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ApparelNews

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IDENTITY & INSPIRATION

Woodbury University's senior fashion design students explored personal identity as inspiration for their final collections, featured on the runway on May 3 at The Majestic Downtown. For more from the show, see page 7

Alisa Tovmanyany

JAN LIM

FREIGHT & LOGISTICS

How Apparel Importers Are Adjusting Their Strategies for the Next Big Shipping Season

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

Late last year, Ram Kundani waited as long as seven weeks to extract his cargo containers filled with printed dresses, lace tops and distressed denim pants from the congested ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Many of his apparel shipments didn't make it in time for the make-or-break holiday season, costing his company more than \$500,000 in lost sales. This year, hoping not to be burned again, he is bringing his apparel import in a little earlier than normal. "We used to add an extra three or four days for our merchandise to clear. Now we are adding up to 10 days to two weeks just in case," said Kundani, executive vice president

➔ Freight page 9

The Point: New Retail Center Bows in LA County

By Andrew Asch Retail Editor

Planet Blue, Lucky Brand and Michael Stars are scheduled to open stores at The Point, Los Angeles County's newest retail center, which is scheduled to take a bow on July 30. Also scheduled to take a bow at The Point are boutiques for Prana; Lou & Grey, a new concept from Ann Taylor Loft; No Rest for Bridget, a fast-fashion chain; Athleta, Gap Inc.'s women's fitness line; and Six:02, a women's fitness apparel and footwear shop owned by Foot Locker Inc. The open-air boutique retail center is currently being constructed on 12 acres of land located at the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue and Sepulveda Boulevard in El Segundo, Calif., which is located adjacent to the affluent

➔ The Point page 8

INSIDE

Where fashion gets down to businessSM



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A CALIFORNIA APPAREL NEWS SPECIAL SECTION

Trade Shows

Miami's SwimWeek Fashion Shows in July on Hiatus, but Trade Shows Will Continue

Events producer **IMG** has put its lineup of glamorous swimsuit-filled runway shows, now known as **SwimWeek**, on hiatus until 2016.

Traditionally, the runway shows, formerly called **Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Swim**, took place in Miami Beach, Fla., every July, at the same time as a number of swimwear-centric trade shows.

But at the beginning of this year, IMG announced that its major sponsor, **Mercedes-Benz**, dropped its support of the company's **New York Fashion Week**.

While the huge swimwear runway event is on hold, all the swim trade shows will take place as usual. Janet Wong, the co-founder of **Cabana**, a trade event scheduled around IMG's runway shows, has been calling clients saying she predicts her show will not see a dip in attendance.

"I think the most important thing for brands during Swim Week is that business is being done. As a buyer [who buys for the Miami **Atrium** store], I can confidently say that's happening at the trade shows. In addition, we're currently looking beyond the trade shows into a number of solutions to make sure all of our brands have a home for their fashion shows and a solid media presence. Shows and presentations have been happening independently for years at a number of hotels like **The Setai**, **SLS**, **Soho House** and so on. So I sincerely believe the shows will continue to happen this season in IMG's absence."

Cabana, which is scheduled to run July 18–20 in Collins Park in Miami Beach, will

feature 140 brands.

IMG's announcement did take some by surprise, said Cece Feinberg, who represents **SwimShow**, where an estimated 7,500 brands are scheduled to exhibit at the **Miami Beach Convention Center** July 18–21.

"People are scrambling to figure out different venues," she said. Her **Cece Feinberg Public Relations** has put together a schedule of events and will post upcoming developments on the website *SwimWeekCalendar.com*. Feinberg said that runway producers can post event announcements on the calendar, which will serve as an official schedule for the week's shows.

Along with **SwimShow** and **Cabana**, **Salon Allure/Hammock**, a boutique trade show, is scheduled to run July 18–20 at the **W South Beach Hotel**. **Funkshion Fashion Week Miami Beach**, an independent event, will also be producing runway shows and trade events during the week.

After IMG's announcement, Funkshion Fashion said it would be adding five new venues. It will have an art tent at Collins Park and build bridged runways in four Miami Beach hotels: **The Setai**, **Soho Beach House**, **SLS** and **The Thompson**.

