



FIT Establishes Social Justice Center to Accelerate Equity Transformation Within the Fashion and Creative Industries

December 8, 2021

First-of-Its-Kind Higher Education Initiative Provides Mentorship, Education, and Career Support for Precollege Youth, College Students, and Creative Industry Professionals from the BIPOC Community

PVH Corp., Capri Holdings Limited, and Tapestry, Inc. Each Pledge \$1 Million as Founding Partners Through Their Respective Foundations

Additional Support from Top Industry Leaders, Including G-III Apparel Group, Prada, Carolina Herrera, Ralph Lauren, Saks, and Others

FIT Invites Industry Partners from Fashion, Beauty, Advertising, Technology, Communications, Interior Design, and Others to Join

NEW YORK, Dec. 8, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) of the State University of New York (SUNY) announced the launch of the Social Justice Center at FIT (SJC), a first-of-its-kind higher education initiative established to increase opportunity and accelerate social equity within the creative industries for the Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) community. The effort's hallmark is a seamless and sustained interconnection between early education, college mentorship and training, and professional career support. Founding partners PVH Corp., Capri Holdings Limited, and Tapestry, Inc., through their respective foundations, have each committed \$1 million to help launch the center. Separately, G-III Apparel Group, made the establishing gift to the SJC Scholarship Fund, which already has reached more than \$1.5 million in contributions. Other industry leaders have pledged support, including Carolina Herrera, Prada, Ralph Lauren, Saks, Target, and The Fragrance Foundation.

The SJC at FIT will nurture a racially and ethnically diverse talent pipeline, from the middle school classroom to the executive level, that is focused on breaking down systemic barriers and ensuring that BIPOC professionals achieve their full potential. This approach is supported by four pillars: 1) collaboration among leading corporate and nonprofit CEOs who are committed to promoting the talent potential of aspiring BIPOC youth and advancing the careers of BIPOC professionals; 2) access to the talent, creativity, and expertise of FIT faculty and students as resources; 3) a sustained commitment to funding support for scholarships and programs; and 4) ongoing accountability that will identify and measure the advancement of BIPOC professionals. Jeffrey Tweedy, former president and CEO of Sean John and an FIT alumnus, will be a special advisor to the FIT president to help build and expand the center.

"A powerful and much overdue dialogue was sparked last year around diversity and inclusion, which led to a sobering realization that there was much work to do within the creative industries and at FIT as well. Since then, we have been building a strong foundation for the Social Justice Center at FIT. I am grateful for the early support from PVH, Capri Holdings, Tapestry, G-III Apparel Group, and FIT's other charter partners. They have demonstrated a formidable commitment to these efforts, and I am confident that the center is poised to effect meaningful change," said FIT President Joyce F. Brown.

Further, Dr. Brown noted, "What we have seen thus far are companies or colleges whose focus is either on the workplace or on education. The focus for the Social Justice Center at FIT is on the whole individual. We will intervene early with BIPOC youth so they can make informed decisions about their future and the careers they might choose to pursue. While they are in college, we will provide exposure to the inner workings of industry as well as concentrated support and training. Our partners in industry will then mentor, guide, and provide opportunities to accelerate their career potential.

"It is our obligation at FIT to mobilize our resources and our network to remove existing obstacles so that racially and ethnically diverse students can be recognized for their value in all of the creative fields, including fashion, beauty, interior design, graphic design, advertising, and communications," she said.

"This is an incredibly important initiative towards making a real and lasting positive change in the fashion industry, and we are honored to support its launch as a founding partner," said Stefan Larsson, chief executive officer of PVH Corp. "The goals for the Social Justice Center align with our own values to foster an environment of inclusion, belonging, and equity for all across the industry. We believe the unique approach of the SJC to provide support at every stage of the career journey will help ensure that promising creative talent in the BIPOC community have the tools they need, as well as a clearer pathway to access and success."

"We are proud to support FIT as one of the founding members of the Social Justice Center and foster their important work to support diversity, inclusion, and equity throughout the fashion industry," said John D. Idol, chairman and chief executive officer of

Capri Holdings Limited. "Diversity and inclusion are embedded in the DNA of each of our fashion luxury brands and we are excited for the opportunity to work with FIT to create meaningful opportunities in fashion for underrepresented communities."

"As a founding member of the Social Justice Center, we are honored to partner with FIT to advance equity and opportunity in the fashion industry and effect real and lasting change," said Joanne Crevoiserat, chief executive officer of Tapestry, Inc. "At Tapestry, we believe that bringing together different backgrounds and experiences sparks brilliance and that the work of the Social Justice Center will enrich all. We look forward to working closely with FIT to make the fashion world more inclusive by fostering underrepresented perspectives and BIPOC talent who will be the future leaders that drive our industry forward."

"We are proud of our partnership with FIT in launching the Social Justice Center, which is an essential step forward in support of the BIPOC community," said Morris Goldfarb, chairman and CEO of G-III Apparel Group. "G-III Apparel Group has had a longstanding commitment to FIT and its best-in-class programs aimed at moving the industry forward. The Social Justice Center furthers that mission and our own work at G-III Apparel Group to enact change and provide equal opportunities for all."

