

Fashion á la Mode

FASHION & INTERIOR DESIGN

YOUNG CAREER-MINDED, GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO NETWORK WITH INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS



By BILL QUINNAN
FOR O.C. REGISTER SPECIAL SECTIONS

High-school students interested in careers in fashion and interior design will have an opportunity to network with industry professionals, participate in runway competitions and attend free workshops Friday at Saddleback College in Mission Viejo. Saddleback College's Fashion Department will be hosting the Fashion á la Mode from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday on the college's campus.

According to Saddleback College faculty instructor Malia Vago, between 160 to 200 students are expected at present, with eight Orange County high schools participating, along with individual students attending from other schools.

Scheduled guest speakers at the event include Beth Jones of the B Jones Style blog and Ralph Lauren executive sales professional Tomiko Lawless.

Students will attend three of 10 one-hour workshops sessions, led by faculty from Saddleback, Fullerton and Santa Ana colleges and industry professionals from Oakley, Cach Cach, Robert Kaufman Fabrics, Von Hemert Interiors, Ralph Lauren, Hybrid Apparel, along with stylists Beth Jones and Leslie Christen. Workshop topics will include industrial sew-

ing, dye processes, fabric-flower hair accessories, fashion styling, fashion blogging, apparel business, draping fashion illustration, room design and interior color.

Following the workshops, students will compete in group contests in denim deconstruction, fashion merchandising or draping.

Approximately 100 previously submitted works by Orange County high-school students will be on display at the event, including garments, as well as fashion and interior-design presentations.

Student-created garments will cover the categories of evening wear, fantasy wear and sportswear. Among the highlights will be 20 prom dresses and evening gowns that have been redesigned by students. The dresses had been previously donated to Camp Pendleton to enable women on the base to participate in a formal event, but were passed over because they were slightly damaged or very out of style, noted Vago.

"It's great to see the students turn a 1980s puff-sleeved polyester gown into a new outfit or design. Those garments are really fun to see," Vago said.

Also on display will be creations in merchandising categories, such as

"What's Hot, What's Not" fashion trend boards and wardrobe boards that showcase "looks" for specific occasions, featuring 10 photos of actual garments and accessories selected for a consumer of a given age and gender. Interior categories will include entries in the Deign-A-Room contest, as well as "What's Hot, What's Not" trend boards focusing on interior decorating styles.

Workshops will be followed by an appetizer and dessert reception and "mocktail" hour for students and parents, followed by a fashion show featuring student designs, hosted by Kelly McCoy of DLux Entertainment.

The fashion- and interior-design fields are particularly relevant to the Orange County region. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the California Employment Development Department indicates that nearly 30 percent of the nation's fashion designers were employed in California in 2010, and 73 percent of those were employed in Los Angeles or Orange counties – approximately 800 Orange County and 3,840 in Los Angeles County.

About 15 percent of the nation's interior designers were employed in California in 2010, with

42 percent working in Los Angeles or Orange counties, including 990 in Orange County and 2,550 in Los Angeles County.

The BLS notes that fashion designers will face strong competition for jobs over the next decade, although the outlook for interior designers is significantly better. Employment of fashion designers is expected to remain flat at the national level from 2010 through 2020, which employment of interior designers is expected to increase at a slightly faster-than-average pace.

For fashion designers, some job growth is projected in specialized firms and for self-employed fashion designers. Growth will result from demand for comfortable and affordable clothing and accessories for the mass market and everyday wear, and also from the development of new fabrics, such as moisture-wicking fabrics, which will require new designs.

On the other hand, growth in those areas will be offset by reductions in the apparel manufacturing industry. Thus, competition for jobs will be strong, and those with formal education in fashion design, exceptional portfolios and industry experience should have the best prospects.

For interior designers, growth will be driven by expectations that home and office interiors meet certain conditions, such as being environmentally friendly or more easily accessible, according to the BLS. Demand will be highest within specialized design firms and in higher-income areas.

Becoming an interior designer generally requires a bachelor's degree, as well as classes in interior design, drawing and computer-aided design, the BLS notes. Licensure requirements vary by state, and obtaining voluntary certification in an interior-design specialty can increase employment opportunities.

Students wishing to attend Fashion á la Mode individually can purchase tickets through Brown Paper Ticket at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/319555. Ticket prices include a \$1.99 processing fee and a \$10 deposit that will be returned at the door with the printed ticket or student identification.

Students who cannot attend the whole event are welcome to attend the reception from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

Bill Quinnan is a freelance writer who lives in Orange County. Readers can send e-mail to him at bquinnan@sbc-global.net. Bill cannot provide job leads.