Kyla Brennan, sales director at **Beach Riot**, a swimwear brand in Costa Mesa, Calif., forecasted that business would go on as usual. **Beach Riot** is making its debut at Cabana.

"The runway shows are exciting, but the trade shows are where brands show their lines and where they get orders, and that part

shouldn't change. There will be plenty of events for people to attend," Brennan said.

Ronen Jehezekel, co-founder of the **Parke & Ronen** men's swimwear brand, has produced runway shows at SwimWeek before and felt IMG needed to recharge its batteries.

"IMG didn't give enough opportunities for new, up-and-coming designers to go on the stage," he said. "They always needed something new and cool, but nothing ever changed there."

Parke & Ronen is scheduled to exhibit at Cabana. However, Jehezekel thought that the swim events might be duller without the nightly fashion shows. "Maybe there will be less press, less media," he said.

Red Carter, founder of **Red Carter** swim-

wear, has shown his styles at SwimWeek eight times before. "It helped me launch the collection, but people were getting a little tired of the format and how it was presented," he said of IMG's SwimWeek. "Updating it is a good idea. I'll be curious to see what they have up their sleeve. I hope it is modern, new and progressive."

Swimwear lines from around the globe have presented their looks at SwimWeek. Some recent runway shows included brands such as **Beach Bunny**, **Mikoh**, **Wildfox Swim** and **L*Space** from Southern California as well as lines such as **We Are Handsome**, founded in Australia; **Caffe Swimwear**, with roots in Colombia; and **Gottex**, designed in Israel.—*Andrew Asch*

Caruso to Start Campaign for Carlsbad Project

Caruso Affiliated, the developer of high-profile retail centers **The Grove** and **The Americana at Brand**, previously announced that it intended to build a mall in Carlsbad, a city located in coastal north San Diego County.

But Rick Caruso, the founder and chief executive officer of Caruso Affiliated, laid his cards on the table on May 12. He held a press conference outlining his plans for a Caruso project in Carlsbad.

He said he hoped to build a center for retail and dining on the Agua Hedionda lagoon by the Interstate 5 freeway in Carlsbad. The property is currently owned by **San Diego Gas & Electric**. Caruso Affiliated is slated to acquire 203 acres on the lagoon land from the utility. However, to build the currently unnamed project, Caruso Affiliated must convince Carlsbad voters to change the zoning for the area. The property is currently zoned for open space and agriculture. Some Carlsbad residents, including the farming family that had cul-

tivated the land with strawberries for generations, joined a campaign to change the zoning for the property, according to some media reports.

The City of Carlsbad's website confirmed that a notice of intent to circulate a petition to create a new specific plan had been filed on May 12. The citizen group **Preserving Carlsbad Open Space the Right Way** noted that its website (www.openspacetherightway.com) enjoyed major funding by Caruso Affiliated.

The group endorsed an endeavor called "The 85/15 Plan." Its platform is to make 85 percent of the 203 acres open space and available for farming, with 15 acres set aside for Caruso's project. The land would be preserved and the retail space would be developed at no cost to taxpayers, the group's website promised.

If the group can gather valid signatures for 15 percent, or 9,784 registered voters in Carlsbad, the initiative can qualify to be placed on a municipal ballot.—*A.A.*

American Apparel Sees First-Quarter Net Loss Jump

American Apparel reported that in the first quarter of this year it had a net loss of \$26.4 million, or 15 cents a share, compared with \$5.5 million, or 5 cents a share, last year.

Net sales for the first quarter of 2015 were \$124.3 million, down 9 percent compared with \$137 million for the same period last year.

The troubled company, which makes its apparel in its own downtown Los Angeles factory, has been clearing out slow-selling merchandise by holding sales at its fleet of 239 stores.

Inventories in the first quarter ending March 31 decreased \$25 million, or 17 percent, compared with the same period last year.

The company has been through a tumultuous time with the firing late last year of its founder and Chief Executive Officer Dov Charney. He was replaced at the beginning

of the year by apparel veteran Paula Schneider, who last month laid off about 180 factory workers.

"American Apparel is an iconic brand with a loyal customer following and tremendous global brand awareness. The new executive management team and board of directors is committed to driving shareholder value and has implemented the initial phase of a multi-year strategic turnaround plan designed to improve operating and financial results over the long term," the new chief executive said.

