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Trade Show Report

Free-Trade Agreement Brings Hope to Central America

By Deborah Belgium
TEXTILE EDITOR

GUATEMALA CITY, Guatemala—Washed factory floors with hundreds of hungry workers are just the beginning of the hope for Los Angeles.

The order of brightly colored garments from a 6-year-old Los Angeles firm, all its production in Southern U.S.

Then last November, with a proposed to take effect on Jan. 1, production to Hipsa, a 20-year-old remaining lingerie factories an apparel worker makes here while the California minimum wage.

"We are doing all the things on and make a profit," said Nolasco of sales. "Making this stuff."

Undergarment's move to Guatemala by the new free-trade agreement and Central America. The agreement

Manufacturer Profile

Blackhart Brothers Core for Hire

By Erin Barajas
MANUFACTURING EDITOR

With an in-house fabric and textile boutique design and marketing hood is built on staying on reverence back to the boutique and design veterans Jimmy McCoy and former Von Zipf Arnold, the brothers had say the mills and manufacturers.

Recently encountered in a black from the beach in San Diego Boulevard is anything but in tattoos, chain smokers and in Mason, who used to design to chase the location for its product.

Tracy McWilliams: Express Yourself

Happy prints and playful colors are signatures of Tracy McWilliams' self-named clothing line. McWilliams' floodgate of pattern and hue makes up for the 12 years she spent wearing a uniform of black or gray conservative business suits as an investment banker in San Francisco and Los Angeles. She recounted an instance when she wore a camisole underneath her suit jacket and was reprimanded by a superior male coworker for her inappropriate attire.

"I wanted to just be able to express myself without that stress," said McWilliams of one reason why she chose to pursue a more creatively fulfilling career.

The inspiration to start a clothing line came to McWilliams while she was taking a break from banking to write the self-help book "Dress to Express." The book, published in 2004 by New World Library, explores dressing tips to help women express their "inner beauty" through their "public image." It has sold nearly 10,000 copies to date.

McWilliams' Los Angeles-based clothing line, launched for Spring 2007, was designed with fashionable day-to-night careerwear in mind. Silk blouses, shirt dresses and baby-doll dresses in whimsical prints sum up the designer's philosophy about dressing.

"I think prints stand out. You can be memorable with prints in different styles that you can't do with solids," McWilliams said. "They make you happy when you look at them."

A developed sense of clothing construction and design has inspired her to revise "Dress to Express" with more of a focus on fashion than on self-esteem.

Wholesale price points range from \$48 for silk camisole tops, \$68 for a wool jacket with short puff sleeves and \$58 for the matching wool skirt up to \$160 for a wool coat.

For more information, contact the Mix Showroom in suite 1106 of The New Mart at (213) 625-8422.—R.C.



POSITIVE PRINTS: Self-help author and designer Tracy McWilliams hopes that women will feel positive and creatively expressive when wearing her pretty printed silk dresses.

Crisp daytime dresses and elegant evening gowns—they were all part of the classic Carolina Herrera looks on the runway at a recent fund-raiser hosted by the Beverly Hills Women's Club. For more from the show, see page 13.

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