White Ball, presented by National Jewish Health
Skirball Cultural Center
Los Angeles

There's more
on ApparelNews.net.

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

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SG Knits: Knitting a Supply Chain That Stretches From the U.S. to the Caribbean

Steve and Lauren Greenberg have a knack for good timing. The couple arrived in Los Angeles to open their fabric converting company, **SG Knits**, in 2001 just after the energy crisis in 2000 put other mills out of business. When they expanded their business to include full-package-production garments in the Dominican Republic, they did it in 2010, amidst the Great Recession.

Both gambles paid off as SG Knits settles into a new 7,500-square-foot headquarters in Gardena, Calif., after more than a decade in downtown Los Angeles. The garment business has tripled in size since the Greenbergs took over sole ownership of **Aquino Sewing** in 2011 and renamed it **United Pacific Group** (UPG). Norberto Menendez, Aquino Sewing's previous owner, stayed on as chief operating officer and vice president of UPG. In the last four years, the factory has grown from 80 employees to 250. SG Knits has a small team of nine people in the Los Angeles headquarters, including the Greenbergs' daughter, Alyssa, who recently joined the ranks. The company also opened an office in Moore, S.C., to help coordinate knitting for UPG production. In addition, the office serves as Menendez's office when he's not at the factory in the Dominican Republic.

"What we do for the Dominican Republic, 60 percent is in North Carolina," said Steve Greenberg, the company's chief executive officer and president. "We don't even bring it here. The yarn is there. It makes sense to produce it there."

Opening UPG was a natural extension of SG Knits.

"We view our garment business as a way to sell our fabric," Steve Greenberg said. "Our interest is in people who don't want to buy fabric by the yard. They want to buy by the piece. We show them the fabric, they pick the bodies and we'll deliver it to you. That's the way of the world today."

Full-package production allows retailers and brands to focus on de-

sign and merchandising and the retail side of the business, he said.

"Think of it as building a house," Steve Greenberg said. "We build the house, but we're not your architect. We're the contractor. We handle all of it. We take that burden away."

The analogy is an apt one made ironic because Lauren Greenberg is a licensed architect who oversees the creative side of SG Knits as the company's creative director and secretary. Steve Greenberg is a

second-generation textile executive who studied at the **Philadelphia College of Textiles and Science**, now known as **Philadelphia University**. When his father and brothers left the knitting and finishing business in North Carolina, Steve and Lauren Greenberg relocated operations to Los Angeles.

SG Knits specializes in fashion-forward knits. The move to Los Angeles allowed the company to be closer to its customers as well as to **Walmart** Los Angeles' knitters and dyers.

Over time, the Greenbergs saw growth in production across the Central America and Caribbean region in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic.

"We focused on the Dominican Republic," Steve Greenberg said. "It's not the cheapest, but there are direct flights from New York and Miami. Customers from New York fly in in the morning. They'll be in the factory before lunchtime and be back home within 48 hours with no time change. And they've done everything from work with the sample in design to inspection."

United Pacific Group can cut, sew, screen and sublimation print and embroider in-house, and the company

is in the process of installing washing facilities. Located in three buildings in a free-zone industrial park, the **WRAP** (Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production)-certified factory can deliver finished goods within 10 weeks. The garments clear customs and are shipped from UPG's warehouse in Miami.



LA HQ: Lauren and Steve Greenberg, pictured in their Los Angeles headquarters, devised a compact and efficient fabric-packing system that also protects the fabric during shipping. SG Knits uses special spacers between each roll to allow for efficient stacking. The company asks for the recycled spacers to be returned so they can be reused for the next shipment.

Costa Rica Gets First Cotton Spinning Mill

SAE-A, the largest apparel manufacturing company in South Korea, has opened a cotton spinning mill in Costa Rica, which is the first for the Central American country.

Construction on the mill started in February 2014 and was completed by this January, but the company spent two months doing a pilot-production run before full production began recently.

