

United Colors of Fashion

2014Media Kit



EMPOWER YOUTH
THROUGH FASHION

UCOF Creates Hope For Runway Renaissance

Dear Media Friend:

For many who dreams of choosing fashion as a profession, a long difficult road lies ahead. The progression of the fashion industry has led it to create a partition between the elites who made it in and those striving to get in the door. The partition proves, for most, to be a challenge too hard to confront. UCOF believes in creating opportunities for talented, but under-resourced youth by giving them exposure to the industry. Fashion Week is the perfect platform for learning during which our interns will be exposed to the workings of such a large-scale fashion exhibition. In order to make their transition smoother before formally entering the industry, they learn everything from design to show production and the opportunity to get some practical experience. This also ensures that the industry receives relatively well-polished starters, making the trainer's job easier.

Our focus is under-resourced youth from New York who have aspirations of entering the fashion industry. We offer them a one of a kind fashion education program that is FREE of charge. We are the first registered 501 (c)(3) in the United States to offer FREE Fashion Education to under-resourced youth. With the funds it raises, UCOF organizes internships and educational opportunities for under-resourced youth in New York through our Fashion Education Program, in order to expose them to and help provide them with access to the many exciting career opportunities in the fashion industry. Various fields of work are opened to our interns in the form of workshops, hands-on participation in fashion show production and internships with leading designers. We also assist interns to get scholarships to leading fashion schools and arrange presentations for newly graduated designers. All these opportunities give talented, aspiring fashion professionals a platform to be recognized and integrated into the industry.

The fashion industry has its beginnings rooted in the humble threads whose belief in their craft awakened a consciousness in so many. Fashion has become a yardstick by which to measure our relevance to our environment. Whether we choose fashion to make us blend in or stand out, we make a choice. UCOF chooses to empower and educate.

Enclosed, please find our press kit, which will provide tools to learn about our organization and programs.

We are available for interviews. For media inquires, please contact:

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Anatomy of the UCOF Logo

The graphic thread elements represent the unity that UCOF creates between (a) under-resourced youth and the fashion industry, (b) philanthropists and youth suffering with HIV/AIDS, as well as (c) the many uniquely talented members of the UCOF team. The various bright colors reveal our optimistic spirit, while also signifying the globally diverse nature of the UCOF team and the youth we strive to empower.

Purpose

United Colors of Fashion (UCOF) is a New York City-based non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to providing fashion focused:

- Education
- Mentorship and Counseling
- Internship Opportunities
- Entrepreneurial Development
- Scholarships

to under-resourced youth in New York City. What makes us different from other non-profit registered 501(c)(3) organizations is that we use 100% of public donations to fund our programs. Our daily operating costs are covered by sponsors, our board of directors and private donors. UCOF FREE Fashion Education Program is the first of its kind in the United States.

Our Mission: Founded in 2010, UCOF is supported by an international team of philanthropically-minded, skilled professionals with backgrounds in fashion, the arts, and business. Our mission is to Empower Youth through Fashion Education.



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UCOF Educates:

Countless talented youth aspire to work in the fashion industry, but few make it. In fact, the vast majority of new designers go out of business within two years. Moreover, without access to the unique educational opportunities, internships, and connections that are invaluable to building a career in fashion, under-resourced youth stand little chance of even entering the industry. With the funds it raises, UCOF organizes internships and educational opportunities for under-resourced youth in New York through our Fashion Education Program in the areas of:

- Management
- Business Development
- Media & Communications
- Marketing
- Design
- Textiles
- Accessories
- Event Production

These fields of work are opened to our interns in the form of workshops, applied participation in fashion show production and internships with leading designers. We also assist interns to get scholarships to leading fashion schools and arrange installations and fashion shows for newly graduated designers. All these opportunities give talented, aspiring fashion professionals a platform to be recognized and integrated into the industry. To date, UCOF has impacted the lives of over 300 under-resourced youth in New York and New Jersey. Yearly, the board of designers selects the “Achiever of the Year”, this person, a college senior, must have been part of the program for more than four seasons,

demonstrates excellent design skills and a strong potential to be a successful fashion designer. The achiever is awarded the following prizes:

