

## Financial

# Teens Get Inside Scoop at Fashion Camp

By Jeanine Poggi

Aspiring designers gathered in New York City last week to learn the ins and outs of the fashion industry from seasoned professionals.

In its first year, Fashion Camp NYC provides an inside look at the business, giving teens ages 14 to 18 a chance to

With big-name instructors including Jimmy Olson, vice president of merchandising and one of the founders of American Eagle Outfitters' new concept Martin + Osa, and Elizabeth McNulty, former vice president of design for Tommy Hilfiger, the teens

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— Gordon Josey, Fashion Camp NYC

learn everything from where to find inspiration to how to source their product.

The young women have come from across the U.S. and overseas to network with top designers, buyers and merchants.

“We thought the campers would just come from the Tristate area, but we have girls from Pennsylvania, Florida, California, Canada and even England,” said Gordon Josey, a 15-year veteran of the summer camp industry and co-creator of Fashion Camp NYC.

“Even though they are young, these girls know they want to be designers and buyers,” Josey said. “Some of these girls even have their own lines. They make their own clothes and handbags. One girl even sent her designs to China to be made.”

are provided an overview of the industry they otherwise wouldn't receive.

“There are so many kids and teenagers who want to go into fashion but don't know how to break into the business or know the fields available to them,” said Fran Della Badia, vice president of merchandising for women's handbags and accessories at Coach and co-creator of the camp. “I really want to give back to young women. Growing up I didn't know anything about a career in fashion. Now that I have established myself, I feel it's important to give back and encourage and educate these women on how to succeed in this



The first Fashion Camp NYC instructed students on how to succeed in the industry.

industry.” Aside from classes and off-site outings to fashion showrooms and manufacturing facilities, the campers will work on a hands-on design project.

In groups the students will create their own brand, tackling each stage of development, from concept to design to sale, ending with a presentation of their brand in front of a panel on Friday.

Josey and Della Badia expect Fashion

Camp NYC will expand into other cities in the future, and have already received requests to bring the camp to California.

“Where are our leaders coming from in 20 years?” Josey asked. “The fashion industry has changed completely over the last 20 years and will evolve even more in the future, but we have to educate these future leaders on how to continue to expand and transform the industry.”