The mill's current annual yarn-production capacity is 19.8 million pounds, which is enough to make 30 million garments a year. When operating at full capacity, the mill will be able to produce 44 million pounds of yarn.

SAE-A, founded in 1986, has a large, almost vertical presence in Central America with fabric knitting and dyeing capabilities in the region. It has five sewing factories and one embroidery/printing factory in Guatemala and five sewing factories and one wash house in Nicaragua. The company also has four sewing factories and two wash houses in Haiti.

In Central America, SAE-A sews T-shirts for a number of large U.S. retailers including **Target** and **Walmart**.

—Deborah Belgium

➔ **SG Knits** page 6



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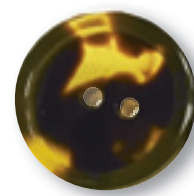
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MADE IN THE AMERICAS

SG Knits *Continued from page 6*

"We handle all of that," Steve Greenberg said. "We give them a price, and it's all inclusive."

Customers who can't make the trip to the Dominican Republic can check in on their production via Web cameras set up around the factory.

"We're up to 48 cameras in the factory," Steve Greenberg said. "We give customers a password so they can see their merchandise online in the factory. When we say it's on the cutting table, they have the same access I have sitting at my desk. We're transparent."

That transparency extends to UPG's prices, as well.

"We work with an open cost sheet. We show them our margins," Steve Greenberg said. "Everybody knows the cost today. Everyone knows what it costs to spin the yarn, to knit, to dye. If you want this project, this is what's involved. It's pretty straightforward."

UPG produces apparel as a private-label manufacturer for retailers such as **Macy's** and **Belks**. The company also produces private-label apparel for licensed sporting-goods suppliers who sell to retailers such as **Target**, **Walmart** and **Dick's Sporting Goods**, as well as for distributors catering to the promotional apparel and resort markets.

"We fit well in the licensed sporting-goods business because of our ability to be flexible," Steve Greenberg said. "That business requires a lot of SKUs. The **NFL** has 32 teams. Before you know it, an order can have 120 different SKUs. It's not unheard of."

The fabric side of the business is geared toward contemporary to better labels.

"On the fabric side, it is all about what we can offer in terms of price," Steve Greenberg said. "It's great when we know the customer and know what we can do in terms of prices."

SG Knits offers a wide range of fabrics and fiber content.

"We're in so many fibers—cotton, poly, Modal, Tencel, wool, nylon and blends," Steve Greenberg said. "Tri-blend and novelty yarns continue to be a big focus of the market for us."

By working closely with customers, SG Knits can often find a way to work with a specific price, either by changing the fiber, the weight of the fabric or the finishing treatment.

"It depends on the customer—they each have their own way to make it special," Lauren Greenberg said. "We're doing more treatments with fabrics. We can use the same yarns, the same knitting, the same dyeing and then add another process."

For example, a double-faced knit with a striped side and a solid side can be finished with a burnout treatment that gives the final piece a distressed, edgy look.

"We can show people how to do it on a garment or on fabric," she said.

Finding ways to creatively solve customers' problems is becoming more important, Steve Greenberg said.

"The biggest challenge for the industry and customers is there's been an oversupply of product available," he said. "It allowed people to be in multiple fibers and fabrics and offer smaller runs, which LA is known for."

But this is changing as Los Angeles knitters and dyers see increased business from offshore producers moving back to the U.S. or existing domestic producers increasing production as the economy improves.

"The hemisphere is growing," Steve Greenberg said. "How that plays out, I don't know. It's going to affect the amount of product the industry can offer. It's going to put more reliance between partners to make it happen. There's got to be more long-term relationships." ●

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Terra: Updated, Elegant, Wearable

Suki Kim's industry background is in mass production, producing apparel for department stores and chains, but she always dreamed of launching her own brand.

In 2013, Kim closed her private-label business and moved into her garage to launch **Terra**, an updated misses collection featuring distinctive, washable fabrics, unusual details and attention to fit.

"My heart belonged to this brand, but I was always overseas doing mass production," Kim said. Her private-label business took her around the world, producing in China, Vietnam, Indonesia and Guatemala.