At the same time, the company announced it would be selling \$10 million worth of common stock through **Cowen and Co.** The company plans to use the funds for working capital and general corporate purposes.

The company's stock has been trading at about 61 cents a share on the **New York Stock Exchange**.—*Deborah Belgium*

Corrections and Clarifications

In a May 8 profile about **SG Knits** and its garment-production business **United Pacific Group**, Norberto Menendez was identified as the company's chief operating officer and vice president. He has also been a partner in the business since 2009.

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Dov Charney Files Two Lawsuits Accusing American Apparel and Hedge Fund of Defamation

By Deborah Belgum Senior Editor

In more legal shots fired in the ongoing battle over control of **American Apparel**, the dismissed clothing company's founder has filed two lawsuits in less than one week accusing American Apparel and hedge fund investor **Standard General** of defaming his character in false accusations and letters.

Charney, who founded American Apparel in 1998, was ousted by the company's board of directors last December as the chief executive officer. He has been fighting to return to the company ever since.

In the latest lawsuit, filed May 12 in Los Angeles County Superior Court, Charney accuses American Apparel and the company's chairman, Colleen Brown, of defamation. The lawsuit centers around a letter Brown sent out on April 24 to all American Apparel employees.

In the letter, Brown maintained that Charney was not

conducted by an independent third party and cost the company millions of dollars at a time it was losing money. (In American Apparel's annual report, it noted it paid \$10 million for an independent investigation while the company had a net loss of \$68.2 million.)

Following his suspension in June and while an investigation was being conducted, Standard General helped Charney buy additional stock in his attempt to return to American Apparel. Between the two of them, the hedge fund and the former CEO both control Charney's 42 percent stake in the company's stock.

Charney maintains in court papers that, in December, American Apparel's board of directors abruptly and unlawfully terminated him as the chief executive officer following the investigation into alleged misconduct. "Charney's termination was part of the board's then-secret plan to wrest control of the company away from Charney," he said in court papers.

its CEO," court papers said.

But later, Standard General's junior partner, Robert Lavan, contacted Charney and said the fund's chief executive, Soo Kim, was told by his more conservative investors that they were unhappy about Kim's association with Charney, legal documents maintain.

"Kim claimed that he was being 'crucified' by his investors for associating with Charney. Kim further claimed that a major Standard General investor, **PAAMCO**, had just pulled \$300 million from Standard General as a result of Kim's ongoing association with Charney," court papers said. Sources at Standard General said this is absolutely false.

Charney's lawsuit maintains that Kim said a hostile proxy contest over American Apparel would be too risky for Standard General's continued operations and that Kim convinced Charney of "settling with the American Apparel board of directors under terms extremely favorable to Standard General but not to Charney or to the company's other shareholders. In



coming back to American Apparel. "Many of you have expressed concern that Mr. Charney continues to claim he is returning to American Apparel. He is not," she wrote. "Mr. Charney put in writing he wouldn't come back, in an agreement filed with the SEC [Securities and Exchange Commission]. Mr. Charney was fired for cause as a result of two separate investigations."

Charney, in his lawsuit, claims these statements are false and that he never agreed in writing or otherwise that he would not return to work at American Apparel. "Charney did not agree to never seek reemployment with American Apparel, nor is American Apparel otherwise contractually or legally precluded from re-hiring him in any fashion," the lawsuit maintains.

Court documents point out that at the end of last year, American Apparel's board of directors offered Charney "a multi-million-dollar executive consultancy position."

Charney also claims in court documents that American Apparel and Brown "improperly accessed Charney's personal and private mail messages relayed through company servers, obtained his highly personal and private photographs and videos, and leaked them to media outlets to personally embarrass and pressure" him to drop his various legal claims.

Charney is asking in the first lawsuit for \$20 million in damages plus attorney fees.

In a second lawsuit, filed May 7 in Los Angeles County Superior Court, Charney alleges that hedge fund investor Standard General said it would defame Charney's character if he didn't give up control of his American Apparel stock. In that lawsuit, he is asking for \$30 million in damages. Neither lawsuit had been served, American Apparel sources said.