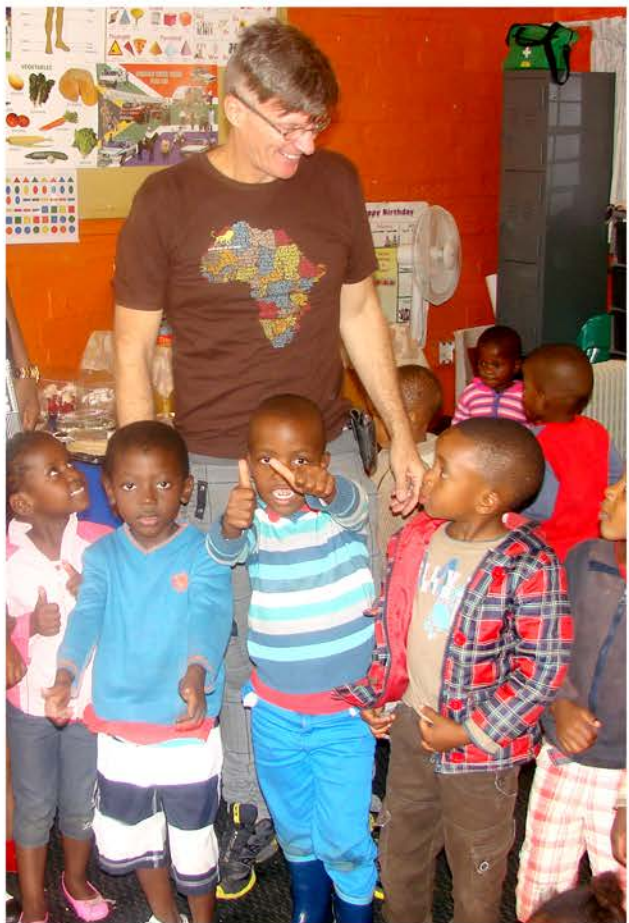
- An opportunity to showcase a fashion exhibition at a leading location in New York City
- All expenses paid trip to a participation Fashion Week country to receive training from top fashion designers, stylists, and world renowned fashion show producers
- Personal training and mentorship for a year
- All expenses paid to show his/her first collection during UCOF’s annual gala



UCOF Cares:

UCOF harnesses the fashion community's compassion for those suffering with HIV/AIDS to bring relief to victims in developing countries that lack access to adequate medical care. It is estimated that 67% of the 33 million people suffering from HIV/AIDS live in Sub-Saharan Africa. In South Africa alone, there are 300,000 children living with HIV/AIDS and another 1.4 million who have been orphaned by the disease.

Since 2010 UCOF Cares program has provided funds and supplies to 100 children living with HIV in South Africa. UCOF partners with Mapetla Day Care in South Africa to provide financial assistance, food, and clothing to young children suffering from HIV/AIDS. UCOF Cares plans to expand this program to other parts of the world as our organization gains more traction.