For the launch of Terra, Kim sourced her fabrics and production from Korea. At first, it was a challenge to move from the high volume of mass production to the 80 units per style when the collection first launched, Kim said.

As the company quickly grew, Kim began air shipping finished goods from Korea to meet the reorder demand. She also moved out of her garage to a small space near her LA home. Now she's beginning to look at producing part of the collection domestically.

Sales for the first four months of the year exceeded last year's business, said Kim's assistant, Ashley Anderson.

"March was three times more than last year," Kim said. "For Spring 2016, we plan to produce 30 percent made in USA."

Kim said she understands what the misses customers want. For example, they don't want to show their upper arms or their stomach. A good design has lots of color detail and a silhouette that frames the face, such as Terra's featherweight cotton shirts, which have be-

come the line's signature style. The woven shirts feature a collar with wire inside.

"The wire collar emphasizes the face," Kim said. "And she can wear it up or down—and it stays there."

For Fall, Kim carried the wired-collar detail to cozy woolen fabrications, some with faux-leather trim.

"It has an elegance to it," Kim said.

With wholesale prices starting at \$32, the line also includes embellished sweaters and jackets as well as a mixed-fabric tweed coat that was a hit with buyers, said Fred Postal, who represents Terra in his **Fred Postal & Associates** showroom at the **California Market Center** in Los Angeles.

Terra is carried in stores nationwide. Among the California stores that carry the line are **Mischief Women's Fashion** in Santa Barbara, **Past & Presence** in La Jolla, **Adornments** in Del Mar, **Molly B.** in Berkeley, **Eve & Me** in Modesto, **Chanel 910** in San Francisco, and **Pati-Ells Boutique & Skin Care** and **BB One**, both in Palm Desert.

"The reorder response has been beyond believable," Postal said. "I've been in this industry for the last 40 years—all my life—and I've never had reorders as healthy and fast as this line."

Kim said she wants to "do justice to the independent store. They are so loyal. That's definitely something you don't see in mass production. In mass production, everything was so price point-driven. Now I get to do a lot more with better control. I haven't had this much fun in years."

For more information about Terra, contact the Fred Postal & Associates showroom at (213) 629-2133.

—Alison A. Nieder



Downbeat April Sales Affected by Weather, Port Delays

For many retailers, sales dipped in April.

All of the retailers followed by *California Apparel News*' index reported declines during the month. **The Buckle Inc.** and **Zumiez Inc.** posted same-store-sales declines

of 3.8 percent and 4 percent, respectively. **L Brands**, the parent company to **Victoria's Secret** and **Bed, Bath and Beyond**, and **Steinmart**, an off-pricer, reported same-store declines of 1 percent and 1.5 percent, respectively. Gap Inc. will report its April sales on May 11.

Retail analysts blamed the generally downbeat performances on a host of influences beyond retailers' controls. First, there was an early Easter. It took place on April 5, and most of the sales for Easter gifts and clothes were made in March, said Ken Perkins of **Retail Metrics**, a Boston-area market-research firm. Weather was cold in much of the United States during the month, which kept people from shopping. "Ill effects from the West Coast's port delays still lingered through [the first quarter] into April," Perkins wrote in a May 5 note.

Adrienne Yih, a retail analyst for **Janney Capital Markets**, characterized April sales as "in-line to slightly below expectations." The headline for her May 7 research note on the month was "Don't Place Too Much Weight on a 'Noisy' April-Shift, Weather, Port, GDP."

In the report, she noted that "we believe conservative inventory planning should help mitigate margin pressure entering [the second quarter of 2015]."

Bebe Stores Inc. announced sales for its third quarter of its 2015 fiscal year on May 7. Same-store sales for the quarter that ended April 4 increased 1.2 percent. Net sales from continuing operations increased 4.1 percent to \$92.7 million, said Jim Wiggett, Bebe's chief executive officer.

It was a good quarter for Bebe, but Wiggett also noted that weather and the lingering effects from the port delays affected his company's performance.