In June, Charney was suspended as chief executive while an investigation was conducted into his alleged misconduct. But Charney alleges this investigation was far from being



RAUCOUS RALLIES: American Apparel workers and sympathizers recently rallied near the American Apparel headquarters in downtown Los Angeles.



this way, Standard General effectively took over American Apparel by and through its control of company stock and the board of directors," the lawsuit said.

"[Standard General] promised Charney that he would be reinstated as CEO unless the investigation revealed something profoundly egregious of which Standard General was unaware," court documents said.

After Charney was fired in December, veteran apparel executive Paula Schneider was named to replace him.

In response to the lawsuit, a Standard General spokesman said, "Dov Charney and his associates continue to file frivolous, meritless lawsuits at a breakneck pace. The facts speak for themselves, and we are confident that Mr. Charney will be held accountable for this knowing, intentional abuse of the legal system."

Several other lawsuits have been filed in the last month by American Apparel shareholders who used to work for the company or are Charney's friends, claiming that the board sent out false proxy statements saying they supported the American Apparel founder when they were allegedly plotting to get rid of him.

"Dov Charney, Dov Charney's lawyer and other people related to Dov Charney continue to bring claims that are wrong on the facts and wrong on the law. Each of these claims is rooted in the same exact agenda," an American Apparel spokesperson said.

"These meritless claims serve as public-relations opportunities now, but they will each fail the test when put before a judge. American Apparel's new management is focused on restoring the financial health of the company and does not intend to waste time addressing each of these meritless claims in the court of public opinion. We are confident we will succeed on every one of these in the proper venue." ●

COMING SOON

May 22

Cover: Fashion
Technology
New Resources

Salute to Suppliers & Services Tech Advertorial

BONUS DISTRIBUTION
Dallas Market Week 6/3-6

May 29

Cover: Retail
New Resources
Technology
Denim Report

Technology Advertorial Denim Advertorial

Bonus Distribution
Designers & Agents LA 6/8-10
L.A. Fashion Market 6/8-11
Licensing Expo 6/9-11

June 5

Cover: Showroom Profile
Real Estate Charts
Technology
Retail Report
New Lines & Showrooms

Activewear Special Section Finance Advertorial Fashion District Advertorial

Bonus Distribution
L.A. Fashion Market 6/8-11
Active Collective 6/23-24

June 12

Cover: LA Market Wrap
Surf Report
Retail Notes

Tech Focus Education in Focus

BONUS DISTRIBUTION
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NEWS

Simon Exec to Helm Glendale Galleria

When looking for a new senior general manager for its high-profile **Glendale Galleria** retail center in Glendale, Calif., **General Growth Properties** picked a man working for its rival **Simon**.

On May 8, GGP named Brent Gardner to helm the Galleria, which is the address for anchors such as **Bloomingdale's**, **Macy's**, **Target**, **Uniqlo**, **Tilly's** and **Hot Topic**. The regional mall unveiled a major renovation in 2013. Gardner replaces Larry Martin, who currently serves as the vice president and general manager of the **Montclair Plaza** retail center in Montclair, Calif.

Since November 2009, Gardner had worked his way through various management positions at Simon. His most recent

post was serving as a general manager for a 1.1 million-square-foot Simon mall in Memphis, Tenn.

"Brent's proficiency within the shopping-center industry will be a welcomed addition to the Glendale Galleria team," said Carol Jacobs, VGGP's asset-management vice president. "His talent and administrative leadership abilities complement our vision for the future of the center."

A Galleria statement said that Gardner's experience included negotiating new leasing contracts for both permanent and short-term tenants. He has supervised construction and development for anchor stores, cinemas and restaurants during his career.—*Andrew Asch*

Shim Names General Manager of Columbia's Korean Subsidiary

Columbia Sportswear Co. named Ham-Bo Shim general manager of the Portland, Ore.-based outdoor apparel company's Korea subsidiary, based in Seoul.

Shim will oversee sales, distribution and marketing strategies for the company's brands, which are sold in Korea in more than 250 dealer-operated, branded, outlet and shop-in-shop locations, as well as Columbia's e-commerce site.

Shim has more than 25 years of experience in finance and operations in the Korean athletic consumer-goods market. For the last decade, he served as vice president and managing director of **TaylorMade Golf's** operations in Korea. He has also served as chief

financial officer of Korea for **Adidas AG**.