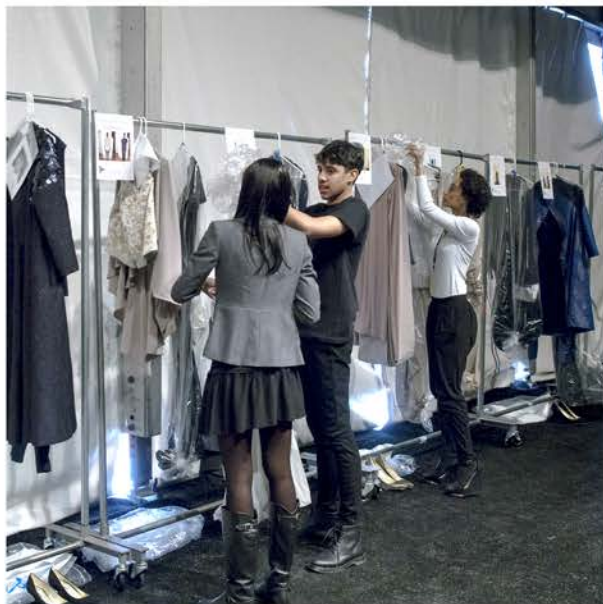


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Believing in possibilities

Today, an invitation to Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week (MBFW) New York is the most coveted article in fashion circles and the buzz the event creates is felt throughout the celebrity glamosphere. Most young designers dream of showcasing their collections at New York Fashion Week, but never get to do so. The International Management Group (IMG) receives numerous applications to showcase on schedule at MBFW New York, but generally admit the same designers each year. The event is exclusive to journalists, fashion buyers, photographers and celebrities.

Thousands of applications get rejected each season and only 200 designers get the opportunity to showcase at New York Fashion Week. Another reality is that the fashion business is a difficult one to stay abreast in and 80% of designers sink within two years of opening shop.



UCOF endeavors to help young, and emerging designers break through the industry. Many talented individuals get overlooked due to lack of exposure or resources. Yet, the possibilities these individuals are able to generate is endless. Established designers who contribute to our mission through mentoring, advising or presenting at our International Fashion Benefit have the full benefit of our staff and interns in preparation for their showcases. This forms the platform on which we run our Fashion Education Program.

During every Fashion Week in New York, UCOF takes the opportunity to expose our fashion interns to the world they aspire to be a part of. Interns are given backstage passes to get down and dirty with steaming pieces, dressing models and many more valuable learning experiences. It is our mission to help our interns to access the fashion industry through opening the doors to a very closed industry. In this way, we use our Fashion Education Program, to get interns noticed and facilitate their own growth as fashion professionals.

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Vision

UCOF has been working tirelessly to keep getting funded to assist our talented youth launch their careers in fashion. As a 501 (C)(3) we use 100% of all donations for our programs, which we aim to expand in the next 5 years.

Last year in an interview with National Association of Haitian Professionals, Ciano Clerjuste, President of UCOF, revealed his 10-year vision for the organization:

“In ten years, I see myself expanding the United Colors of Fashion franchise, leading it to a greater success with the help of our awesomely talented team. I also envision our organization being at the forefront of the battle against the HIV epidemic. We are currently working on a five-year plan, which is to open the first Center For Fashion in New York. The center will be a state-of-the-art building in midtown Manhattan,” he says.

As fashion students like Sade leave school their ID's expire and they forfeit access to the school facilities such as sewing machines, steamers or workspace in which to create.

UCOF aims to provide this space at no cost, which will feature:

- Event space to hold runway shows, presentations, mannequin installations and fashion exhibitions
- Showrooms for emerging designers
- Office/studio space for emerging designers who are just graduating from fashion school
- Free sewing classes for low income individuals
- Fashion styling, hair and makeup workshops
- Well equipped work space with all types of industrial machines for emerging designers to use stylish rental studios for casting call/auditions, photo shoot, fitting, filming.



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Vision

We envisage a chic boutique inside the building where people can purchase custom made clothes by our emerging designers and that will allow us in return to employ back most of the talented interns who have been part of our program upon graduation. This building will be the first space in NY solely dedicated to fashion, open to under resourced youth, the general public, and giving emerging designers a state of the art and well-equipped space for affordable fashion shows. Most designers currently go out of business after their first show due to the high cost associated with putting such events together.

There are programs to help young artists and musicians, UCOF believes there should be programs for those who pursue careers in fashion. It is crucial that students who have graduated with a fashion degree continue their education. Students need to be taught all about the fashion business and how to survive in the extremely competitive environment.

The creation of this space will help sustain the lifelong vision of providing a self-sufficient space for the fashion community.