"Our third-quarter results reflect continued progress in our turnaround with the third consecutive quarter of comparable-store sales growth despite significantly fewer promotions and a meaningful reduction in marketing spend. To a lesser degree, we believe that the port delays and prolonged cold weather also created pressure on our sales," he said in a prepared statement.—Andrew Asch

April Retail Sales

	\$Sales (in millions)	% Change from yr. ago	Same-store sales % change
DISCOUNTERS			
The Buckle	\$74.30	-1.7%	-3.8%
L Brands Inc.	\$724.60	+1.0%	-1.0%
Stein Mart	\$109.10	+1.0%	-1.5%
Zumiez	\$51.80	+2.4%	-4.0%
Information from company reports			

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Turk, Schoenfeld, Alberini Honored at Otis' Big Show

Fashion students got the opportunity to show their styles at a gala runway event, leaders of Southern California's fashion industry received honors, and a black-tie event raised money for **Otis College of Art and Design** at the design school's **33rd Annual Otis Scholarship Benefit & Fashion Show**. Held May 2 at **The Beverly Hilton** hotel in Beverly Hills, the annual event is the largest fundraiser for Otis College of Art and Design, a 97-year-old institution with 1,100 full-time students. It offers bachelor's of fine arts degrees in fashion design, among other disciplines.



Jessica Choi, Otis senior, was named student designer of the year.



Carlos Alberini spoke after receiving the Fashion Leadership Award.

Carlos Alberini, **Lucky Brand's** chairman and chief executive officer, was honored with the school's Fashion Leadership Award. Gary Schoenfeld, president and chief executive officer of **Pacific Sunwear of California**, received the school's Creative Vision Award. Trina Turk, founder of the self-named **Trina Turk** brand, was the recipient of the school's Fashion Innovation Award.

When accepting their awards, the executives gave brief remarks about their careers. For words of encouragement for Otis students, Turk told them that they are stronger than they think.

"The fashion industry can be very intense. Don't let it get to you. Remember you have a secret weapon, your creativity," she said.

During the awards show, Bob McKnight, **Quiksilver Inc.** founder and the surf giant's recently returned chairman, who also serves as the vice chair of Otis' board of trustees, got a surprise tribute. His surf-industry col-



Look from the Otis students who worked with mentor Zaid Affas



Look from Otis students who worked with Trina Turk in the mentor program



Dress from Otis students who worked with PacSun designers in the mentor program



Look from Otis students who worked with Mary Jo Bruno in the mentor program



Look from Otis students who worked with Joe McCarty for Lane Bryant in the mentor program



Look from Otis students who worked with Anne Cole Swim in the mentor program



Looks from Otis students who worked with Quiksilver designers in the mentor program



Bob McKnight spoke after receiving news of the Bob McKnight Scholarship Fund.



Trina Turk spoke after receiving the Otis Fashion Innovation Award.

leagues Richard Woolcott of **Volcom**, Kevin Meehan of **Volcom North America**, Neil Fiske of **Billabong**, and Fernando Aguerre, founder of **Reef** and president of the **International Surfing Association**, took the stage in a tribute to McKnight. Aguerre told him that a scholarship would be made in his name in

perpetuity. The **Bob McKnight Scholarship Fund** will benefit Otis students of limited financial means. Terry Lundgren, **Macy's Inc.** chairman, also was one of the contributors to the scholarship fund.

Bruce W. Ferguson, president-elect of Otis, made his first official remarks to the college. He said many of the students

forge careers in Southern California's creative economy, where they run their own creative businesses or join the region's leading fashion, entertainment and creative companies.

"We encourage students to dream big and act big on their dreams," he said.

During the runway portion of the show, design students displayed looks they developed by working with industry mentors such as Trina Turk, Bob Mackie, Zaid Affas, **Morgan Le Fay's** Liliana Casabal and Joe McCarty for **Lane Bryant**, along with head designers from brands such as **Urban Outfitters**, **Quiksilver** and **PacSun**.

