

POP-UP SHOP GALLERY HIGHLIGHTS FUTURE OF RETAILING Featuring Projects by FIT Students

NEW YORK (June 2009) – One of several exciting attractions during 7 W New York® Gift & Home Textiles Market Week® will be the Pop-Up Shop Gallery created in collaboration with the Fashion Institute of Technology. Officially debuting in July and located in Suite 743, the gallery will showcase the Pop-Up Shop projects conceived by FIT Home Products Development students from the class of 2010.

Pop-Up shops are a retailing phenomenon that has continued to grow in the past few years, with everyone from major retailers like Target to online and small shops taking part. Businessweek.com reports, “These days, retailers are adopting the concept of a pop-up store with gusto. A pop-up store opens up at an empty retail location for a few days in a major city, or a mall, with great fanfare. And then, poof! It’s gone. In a world of BlackBerries and instant messaging, there’s a growing sense of haste in people’s lives. In response, companies trying to get consumers’ attention are trying to create a sense of urgency. For retailers who need to get people into stores to try products, the store itself is the new limited edition.”

The Home Products Junior Competition at FIT challenged students to use their knowledge of design, merchandising and marketing to create truly innovative projects with this retail model in mind. Each team took product trends found at 7 W and adapted them to fit a comprehensive shop concept. Each concept included floor plans, complete merchandise assortments, visual and merchandising plans, a buying assortment and profit and loss statements. The projects were presented to a jury of industry professionals this past May.

Shop concepts include:

- **Vanity Fair** - the competition winner - a shop inspired by the Hollywood Regency trend and incorporating sophisticated finishes and jewel tones
- **Elements** - a boutique featuring merchandise with metallic accents of diverse textures and finishes
- **Natural Instincts** - a decorative, nature-inspired haven for city-dwellers
- **Village Accents** - a shop playing off popular trends inspired by various exotic locales
- **Urban Nature** - an edgy concept utilizing graphic natural motifs

These projects - as well as highlights from the 2008 competition - will be displayed in the gallery along with merchandise from their product assortments selected from 7 W showrooms. This will serve as a reference for buyers in terms of trends in the building and individual showroom product offerings. It will also give visiting buyers the truly invaluable experience of looking through the eyes of the next generation, as well as provide an insight into the future of retailing itself.

Chris Collins, vice president and managing director of 7 W, comments, “We are very proud of our relationship with FIT and the work that the students have done. The Pop-Up Shop Gallery is another project that we feel will be great for the building and certainly a valuable experience for the students. The projects should be inspiring to even the most seasoned buyer or industry professional.”

After its launch in July, the gallery will remain open through Gift Week and beyond. On Saturday, August 15 from 5-7pm, an informal ‘Meet and Greet’ to promote the gallery will take place in Suite 743. Buyers can mingle with past and current students, future retail innovators, and pop-up shop veterans.

HOME PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT AT FIT

The two-year program, leading to a Bachelor of Science degree, gives students a solid background in product knowledge, the design and development processes, and manufacturing, merchandising, and marketing strategies specific to the home products industry. Students study both the hard lines (furnishings and accessories) and soft lines (textiles). Courses in the liberal arts supplement, and complement their career preparation. The comprehensive curriculum, designed with input from professionals in the home furnishings industry, also provides students with strategic marketing knowledge, global awareness, computer skills, presentation and interpersonal skills, and work experience through a required internship.

7 W NEW YORK® is a wholesale mart building, catering to the buyers of Home Décor, Table Top, Giftware, Textiles, Decorative

Accessories, Fine Arts and related industry. Its daily hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 9 am to 5 pm with extended hours during special market weeks. 7 W New York is a trademark of MMPI.

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