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Annual Gala

Our annual gala serves as the biggest training for our under-resourced youth. It is the time of year where we raise the most funds to keep our programs running for the following year. The event constantly attracts world press, dignitaries, New York/New Jersey elites and supporters from different parts of the world together to see how we have grown, the accomplishments of our students, and to witness how we have touched the lives of HIV/AIDS infected/affected children overseas. The black tie event includes a fashion show featuring designers from around the world including David Tlale, Naked Ape by Shaldon Kopman, Ron & Ron, Kosibah by Yemi Osunkoya, and Sukeina. Jan Malan is the Producer; Sandi Bass is the Casting Director. There is also a special fashion exhibition by UCOF Achiever of the year for the relevant. The gala provides scholars of UCOF's Fashion Education program the opportunity to practice the skills they have learned and work with top international fashion designers, stylists, hair and makeup artists, fashion show producers and publicists. With the funds raise at the event, UCOF is able to continue to organize internships and educational opportunities for under-resourced youth in NY to expose them to the many exciting career opportunities in the fashion industry.



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Past Honorees:

- **2013 Honorary Chair, Fern Mallis** -fashion industry leader and the renowned creator of New York Fashion Week
- **2013 Lifetime Achievement Award, Pat Cleveland** -legendary supermodel who has made invaluable contributions to the worlds of fashion and the arts
- **2013 Presenter, Bethann Hardison**
- **Name of Supermodels:**

2013

- Carla Hall
- Coco Mitchell
- Patricia Tracey
- Jamie Foster
- Linda Morand

2012

- Sandi Bass
- Pat Cleveland
- Sessilee Lopez
- Ajak Deng
- Nykhor
- Devyn

International Fashion Ambassador for UCOF

Devyn- Winner of The Face

- **2012 Honorary Chairs**
- **Nigel Barker**-world renowned fashion photographer and former judge of America's Next Top Model
- **Phillip Bloch**-widely considered as Hollywood's premier fashion stylist
- **2012 Honorary Co-Chair, Dionne Warwick**- international musical legend and Grammy award winner

Past Partners:

IMG
Harmonie Liquor
Jan Malan Productions
Wilhemina
Red Models
Fashion One
Hot and Crusty Baker/Deli

South African Airways
Hair & The City
COPHA
Major Model
Women Model
Bella Public Relations
Strohmeiher Lighting Inc.

Wines of South Africa
Makeup Pro
New York Model
MUSE
Fenton Moon Models
PRG Lighting
Milano Green

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Proven Success

Sade Solomon, United Colors of Fashion (UCOF) was named Achiever of the Year for 2013. She graduated with a degree in fashion design from New York's Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) and even now it is evident that she has no intention of resting on her laurels and she is clear that each achievement is only the foundation upon which she can build the next.

Since she started working with UCOF, this former caseworker, has grown into a visionary and a paragon of hope with aims of starting her own business through which she can use fashion and philanthropy to encourage the youth and empower them to fulfill their dreams and passions as she has done. UCOF is proud to be associated with Sade and has kept its promise of assisting her every step of the way to realize her dream of fashion philanthropy that so closely aligns to the mission of UCOF.

In February, last year, Sade designed a number of pieces for the Hope Beyond Horizons exhibition of avant-garde fashion and in March she visited South Africa during Joburg Fashion Week where she worked behind the scenes. She was an intern under South African designers David Tlale and Shaldon Kopman and also world renowned show producer Jan Malan. The many inspirations she received from this trip gave Sade the impetus to launch her first collection on October 9th at the UCOF annual gala. The collection was presented as an installation. The installation allowed guests to get close to the garments and indulge all their senses while asking Sade questions about her creations and her experience with UCOF. This preceded the internal fashion show featuring

internationally acclaimed designers who have mentored interns such as Sade.



Sade has been part of UCOF's fashion education program for the last 3 years. The program is the first of its kind in the United States and it aims to expose talented but under-resourced New York youth the opportunities within the fashion industry at no charge. The challenge many newly graduated fashion designers face despite being artistically ready is funding. The fashion education program allows designers like Sade to focus on design without the worry of funding, which is covered completely by sponsors.