The unifying theme of the night was water. Designs ranging from swimwear to eveningwear took their inspiration from oceans. At the end of the night, Jessica Choi, an Otis senior, was named student designer of the year.—*Andrew Asch*

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MULTI-DIVISION APPAREL FIRM HAS OPENINGS FOR THE FOLLOWING TWO POSITIONS:

Multi-Division apparel firm has openings for the following 2 positions: •**PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**• Min. of 5 years exp in off-shore production. Knowledge of Wal Mart, Target, Kohl's or JCP production processes, approvals, sourcing cost negotiation. Must have strong problem solving and communication skills.

•**FABRIC PURCHASING MANAGER**• Min. of 5 yrs exp. in purchasing, price negotiation, sourcing, fabric construction, testing methods, and dyeing. Must have exp. with both knits and wovens. Must be detail-oriented, have strong computer skills, and excellent communications skills. Send resume with salary history to: Lisa Grayson MGT Industries, Inc. 13889 S. Figueroa Street Los Angeles, CA 90061 Fax: (310) 538-1343 E-Mail: lgrayson@mgtind.com

PRODUCT DEVELOPER

Accessories company in Whittier, CA seeking a detailed oriented, pro-active problem solver, responsible for all aspect of the product development cycle, tech packs, prototype, SMS, top sample production, & world wide logistics products includes, hats, sunglasses, back packs socks jewelry etc.. Must be able to read & type Chinese. Great compensation package, Send res. to: caseyl@blueberrybookusa.com

KANDY KISS

.....WANTED FIRST PATTERNMAKER..... Junior Wovens-Multi-division mfr. •Develop monthly collections using PAD system. •Report to designer and work with associates to manage fast-paced sample execution. Candidates must have a min. of 5 years' exp. Valley location. Please send your resume with salary requirement to davidz@kandykiss.com.

PRODUCTION PATTERNMAKER

Fast growing contemporary apparel company is in immediate need of production patternmaker. Candidate must have the following qualification ; Minimum of 5 years experienced in contemporary line knits & woven (tops, dresses and bottoms) Preferably with tuka system experience, but not necessary. Please submit application to textsmart@aol.com

DESIGNER

Fast growing contemporary company seeks Designer for womens sportwear wovens & cut & sew knits. Candidate must have flair for fashion and detail, and be proficient in Adobe Photoshop/Illustrator & Microsoft Office. Please send portfolio samples and resumes with salary history to jobshr000@gmail.com

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Better Contemporary Brand has a position available for a qualified Prod Assistant. Must have a min of 3yrs exp in domestic production and be efficient and organized. Duties include data entry, analyze reports, issue PO's, cost sheets and corresponding with vendors. email: apply@lagarmentindustry.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP

Seeking a detailed-oriented individual that possesses excellent communication & computer skills. Must have working knowledge of all major and specialty stores, buy sheets, and customer web sites. Customer service exp. in the garment industry a MUST. Applicants w/out garment industry exp. will not be considered. Send resumes to: rvasquez@swatfame.com or fax: 626-934-5201

Jobs Available

1ST THRU PRODUCTION PATTERNMAKER KIDS DIVISION

Looking for a fast and accurate 1st thru Production patternmaker with 5+ yrs exp in girls 4-6X and 7-16 sportswear and dresses working with all fabrications. Must be proficient with Gerber and have a great eye for detail. Great benefits. Email resume to albam@wrapper.com

DESIGNER

LA sportswear company seeking designer for Sportswear & dresses. Min. 5 years experience. Know how to work with overseas suppliers for product development. Must have good communication skills, be well organized. Know the essential computer programs & be a team player. Please send resume to: mpaguio@velvetheart.com