Shim succeeds HR Cho, who has been the company's general manager of Korea since early 2012.

"We are delighted to welcome Han-Bo to the Columbia Sportswear family," said Bill Tung, Columbia Sportswear's vice president of international distributors and Asia-direct markets, in a company statement. "He brings a wealth of relevant experience in multi-brand and financial management within the Korean market."

In addition to the Columbia brand, the company also owns the **Mountain Hardwear**, **Sorel**, **prAna**, **Montrail** and **OutDry** brands.—*Alison A. Nieder*

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

"Costume Design Meets the Fashion Business: Designers, Deals and Dynamics," presented by FGILA and the David C. Copley Center for Costume Design, UCLA
Pacific Design Center
West Hollywood, Calif.

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

June 8

Los Angeles Fashion Market
California Market Center
Cooper Design Space
The New Mart
Gerry Building
824 Building
Lady Liberty Building
Primrose Design Building
Academy Awards Building
Los Angeles
Through June 11

Designers and Agents

Los Angeles
Through June 10

Select Transit

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through June 11

LA Kids' Market

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through June 11

Brand Assembly

Los Angeles
Through June 10

Shape

California Market Center
Los Angeles
Through June 10

June 9

Licensing Expo
Mandalay Bay
Las Vegas
Through June 11

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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Looking for Tools to Bridge the Tech Gap Between Online and Bricks-and-Mortar

By Rhea Cortado Contributing Writer

From start-up apparel brands launched online to established brands that are adapting online channels into a traditional bricks-and-mortar wholesale business model, the topics at the **Fashion Digital Conference** aimed to satisfy the needs of brands at different stages of the digital marketing and online retail business.

Held at the **Los Angeles Convention Center** on May 7, the event featured panel discussions, workshops and the

Max Azria said the company has implemented **iPads** into the bricks-and-mortar stores so that customers can order a product online if her size is unavailable in the store. **BCBG** is exploring ways to make this process even more fluid. “How do we achieve single inventory, not inventory silos? How do we make sure we get that inventory from wherever it may reside within our total enterprise and get that to the customer at the moment that she wants it,” Golshan said were the big questions to answer.

When it comes to choosing technology to satisfy these

traffic to blog posts and starting community conversations. **Instagram** was the winner for the best place to showcase a brand’s moodboard, and uniformly “curated feeds” was mentioned as a trend. **Pinterest** emerged as a top referral traffic driver for sales. Because of the different channel’s strengths and weaknesses, the panelists advised to optimize content for each platform.

Social media isn’t just a shiny marketing exterior. Customers treat social media as a direct line to the brand. “We have a customer-service rep who is dedicated to social. ...



opportunity to browse the latest software tools for addressing both the macro and micro trends of selling fashion in a digital age.

Approaching from the macro view, the panel “Having It All: Online and Offline Collide” discussed how brands connect the dots between online and bricks-and-mortar shopping. This omnichannel approach seamlessly links the two retail channels on the back end. Most of the questions dealt with the technological side of the coin.

“We want to figure out how to do it right now rather than have to retrofit later,” said Hilda Fontana for **Toms** shoes, which has five bricks-and-mortar stores. Fontana said customers expect to be able to redeem online promotions, credit or gift cards interchangeably between online and bricks-and-mortar stores, but technologically it’s not always that easy.

To bridge the inventory gaps, Alex Golshan of **BCBG**

needs, the panelists warned to try before you buy to reduce future compatibility headaches with existing systems. “There are so many shiny objects out. You have to pull back and see what’s within your stack right now and what’s on your roadmap,” said Nathan Liu for **PacSun**. “Implementation always sounds easy until you get in the middle of it. Most times it impacts not just one technology and makes everything else more complex.” Golshan added that upgrading systems is a goalpost that’s never reached. “The biggest thing to realize is it’s a journey, not a project,” Golshan said.

Another panel on social media featuring spokeswomen from the brands **Igigi**, **Hot Topic**, **Thursday Friday** and **Jill Aiko Yee** and blogger Chastity Garner Valentine, whose blog is called **Garner Style**, discussed the changing social-media trends and optimizing paid and earned media. **Facebook** proved to be the best platform for driving

Customers reaching out on social expect an answer within one hour,” said Katherine Hernandez for **Hot Topic**. She continued, “If the same questions come up multiple times, there’s an issue there.”

