

Business attire featured in student fashion show

Career Center and 27 Mannequins' hosted 'Taking Care of Business' fashion show

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Empty chairs were scarce as spectators of the Career Center and 27 Mannequins' "Taking Care of Business" fashion show scrambled to find seats Sunday.

Fuchsia ceiling lights illuminated the L.A. Pittenger Student Center Cardinal Hall and gave off a cool feel, with rows of chairs in every direction and a lengthy runway covered in printed Powerpoint slides and graphs in the middle of the room.



DN PHOTO MARIA STRAUSS

Freshman apparel design major Monica Schuler poses on the runway during the "Taking Care of Business" fashion show.

The show was held Sunday in the Student Center Cardinal

The opening to the runway went with the show's theme of professional dress. It was an office elevator complete with floor numbers at the top and up-or-down buttons on the side. The signature elevator "ding" could be heard as each model appeared.

The show started with a video of a handsome, well-dressed man walking into an office elevator, Thermos and briefcase in hand. He entered the elevator and pressed the button for his floor. As a hidden twist, the man in the video turned out to be the first model to grace the runway, which made for an original opener according to Jane Federle, a family member of one of the models.

"It was a great start to the show," Federle said. "It was simple, but affective. It also went along with the show's theme perfectly."

From there, about 30 models worked the runway in classic looks paired with today's trends, such as high-waisted belts and skinny jeans.

The show was separated into three basic looks: business professional, business casual and after-hours. Each ensemble featured clothing from popular retail and department stores, such as Macy's and Charlotte Russe, both of which can be found at the Muncie Mall. Perhaps the biggest label in the show was Banana Republic, which seemed to dress most on the women in its pencil skirts and cardigans.

Although not all of the suits were tailored to fit the models — pants were too long, jackets too big — people were shown ways to make a typical suit their own with the use of jewelry and colorful layers.

One example of color contrast came from a model sporting a black dress paired with a yellow jacket. The yellow made the black pop and avoided the feared "bumblebee" essence. The outfit was featured in the after-hours category.

Trenton Bush, instructor of fashion promotion, which founded 27 Mannequins, said he enjoyed the after-hours look. "I liked that look because they were really able to expand and use some of their fashion to pull in an awesome look in a professional environment," Bush said.

Ball State President Jo Ann Gora made an appearance at the end of the show to announce the winners of the "Tie and Tote" contest, an immersive learning project that gave 31 students a chance to design unisex ties and tote bags as gifts for friends and dignitaries of the university. The best tie design went to senior Ashley Mayer and the best tote design was split between junior Michael Richardson and sophomore Ellie Howard.

"I hope these are résumé builders for our students, and we are certainly very proud of them," Gora said. "And when we give these gifts to alumni or donors or dignitaries, that we always tell the story of how these articles came out of a design competition that was won by our students and through the use of good technology, and what an exciting opportunity it is to showcase the creativity of our students."

Tickets were \$7 in advance and \$10 at the door. A portion the show's proceeds are going to "Dress for Success," a charity located in Indianapolis. The charity provides women in need of employment the basic knowledge of appropriate dress for an interview and the work force. Along with wardrobe skills, the charity also helps build resumes.

Mayer, head of public relations for the show, said the show turned out better than expected.

"I'm a fashion designer, and I've never seen shows that weren't by designers, so I was really happy that it turned out well," she said.