WHOLESALE ACCOUNT MANAGER

Sole Society is a leading, born-on-the-web lifestyle brand of on-trend women's shoes, handbags and accessories. We are seeking a Wholesale Account Manager who can establish and develop relationships with existing accounts and cultivate new business opportunities. 2-3 yrs account management/sales exp. for a national brand is needed with direct shoe and/or handbag exp. being a big plus. Pls. send resumes to linda@solesociety.com.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Seeking a self-motivated, organized individual with a min. of 2 yrs. exp. in import production. Must be able to multi-task, be computer literate for data entry & have good communication skills. Duties include: •Receiving & sending samples •Prepare samples for showing: tagging (sizing,units,colors info) •Creating photo mails •Organizing Final Packing slips •Writing Purchase orders •Sending finalized packing list to sales team Please send resumes to: mark@mbkapparel.net - cell #213 216-3068

1ST TO PRODUCTION PATTERNMAKER

Wilt is looking for an experienced 1st to Production patternmaker- Must know Tuka Minimum 5 years exp, garment dye knowledge preferred email:parcandpearl@parcandpearl.com

SALES REPRESENTATIVE-HANDBAGS

LA handbag co. seeking an EXPERIENCED Sales Rep for boutiques, online retailers and specialty chain stores. Must have existing relationships, product development, ability to travel. Email resume/salary requirements to: andmjw@gmail.com

DESIGNER

Fast growing contemporary company seeks Designer for womens sportwear wovens & cut & sew knits. Candidate must have flair for fashion and detail, and be proficient in Adobe Photoshop/Illustrator & Microsoft Office. Please send portfolio samples and resumes with salary history to jobshr000@gmail.com

ROOM ASSISTANT

Looking for Room Assistant. You will gain essential, hands on experience, learning the intricacies of the apparel industry while working in a fast-paced environment! Photoshop & Illustrator require. Send resumed by e-mail grace.lee@saymeekinc.com

SAMPLE SEWER/PRODUCTION SEWER

Luxury women's apparel company seeking immediate hire. Min. 5 yrs experience for all types of sewing machines. Must have experience sewing silk. Full-time employment. Call 323-937-0355.

Jobs Available

PATTERNMAKER

High End Premium Denim Company seeking exp'd patternmaker. (5-7 yrs' exp., Gerber V8/9.0). Must be able to create 1st to production patterns. Be VERY detail oriented, team player, well organized, customer service driven and able to follow thru and complete projects. Please submit your resume with salary history to: info@caitacgarment.com or fax to 310-366-7889.

ASSOCIATE DESIGNER/DESIGNER

Looking for an experienced Contemporary Missy Associate Designer/Designer, to work with a design team to develop both knit and woven tops and bottoms for private label and branded product line. Send resumed by e-mail grace.lee@saymeekinc.com

ASSISTANT DESIGNER

Contemporary/ Missy/ Plus Size Apparel Company looking to fill our ASSISTANT DESIGNER POSITION - Must have at least 3 years of exp. as an Assistant Designer. - Must be proficient in Photoshop & Illustrator. - Must have knowledge of design through production process. - Must be detail oriented, organized, responsible and be able to multi-task. - Must possess excellent communication skills. We offer a nice benefits package & nice working environment. If interested, please email resume to: hiromi@novemberdesigngroup.com

•ASSOCIATE DESIGNER/DESIGNER•

Looking for CAD Designer for Contemporary Missy Company, with min. 2 year experience with textile/fabric prints. Photoshop/Illustrator a must. Send resumed by e-mail grace.lee@saymeekinc.com

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Position Wanted

35 YRS EXP'D

1st/Prod. Patterns/Grading/Marking and Specs 12 yrs on Pad System. In house/pt/freelance Fast/Reliable ALL AREAS Ph. (626)792-4022

1ST & PRODUCTION PATTERN/GRADING/MARKING

References from leading brands. Jackets, Pants, Dresses, tops, etc... on Gerber.. 213-926-8979

Real Estate

GARMENT BUILDINGS

Mercantile Center 500 sq. ft. - 16,500 sq. ft. Priced Right. Full Floors 4500 sq ft., Lights - Racks - New Paint - Power Parking Available-Good Freight. Call 213-627-3754 Design Patternmaker Garment Lofts 300 sq ft-1,000 sq ft. Call 213-627-3755

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