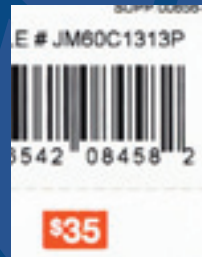
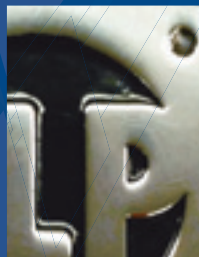
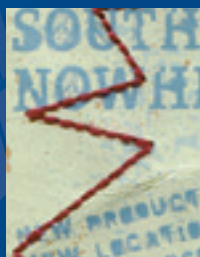
Masha Kubyshina for plus-size clothing brand **Igigi** said that brands often forget that social media isn’t a one-way channel to pump out promotions—it’s a conversation and forum to find out about the perception of your brand in the market, discover natural ambassadors and improve overall. “Listen to what they say and what they ask,” Kubyshina said. ●

Editor’s note: There are two competing Fashion Digital Los Angeles conferences run by separate individuals, Sandy Hussain and Ryan Slack, who are currently disputing ownership of the conference’s name and content. Hussain’s Fashion Digital Los Angeles conference is scheduled for May 19.



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Woodbury Hosts 51st Annual Runway Event in Downtown LA

Woodbury University returned to downtown Los Angeles for its annual runway show, held May 3 at a new venue: **The Majestic Downtown**, a 1921 architectural gem of a building that once housed the **Los Angeles Bank of America**.

Kathryn Hagen, chair of the department of fashion design, opened the show, noting that this is the first group of students who were “the freshmen who started with me on this amazing journey four years ago.”

Hagen thanked legacy sponsor and Woodbury graduate Judith D. Tamklin, who founded the fabric fund at Woodbury, which gives students access to high-quality fabrics and research.

She also recognized “two timeless fashionistas and amazing women” in attendance: Rosalind Johnson Henneman, who studied executive fashion arts at Woodbury in 1937 and 1938, and Hildequard Archuleta, a 1955 executive fashion arts graduate whose modeling career included work with legendary designer Rudi Gernreich and makeup artist Max Factor. While studying at Woodbury, Archuleta successfully pitched the concept for the school’s annual fashion show.

Woodbury’s sophomore students opened the show with a collection of swimwear inspired by the **Tokyo Robot Café**, featuring futuristic digital prints processed by **Colorway Inc.**

Another group of sophomores mixed linen, sequins, streetwear and inspiration from British designer Gareth Pugh for a collection of Egyptian-inspired pieces that paired the stark simplicity of linen with gold metallic accents.

Junior-year students designed “Status Streetwear” inspired by “the codes of music, sports, art, social media and culture.”

Costume design senior Catalena Lee,

working under the direction of **Academy Award**–winning costume designer Albert Wolsky (“Bugsy” and “All That Jazz”), created looks inspired by the 1928 Louise Brooks film “Pandora’s Box.”

Woodbury’s senior design students explored personal identity and inspiration for their collections.

Sylvia Graham designed brightly printed swimwear and coverups inspired by her mother, who was a model in Costa Rica. Stella Harutyunyan’s collection featured tai-

loring details, oversized silhouettes and fluid gowns. Araksi Balyan’s all-white collection was inspired by her Armenian heritage while Rosa Barrera drew inspiration from indigenous cultures for her candy-colored collection with handworked embroidery and appliques. Ashley Zika combined sports and high-performance fabrics for her collection of men’s and women’s streetwear. Juan Olivera mixed pinstripes and sharp tailoring for his women’s collection, and Alisa Tovmanyan’s collection featured dreamy digital

prints inspired by Armenian folk art. Jenine Nerecina’s romantic lingerie and loungewear pieces were inspired by the formalwear of her native Philippines. Self-described “professional dreamer” Polina Zeynalian showed a collection that mixed moody digital prints, spider-web fabrications and architectural silhouettes. And Brittany Wise drew inspiration from San Francisco and Los Angeles for her collection, which mixed color and fabrication to combine structure and movement.

