



News

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Tommy Hilfiger, renowned designer known for preppy American sportswear style, will receive the 2011 Spirit of Design Award at the Philadelphia University Fashion Show

Philadelphia University's Fashion Show will take place Saturday, April 30, 2011 at the Academy of Music as part of an Evening of Innovation

PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 18, 2011— Tommy Hilfiger, who for 25 years has been at the forefront of the classic but trendy all-American preppy look, will receive the prestigious 2011 Spirit of Design Award at Philadelphia University's Fashion Show on Saturday, April 30, at the Academy of Music.

Hilfiger, a self-taught designer known for casual styles and his classic red, white and blue flag logo, is an American fashion icon who oversees a brand that includes men's, women's and children's apparel, sportswear, denim, and a range of licensed products such as accessories, fragrances and home furnishings. There are more than 1,000 Tommy Hilfiger stores worldwide and in 2008 the company announced an exclusive partnership with Macy's to sell its sportswear in the U.S.

"I am very honored to receive the Philadelphia University Spirit of Design Award," Tommy Hilfiger said. "I think it is incredibly important to give back and to support new designers interested in working in the fashion industry."

"We are thrilled that Tommy Hilfiger is the 2011 recipient of the Philadelphia University Spirit of Design Award," said Clara Henry, director of Philadelphia University's fashion design program. "He is an international fashion icon who is an advocate for design education and nurturing young talent."

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Philadelphia University/ page 2

The Tommy Hilfiger brand is centered around a hip and colorful button-down, casual lifestyle. Hilfiger noted in a recent interview in *Women's Wear Daily* that he was one of the first designers to feature celebrity marketing – Britney Spears, Jewel, Lenny Kravitz and David Bowie among them—and that his brand's image is closely associated with pop culture and music.

Hilfiger, from the small upstate town of Elmira, N.Y., began his career in fashion as a high school student with a small chain of stores called People's Place. He introduced his first signature collection for men in 1985, modernizing button-down shirts, chinos and other classics with updated fits and details. With creativity and bold marketing campaigns – including a much-talked about billboard in New York's Times Square – his collections expanded and success grew.

Andrew Van Sant, '11, president of Philadelphia University's Fashion Industries Association student group, said, "Tommy Hilfiger is a brilliant designer as well as a consummate fashion industry professional who has developed an exceptional model for building a globally recognized brand. He is an inspiration for those of us who are entering the fashion industry."

Hilfiger was named 1995 Menswear Designer of the Year by the Council of Fashion Designers of America, has won several FiFi awards from the fragrance industry, was GQ Spain's Designer of the Year in 2006, and in 2008 *Women's Wear Daily* listed Hilfiger as the #1 Designer and #16 Brand in their annual top-100 listing. In 2009, Hilfiger received the UNESCO Support Award for his philanthropic efforts and the Marie Claire Lifetime Achievement Award.

Through The Tommy Hilfiger Corporate Foundation, he has supported numerous charities and causes, including the Martin Luther King Jr., National Memorial Project Foundation, the Anti-Defamation League and The Fresh Air Fund. In 2009, the Foundation donated over \$2 million to Millennium Promise, a non-profit organization founded in 2005 to help end extreme poverty.

The Spirit of Design Award is presented at the Philadelphia University Fashion Show to a prominent and influential designer. This prestigious award, first given in 2002 to renowned designer Geoffrey Beene, is presented to those who have made outstanding contributions to design and the fashion industry and who have served as inspirations to fashion design students and young designers.

Awardees have included Francisco Costa, celebrated creative director for women's wear for Calvin Klein; Mary McFadden, renowned for her goddess-like couture gowns; and Philadelphia University Fashion Design alumni William Calvert, known for his exquisitely beautiful dresses and wedding gowns, and Jay McCarroll, winner of the first season of Bravo's *Project Runway*.

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Philadelphia University/ page 3

Philadelphia University's Fashion Show, which is part of the University's gala *Evening of Innovation*, is an annual event that showcases the best of each year's fabulous, colorful, creative and innovative student fashion designs. Each year, a standing-room only crowd of some 2,200 students and their families, faculty members, designers and fashion and apparel industry professionals turn out for the professional runway show.

The Tommy Hilfiger brand is owned by Phillips-Van Heusen Corp., one of the world's largest apparel companies, which also includes the brands Calvin Klein, Michael Kors, Sean John, DKNY, Kenneth Cole New York and Trump.

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is developing the model for professional university education in the 21st century. With 3,500 students enrolled in more than 60 undergraduate and graduate programs, the University focuses on professional programs that prepare students to be leaders in their professions, in an active, collaborative and real-world learning environment with a strong foundation in the liberal arts. Philadelphia University includes Schools of Architecture, Business Administration, Design and Engineering, Liberal Arts and Science and Health. In Fall 2011, the School of Design and Engineering and the School of Business Administration will merge into a new and innovative College of Design, Engineering and Commerce.