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Impact

To date UCOF has changed the lives and nurtured the dreams of 300 youths from the tri-state area. We have exposed them to the “behind the velvet ropes” experience of the fashion industry by allowing them to intern for some of the best designers in the industry, but more importantly we have given them access to learning. Our intern of the Year for 2013 will this year present her S/S 2014 collection as testament to her growth and our relentless endeavor to give all our interns access to the fashion industry.

Our UCOF cares program has provide funds and supplies to 45 children living with HIV in South Africa since our inception. Our vision includes plans to expand this program to other parts of the world as our organization gains more traction.



Thoughts from the founder

There is no one more passionate about the goals of UCOF and the youth of New York who are denied access to the elite fashion industry than founder, Ciano Clerjuste. He has poured his soul into making UCOF work and despite the challenges it has faced.

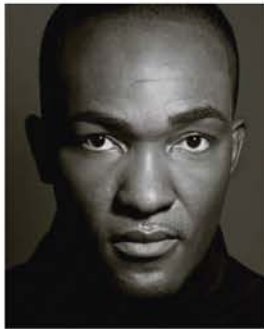
"Dr. Martin Luther King once asked, 'what are you doing for others?' I have answered this question by addressing the little-known lack of diversity in fashion design, an industry typically only available to the elites. After giving up on my dream of becoming a designer, I decided to prevent other under-resourced youth regardless of obstacles from giving up on their dreams. In 2010, I started United Colors Of Fashion using my own savings. Four years later, we are now the first registered 501 (c)(3) in the entire country to offer FREE fashion education to youth in New York and New Jersey. I am happy to offer opportunities to the youth, which were not readily available to me. Dr. King and Nelson Mandela have been my motivators to continue this project despite a plethora of challenges." - Ciano Clerjuste, Founder and President of UCOF



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UCOF President, Chairman & Founder

CIANO CLERJUSTE



CIANO CLERJUSTE

Since his adolescence, Ciano Clerjuste has been passionate about fashion design. Sidelined by the tragic accident of his mother and sudden death of his father, Clerjuste's dream of becoming a fashion designer deferred at the young age of 17. He reluctantly pursued a career in business and finance to support his family while harboring the desire of being a designer. In 2010, determined not to allow his dream to ultimately die, Clerjuste transformed his tragic past into triumphant futures for other under-resourced youth by founding

UCOF Academy. As a labor of love, Clerjuste has selflessly paved inroads for others in the fashion industry. He has teamed with great designers from all over the globe. From as far as Argentina, Spain, Haiti, Angola, Paris, Trinidad, Philippines, Russia and South Africa – with one purpose in mind – to empower youth through high fashion. To date UCOF Academy has changed the lives and nurtured the dreams of 300 youths from the tri-state area. UCOF Academy exposes them to the “behind the velvet ropes” experience of the fashion industry by allowing them to intern for some of the best designers in the industry, but more importantly by providing them access for knowledge generation.

At this time, there is no funding from government or private sectors to offer **FREE** fashion education to under-resourced youth, but there is funding for the same program in the Arts. UCOF Academy believes Fashion is Art, and should be able to receive the same type of funding. Currently, UCOF Academy President, Ciano Clerjuste, uses his own personal savings to help keep programs up and running. In lieu of government funding, sponsorships and donations help support the dream.

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Fashion Show Producer/Director

JAN MALAN



JAN MALAN

Namibian-born Jan Malan, director of Umzingeli Productions, is one of Africa's leading show producers. Umzingeli means "hunter-gatherer" in Xhosa and Zulu, as the company prides itself on finding and nurturing fashion and beauty talent that hails from Africa.

Since starting his show production career in 1985, his momentous work, energy and positivity towards the industry has led him to stage high profile productions in 22 countries spread over four continents. Using his powerful knowledge of the events industry, he brainstorms truly innovative concepts and executes them professionally with an enthusiasm that can only be described as electric.