—Alison A. Nieder



Juan Olivera

Sylvia Graham

Araksi Balyan

Junior Brittany Diego

Jenine Nerecina

Sophomore Haibert Kenshishi



JAN LIM

Sophomore Andrea Martinez

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The Point Continued from page 1

cities of Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach as well as the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

Federal Realty Investment Trust, headquartered in Rockville, Md., spent \$80 million to build The Point, which will spread out over a relatively compact 115,000-square-foot area. It owns the **Plaza El Segundo** shopping center, which neighbors The Point. Federal Realty also developed another open-air retail center, **Santana Row**, in San Jose, Calif.

restaurants and cafés that are new or new to the area, such as **Hopdoddy Burger Bar**, an Austin, Texas-based hamburger and bar restaurant. There also will be **Craft Shack**, a fast casual eatery by the **Simms Restaurant Group**. Other restaurants will be **Superba Food & Bread**, **North Italia** and **Mendocino Farms**.

Planet Blue is scheduled to open a 2,500-square-foot boutique in the fall, said David Lindell, the Santa Monica, Calif.-headquartered boutique company's vice



NEW MALL: The Point is scheduled to take a bow on July 30.



THE CREW: Construction crews working on The Point

However, The Point was intended to be a retail alternative, said Jeff Kreshek, vice president, West Coast leasing, at Federal Realty. "We worked on this project for four years, and we wanted to create a special place in the South Bay [of Los Angeles County], a place that is more experiential than functional," he said.

Shopping and dining will be central to the new retail center's mission, but much of the retail center was constructed as a place to hang out as well as a place to shop. Designed by **Architects Orange**, based in Orange, Calif., the retail center features a 40,000-square-foot common area that includes a park-like lawn area. There will be fire pits at The Point. The retail center also features whimsical architectural features. Large street lights that look like giant desk lamps are placed in the center. A children's play structure was designed around an installation that looks like a lifeguard stand. Overlooking the retail center will be 25,000 square feet of office space, although office tenants have not been announced.

The Point's primary audience will be people from the South Bay's beach cities as well as El Segundo and the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Kreshek said that this well-off demographic was not interested in mainstream mall experiences.

"Shoppers want something that is flexible, something that is convenient and something that is approachable," he said. "They don't want a 2-million-square-foot mall where you have to ask for directions all of the time. You'll never have to say, 'How do I get from Point A to Point B' here."

The boutique retail center also will offer

president of retail. The store will be the 11th physical location for Planet Blue, which was inspired by the beach lifestyles of cities such as Malibu, Calif.

"We're tremendously excited about the potential of opening a store in a beach community financially," Lindell said. "It's where our brand has thrived." He declined to forecast how much the sales per square feet were going to be at The Point.

The Point is part of a wave of new retail construction in the South Bay. This fall, **Del Amo Fashion Center**, a **Simon** mall in Torrance, Calif., is scheduled to unveil a new remodel, which will include a new **Nordstrom**. Plans to remodel the **Manhattan Village** mall were approved by the Manhattan Beach City Council in December. There are also plans to redevelop and build new retail in the waterfront area of Redondo Beach. A remodel is scheduled to be unveiled in early 2016 for the **Peninsula Center** mall in Rolling Hills Estates, a town on the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

The market is improving for developing retail centers, said Vincent Spataro, director for the Southern California Region for **Shawmut Design and Construction**, a company that has built luxury stores on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills and around America. "As we continue to claw our way back from the depths of the recession, there are a large number of retail developments underway. Until recently, most of the activity has focused on refurbishment and re-positioning of existing, underperforming centers. With greater availability of development capital, we are seeing more emphasis on new centers throughout the country," he said. ●

Freight

Continued from page 1

at **B. Boston & Associates**, a decades-old Los Angeles apparel company whose labels include **Sloane Rouge** and **Stilletto's**. "The reason is even though the situation has improved a lot at the ports, we think the chassis problem is still there. So once it gets to be the busy season, we think it [the port congestion problem] will hit again."

Kundani is just one of hundreds of apparel importers recalibrating their logistics plans before the next big shipping season hits in July. Many apparel importers were pummeled when clothing and accessories coming from factories in China, Vietnam, Indonesia, India and Bangladesh were piled high on boats stuck off the coast of Southern California waiting in line to dock at the **Port of Los Angeles** or the **Port of Long Beach**. While some ships went straight to berths, depending on the terminal, some waited as long as 22 days on the ocean before sinking their anchor to unload, according to Capt. Kip Louttit, executive director of the **Marine Exchange of Southern California**.