"I am honored to return to my alma mater and assist President Brown in building a unique model of a higher education/industry partnership that will benefit BIPOC youth, college students, and professionals," said Jeff Tweedy, an alumnus of FIT's Menswear program. "I am excited to meet with and talk to my industry friends and colleagues about this crucial effort because the SJC at FIT is the future of our creative industries. This effort is extremely important to me because diversity in the industry has been missing for too long," he said. Tweedy is currently brand advisor to Sean John, serving for more than 20 years since its inception and earning a reputation for building brands and establishing an impressive marketing and sales track record at retail and direct-to-consumer. Tweedy also serves on the boards of Academy Sports and Pineywood Boarding School and, in an advisory capacity, to the Black Action Retail Group (BRAG), the Figure Skate of Harlem, and 500 Role Models, to name a few.

A public institution of the State University of New York, FIT was founded by the fashion industry and has an historical mission-driven commitment to ensure the future success of both its alumni and the vast creative industries it serves.

To reverse the underrepresentation of BIPOC talent in educational institutions, the Social Justice Center at FIT will provide scholarships for middle school, high school, and college students. This support includes precollege instruction that will help position youth for success by preparing them for college-level study, providing exposure to career opportunities in the creative sector. Once the students are in college, pathways to advancement will be offered through internships, mentorships, and apprenticeships provided by SJC partners. Numerous scholarships are already available, including the Social Justice Center Endowed Scholarship, the Amsale Aspire Initiative, the Art Smith Memorial Endowed Scholarship, the Black Student Illustrators Graduation Award, and the Prada Scholarship at FIT, among others.

Concurrently, the SJC partners will work collaboratively with FIT to change the corporate culture and diversify its framework from the ground up. To instill lasting social change, the SJC will promote industry mentorship programs for employees of color, share best practices, establish authentic and relevant networks for BIPOC professionals, develop mid-management advancement programs, and commit ongoing efforts to diversify leadership from entry level to the executive suite and beyond.

An industry advisory council of 16 executives has been established to counsel, collaborate, and help measure progress in achieving equity within the creative industries.

A search is underway to name an executive director of the SJC, who will report to President Brown.

To learn more about the Social Justice Center at FIT and for ways to get involved, contact SocialJusticeCenter@fitnyc.edu or visit fitnyc.edu/socialjusticecenter.

About FIT:

A part of the State University of New York, FIT has been a leader in career education in art, design, business, and technology throughout its history. Providing almost 9,000 students with an uncommon blend of hands-on, practical experience, theory, and a firm grounding in the liberal arts, the college offers a wide range of affordable programs that foster innovation and collaboration. Its distinctive curriculum is geared to today's rapidly growing creative economy, including fields such as computer animation, toy design, production management, film and media, and cosmetics and fragrance marketing. Internationally renowned, FIT draws on its New York City location to provide a vibrant, creative community in which to learn. The college offers nearly 50 majors and grants AAS, BFA, BS, MA, MFA, and MPS degrees, preparing students for professional success and leadership in the new creative economy. Among notable alumni in fashion are Calvin Klein, Michael Kors, Norma Kamali, Reem Acra, Brian Atwood, Stephen Burrows, Dennis Basso, Francisco Costa, Nanette Lepore, Bibhu Mohapatra, Ralph Rucci, John Bartlett, Peter Do, and Michelle Smith. Other prominent graduates include Leslie Blodgett, creator of bareMinerals; international restaurant designer Tony Chi; and Nina Garcia, editor in chief, *Elle*.

About PVH Corp.:

PVH is one of the world's largest and most admired fashion companies, connecting with consumers in over 40 countries. The company's global iconic brands include Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger. Its 140-year history is built on the strength of its brands, its team, and a commitment to drive fashion forward for good.

About Capri Holdings Limited:

Capri Holdings Limited is a global fashion luxury group, consisting of iconic brands that are industry leaders in design, style and

craftsmanship. Its brands, Versace, Jimmy Choo and Michael Kors, cover the full spectrum of fashion luxury categories including women's and men's accessories, footwear and ready-to-wear as well as wearable technology, watches, jewelry, eyewear and a full line of fragrance products. The company's goal is to continue to extend the global reach of its brands while ensuring that they maintain their independence and exclusive DNA.

About Tapestry, Inc.:

Tapestry is a global house of brands that unites the magic of Coach, kate spade new york, and Stuart Weitzman. Each of the Company's brands are unique and independent, while sharing a commitment to innovation and authenticity defined by distinctive products and differentiated customer experiences across channels and geographies. The collective strengths of Tapestry's brands are used to move their customers and empower their communities, to make the fashion industry more sustainable, and to build a company that's equitable, inclusive, and diverse. Individually, Tapestry's brands are iconic. Together, they can stretch what's possible.

About G-III Apparel Group:

G-III designs, sources and markets apparel and accessories under owned, licensed and private label brands. G-III's substantial portfolio of more than 30 licensed and proprietary brands is anchored by five global power brands: DKNY, Donna Karan, Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger and Karl Lagerfeld Paris. G-III's owned brands include DKNY, Donna Karan, Vilebrequin, G.H. Bass, Eliza J, Jessica Howard, Andrew Marc, Marc New York, Sonia Rykiel. G-III has fashion licenses under the Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Karl Lagerfeld Paris, Kenneth Cole, Cole Haan, Guess?, Vince Camuto, Levi's and Dockers brands. Through its team sports business, G-III has licenses with the National Football League, National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, National Hockey League and over 150 U.S. colleges and universities. G-III also distributes directly to consumers through its DKNY, Karl Lagerfeld Paris and Vilebrequin stores and its digital channels for the DKNY, Donna Karan, Vilebrequin, Karl Lagerfeld Paris, Andrew Marc, Wilsons Leather and G.H. Bass brands.

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