



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2021.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: Symposium Puts Students at Heart of Fashion Industry
Program Category: Community and Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

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Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration
Signature: 

Program Overview

The Fashion Symposium was a collaboration between Henrico County Public Schools' (HCPS) marketing education and family and consumer sciences programs. The marketing program offers a fashion marketing class while the family and consumer sciences program teachers lead a fashion careers class. The two departments also collaborated with community partners from Goodwill of Coastal and Central Virginia and the executive director of RVA Fashion Week. The executive director brought in his contacts from the fashion industry to help make the event a reality.

The purpose of the event was to expose high school students to the fashion industry, which included photographers, makeup artists, hair stylists, modeling professionals and professionals from the design world. The event brought together 75 students from 10 different HCPS high schools who participated in two hands-on industry-related sessions and were then brought together at the end for a "design challenge." One design challenge used clothing donated from two local Goodwill stores; the second challenge was sponsored by HCPS' marketing education and family and consumer sciences programs.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

HCPS marketing education and family and consumer sciences students had not had many opportunities to see the fashion industry firsthand and gain practical experience. This symposium gave the students a glimpse into the real world of fashion, involving them in a firsthand experience with the region's largest fashion event. This partnership afforded students the opportunity to learn from professionals in the fashion industry. RVA Fashion Week represents top models, leading designers, choice producers, choreographers, and stylists in the Richmond, Virginia area. This combination leads to unforgettable regional events and showcases many of the industry's top

organizations and charities. Every year, RVA Fashion Week has been committed to collaborating with local businesses and designers to display Richmond's style, creativity, street culture, and arts through fashion.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The Fashion Symposium is the first of its kind in Henrico County Public Schools and the Richmond region. It was a collaboration of two HCPS Career and Technical Education programs as well as our community partners. It created a memorable, low-cost event for a diverse group of high school students interested in related careers. Students were able to participate in hands-on activities and learn firsthand what it takes to be part of the fashion industry. With its low cost, it is easily replicable by other school divisions.

How Program Was Carried Out

The objectives of our Fashion Symposium were to introduce students to the different areas of the fashion industry, including photography, modeling, makeup, hair and styling. We began meeting as a team of four in November 2019, brainstorming several ideas that would help students interested in fashion careers, and ultimately decided on the Fashion Symposium. We met five more times at public libraries in Henrico County to flesh out our necessary roles and related tasks, what the event would look like, how many students would be able to attend, and criteria for invitation selection. Students currently or previously enrolled in fashion marketing, fashion career, or entrepreneurship courses and exhibiting a strong passion for the fashion industry were invited by their teachers to attend via special invitation.

The Fashion Symposium agenda included a welcome speech (by marketing and family and consumer sciences department specialists), a motivational guest speaker (a well-known, young

female entrepreneur and radio personality in our community), three fashion-related sessions (design and merchandise; hair, makeup and model behavior; and production, marketing, and media). Lunch was provided at no cost to all attendees, and a fashion challenge was presented about 45 minutes before the end of the event.

Each fashion session was facilitated by a business partner from the Richmond fashion industry. Each partner was an entrepreneur, had their own fashion company, and represented their brand while sharing information with students. They provided hands-on activities to tie everything together, with students working either in groups or independently, depending on the activity.

The Fashion Challenge enabled students to collaborate with their attending peers to meet the requirements of the challenge. The “School Supplies and Trash Bag Challenge” (Challenge No. 1) required students to use trash bags to create a clothing design that included something braided, something asymmetrical and something gathered while incorporating any school supplies into the design. “Styling Challenge” (Challenge No. 2) required students to select up to three garments from our donated Goodwill items and manipulate the clothing and add additional pieces from their closet to create a complete, original outfit without purchasing anything new. Specific roles related to the day’s session were assigned among each group, including a photographer, a stylist, makeup and hair artists, a model, and an executive producer of branding and marketing. Final products were due in April 2020, and selected winners would model their newly created fashion on the runway in RVA Fashion Week’s Fashion Show in May. However, COVID-19 prevented these follow-up activities from taking place. Our business partner was part of the planning process from the beginning and used his contacts to assist us with the event.

Financing and Staffing

The two collaborating departments provided all materials used for the activities, using existing instructional funds and our session facilitators donated their time to the event. We purchased trash bags, name tags and folders for all participants at a total cost of \$51. Specialists covered the \$500 cost of lunch which was prepared by students in the Hospitality & Catering program at the ACE Center at Highland Springs, using existing food budgets so that students did not have to incur the costs. A school bus was provided for students and driven by a retired staff member who had an applicable license. Henrico County's Belmont Recreation Center was the venue for the event which was available to HCPS at no cost. Event speakers and session facilitators donated their time to students and the clothing provided for the fashion challenge was donated by local Goodwill stores.

Program Results

The event, held on Feb. 7, 2020, was a successful one. All vendors arrived on time, checked in, and set up their stations. The students' buses arrived as scheduled. Students heard from various fashion professionals and a local radio personality who is well known in the Richmond area for connecting people with food, arts, sports and education. The students were engaged and asked many questions from these fashion-forward individuals.

When students were in the design room, they worked with two designers who have had collections showcased in previous RVA Fashion Week productions. The two designers had the students go through exercises to help them establish a "mood board." This board is typically the beginning step of designing a collection. Students thumbed through fashion magazines and cut out pictures that spoke to them in addition to identifying samples of fabrics they liked. They had the opportunity to look at examples of the designers' mood boards which had inspired their entire collection for a given season. They listen to the stories from the designers about the pieces that they designed,

the feelings, thoughts, and representation of each piece. The designers did a great job of taking the students through the beginning of the design process. Once the students completed their mood board during the session, they shared and explained the rationale behind their selections. The students had a chance to practice makeup, hair, photography and walking the runway in the second session. Students were able to interact with models who have participated in the RVA show.

The student designs were due for judging April 1, 2020. Up to 10 teams would be selected to participate in the RVA Fashion Week Spring Show in May. With the closing of school buildings and community event restrictions because of the pandemic, the ensuing events were put on hold. The feedback we received from the teachers and students was very positive. The students were floored when they heard that they would have a chance to participate in the region's largest fashion event.

The HCPS staff is still in communication with the organizers of RVA Fashion Week regarding the future of this event. All parties are thrilled with the program and want to continue the collaboration.

Brief Summary

With a goal of increasing opportunities for HCPS marketing education and family and consumer sciences students to see the fashion industry firsthand and gain practical experience, a Fashion Symposium was created in conjunction with RVA Fashion week. The symposium was a partnership with the school division and both individuals and companies affiliated with the fashion industry, affording students the opportunity to interact and learn from professionals in the field.

Students currently or previously enrolled in fashion marketing, fashion career or entrepreneurship courses and exhibiting a strong passion for the fashion industry were invited by their teachers to attend via special invitation. The Fashion Symposium agenda included a motivational guest speaker, three fashion-related sessions facilitated by business partners from the Richmond fashion industry, lunch and a follow-up fashion challenge in which students collaborated with their attending peers to create new fashions from either trash bags or donated clothing. There were numerous hands-on activities for the students throughout the day, providing an opportunity for interactions with professionals and real-life fashion industry experiences.

The feedback from teachers, students and business partners was very positive. The HCPS staff is in communication with the organizers of RVA Fashion Week and plans on continuing the partnership, providing engaging industry-related opportunities for HCPS students.

Symposium Puts Students at Heart of Fashion Industry

Supplemental Material

All supplemental materials can be found here - <http://bit.ly/FSmaterials>