At its worst, there were 28 cargo-container ships lined up beyond the ports' breakwater on March 14. After a tentative contract agreement between longshore workers and their employers was reached on Feb. 20, dockside workers who had been working slowly during labor negotiations amped up their schedules to clear the backlog at the two ports, which account for 40 percent of all the cargo-container traffic that comes into the United States.

As of May 11, there were no cargo-container vessels anchored beyond the port breakwater.

Stay West

With the ports nearing normality, many apparel importers said they are planning to continue to use the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach as their entry points because so many warehouses, distribution centers and railroad infrastructures are located in Southern California.

"Most people who are using the West Coast are continuing to use it," said Debra Taylor, a customs broker for **Alba Wheels Up**.

She pointed out that the **Port of New York and New Jersey** recently experienced its own set of congestion problems with trucks backed up for miles onto the New Jersey Turnpike as they waited to pick up cargo at the **GCT Bayonne** terminal.

Indeed, the East Coast ports saw a surge of shipments late last year and early this year. In December, container volumes on the East Coast were up 11.5 percent from the previous year, and they inched up 7.6 percent during the first two months of this year, according to the "2015 North America Ports & Logistics Annual Report," prepared by **CBRE Research**.

But that surge of cargo may be temporary. "The degree to which East Coast ports can benefit over the long term is limited, however, as the majority of the cargo that travels through the West Coast ports remains within the region—85 percent in Northern California and 60 percent in Southern California," the report said.

Ben Hackett, who writes the "Global Port Tracker" report for the **National Retail Federation**, said there was a surge of all-water shipments to the East Coast from mid-December to the end of February. But shipping activity is returning to the West Coast. "There is so much money sunk into the distribution centers and facilities on the West Coast that companies are not making a change unless they have to," he said.

That was reiterated by one major apparel importer that brings in at least 15,000 containers a year to the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. During the height of the port congestion problem, the company monitored terminals' efficiency, switching its cargo to terminals working the fastest.

The company also trained a number of its own trucker drivers to pull cargo containers from inside the terminal gates and leased dozens of chassis kept in its yard to make sure there was no shortage of wheels. "I think we are going to toe the line and take the same strategy we had starting last year," said the company's logistics and transportation director, who wished to remain anonymous. "We feel good about the strategies and that the worst is behind us until the next labor strike."

Walmart has apparently upped its cargo-container traffic moving through the **Port of Lázaro Cárdenas** in Mexico, starting to transport more than 150 containers a week from the Pacific Ocean port to Houston via the **Kansas City Southern** rail network, said Erik Bo Hansen, vice president of KCS's intermodal sales and marketing.

While apparel importers are relieved to hear that a new five-year contract has been worked out between West Coast longshore workers and their employers, the next challenge has been the lingering chassis-shortage problem.

On March 1, the Port of Long Beach and the Port of Los Angeles started operating a "gray" chassis pool. Under this system, truckers can pick up and drop off chassis at any of the 12 cargo-container terminals at the two ports.

Before the "gray" chassis pool was formed, chassis were divided up into different pools run by three leasing companies and had to be returned to those pools, making it hard to get chassis at certain terminals. Those three chassis leasing companies are **Trac Intermodal**, **Flexi-Van Leasing Inc.** and **Direct ChassisLink Inc.**

Now the "gray" chassis pool is one big chassis pool in a cooperative-agreement program between the three leasing companies, which control 80,000 of the 100,000 chassis at the Los Angeles/Long Beach port complex.

The chassis-pool managers are hoping **West Coast Chassis Pool**, operated by shipping line **SSA Marine**, comes into the program with its 15,000 chassis.

The major trucking companies that collect cargo from the two ports said the chassis situation has improved rapidly. "We haven't had any chassis problems," said Bob Curry Sr., president and chief executive of **California Cartage Co.**, which operates a fleet of 1,500 trucks nationwide and owns three warehouse brands. "And I don't anticipate any chassis problems in the future." ●

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