Malan pioneered Africa Designs for M-Net and AngloGold, a pan-African fashion designer competition, in the year 2000. This was the first time that African designers showed on schedule at New York Fashion Week in a group show. He also conceptualized the legendary M-Net Face of Africa Model Search. Malan has produced shows at various fashion weeks across the continent including South African, Cape Town, Durban, Joburg, Kinhasa, Fashion Business Angola and Africa Fashion Week; Mozambique Fashion Week and Swahili Fashion Week in Tanzania; and also directed all shows at Delhi Fashion Week in India for two consecutive seasons in 2008 and 2009. Malan has also directed the international finals of Ford Models' Supermodel of the World for two years.

But regardless of an impressive client list, which includes names such as Elton John and Tyra Banks, Malan has continued his passion for charity work by giving his time to produce shows for the Witwatersrand Hospice, The Organ Donor Foundation, the South African Federation for Mental Health and most recently, United Colors of Fashion in New York. UCOF honored him with the "Producer of the Year Award" in 2012.

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Fashion Show Casting Director

SANDI BASS

Sandi Bass was born and raised in Nashville, Tennessee. After graduating, she moved to Los Angeles where she studied Art Culture and Fashion Design at LA City College. It was during this time that Sandi was discovered by Monsieur Hubert de Givenchy and taken to Paris, France as his muse. This historical, Girls of Color Cabine that took Paris by storm was on the heels of the Versailles Show honoring designers Halston and Stephen Burrows, and featuring models Bethann Hardison and Pat Cleveland. Sandi spent the next fifteen years as a top runway model living in Paris, Rome, and Tokyo working for top designers such as Valentino, Christian Dior, Emanuel Ungaro, Karl Lagerfeld and Fendi, to name a few.



After turning in her runway pumps, Sandi returned to America, making appearances on numerous television shows as the on-camera personality and fashion coordinator presenting *Fashions of the Moment*. She also appeared as a guest judge on Tyra Bank's *America's Next Top Model*.

Sandi is now on the other side of the modeling industry. She has experience working as the Director of Runway at a top NY agency and traveling the world as a top international model scout placing models in Asia, Europe, the US and Canada. Sandi is sought after by modeling agencies, schools and conventions to give seminars to models and parents, knowing they will get sound advice. It is her inviting southern comfort personality that has taken her around the world. She is also the Creative Director for Cover Girls for Change, models of the 80's and 90's uniting to mentor young models through events during NY Fashion Week, and has also recently been chosen as a member of The National Association of Professional Women in New York.

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International Fashion Ambassador

DEVYN



DEVYN

“It is an unexpected honor being selected as UCOF’s newest fashion ambassador.”

UCOF is excited to have Devyn, our International Fashion Ambassador, represent us at the 2013 Annual Gala. This Bronx born, native New Yorker is a fashion model of Barbadian and Jamaican ancestry. With the encouragement of her parents since she was very young, Devyn studied dance and art, while also pursuing a passion in photography.

During high school, she was scouted by an agency in New York and learned to balance her classes with the demands of working as a model. Since graduating, Devyn further developed her interest in photography, hosted a professional photography exhibit, and created a short film which was recognized at the TriBeCa Film Festival. Recently, Devyn was awarded the title of being the first official winner of *The Face* reality TV modeling competition.

Devyn admires how United Colors of Fashion empowers youth through fashion. “It is an unexpected honor being selected as UCOF’s newest fashion ambassador. In the past, I have shown my support for UCOF by walking in the annual charity fashion show. To now be a part of the entire UCOF movement makes my support grow ever more. I have seen the effect of their cause and the drive behind their vision. It feels amazing to be a part of something so beautiful,” says the Ambassador.

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Anatomy of the UCOF Brand Mark

The button and needles within the Brand Mark represent the tools we provide in order to empower youth to achieve their goals through fashion. The two needles are used to signify UCOF's two core initiatives: Fashion Education and Charity Care.