Fast-forward to 2030: men wear makeup, a new skin tone is born every day, and people aged 65 and older outnumber the young. The demographic, economic, and lifestyle changes of the next 16 years will impact, guide, and shape the direction of the beauty industry in new unexplored directions, according to the 2014 graduates of the Fashion Institute of Technology’s Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing and Management Master of Professional Studies program.

In partnership with Unilever U.S., the students revealed their research findings at the program’s 13th annual Capstone presentation on the topic of The Changing Face of the Beauty Consumer. The student’s final graduation requirement, the Capstone research was presented to 700 beauty executives on the evening of June 4, 2014.

“We in the beauty industry are at the eve of a seismic change. Our consumer is changing rapidly and profoundly,” said keynote speaker Gina Boswell, executive vice president personal care, Unilever N.A. “The Capstone topic tonight is the changing face of the beauty consumer. It goes beyond beauty, beyond products or brands, and puts the consumer right at the core.”

Challenged with defining this future consumer and creating marketing strategies, the degree candidates explored three key concepts: Accessible Beauty, The New Beauty Consumer, and Men’s Beauty. Full research white papers for The Changing Face of the Beauty Consumer, along with white papers for past presentations, are available online.

**Accessible Beauty**

Among the seismic changes expected by 2030 is a shift of economic power to Asia and the emergence of a global middle class. “The number of impoverished people worldwide will have declined by half between now and 2030, falling below 500 million people,” said Jessica Dudley, director, Lancôme. At the same time, income levels in many developed countries are expected to remain flat. The global consumer will have money to spend, but not at today’s level of disposable income. Dubbed Progressive Rationalists, these consumers will demand convenience, clarity, and cash value from brands before they make a purchase.

The researchers developed a new marketing model called the Progressive Consumption Equation: [function + higher order need] + performance = purchase, to define future purchase behavior. Higher order need refers to the expectation of clarity in all aspects of business. Progressive Rationalists will want to know that their purchase decisions will contribute to a better world and will demand radical transparency regarding philanthropy, profits, and resources. As the way in which we shop is expected to drastically change, the students identified Subway restaurant franchises as a business model for future beauty retailers.

**New Beauty Consumer**

Ethnicity and gender identifications that require a check in a box labeled “other” will become the norm in the future. “Others are on the rise,” said Roshini Greenwald, assistant vice president of sales development, Kiehl’s Since 1851. “By 2050, the largest ethnic group in the U.S. will be mixed ethnicity.”

The marketing strategy of the future will evolve beyond the traditional segmentation of race, sex, age, and geography. In fact, this group predicts that race will transform into identifica-
tion with cultural values, gender identities will significantly broaden (Facebook already offers 56 gender options), age will evolve into shared passions spanning multiple generations, and communities will be defined by the connections between people, not geographic borders.

To navigate this landscape, the students recommended four strategic initiatives. 1) promote an exchange between the values of brands and consumers; 2) connect your brand with everyday moments like seeing a daughter off to school, rather than just around holidays or events; 3) don’t confuse technology with real connections; and 4) involve all marketing and sales team members in the process of deriving consumer insights.

Men’s Beauty

According to interviews with 25 U.S. men, “manscaping” and male makeup is on the rise, yet the U.S. men’s skin care market lags behind global trends. “To put this in perspective, the U.S. and China [men’s] skin care markets were the same size in 2008. Today, [China’s] men’s market is 713 million dollars larger than the U.S.—in just five years,” said Simone Bolotin, director of U.S. Public Relations, Coty Prestige.

The beauty industry has not kept up with changing male roles, views, and attitudes toward their appearance. Most men feel that traditional gender roles no longer apply, that they are subject to the same pressure as women to present a polished image, and that they are ready to adopt more complicated grooming routines, especially older men who want to remain competitive in the job market.

The researchers presented a four-pronged solution represented by the masculine icon of gears. 1) the ignite gear includes delivering the message to men that ignoring their skin has consequences; 2) the steer gear is about leveraging key influencers including family and peers; 3) the fuel gear recognizes the importance of embracing non-stereotypical images of men; and 4) the accelerate gear suggests building the market by focusing on one product at a time to slowly gain momentum, sophistication, and trust.

Beyond gaining invaluable insight into the new beauty consumer, the audience was treated to a presentation on the scale of a TED talk. Each group used video, audio, and graphic displays on a theater size screen to present their findings. There was not a static moment in the evening. With the intent to share their research and fill the role of think tank, the Capstone research white papers are available on the FIT website. ■

Capstone Groups

Accessible Beauty: Jessica Dudley (L’Oréal), group leader; Heather Cunningham (Shiseido Group USA), co-leader; Natalia Espejo (Unilever); Jennifer Lacenera (IT Cosmetics); Dudley Williams (L’Oréal)

New Beauty Consumer: Roshini Greenwald (L’Oréal), group leader; Jacqueline Smeklo (Givaudan), co-leader; Gayathri Balasundar (IFF); Kimberly Lam (The Estée Lauder Companies); Deanna Spence (Bath & Body Works); Brenna Stone (L’Oréal)

Men’s Beauty: Simone Bolotin (Coty Prestige), group leader; Colleen Celentano (L’Oréal), co-leader; Renee Bukowski (IFF); Alexandra de Lara (The Estée Lauder Companies); Michael Kremer (L’Oréal)

In The Press

Print and online news stories about the 2014 Capstone

Fast Company
Women’s Wear Daily
WWD Beauty Inc.
CEW Insider
Drugstore News

Gina Boswell of Unilever N.A. explains the significance of the Capstone topic.

Tennille Kopiasz of Coty Prestige presented the Coty Award for Professional Excellence to Kendal Asher of La Mer and Jo Malone, pictured here with Stephanie Kramer of Chanel and Carly Guerra of Lancôme.

The Estée Lauder Companies’ Karyn Khoury presented the Faculty Leadership Award to Mark Polson, also of The Estée Lauder Companies.

Stephan Kanlian of FIT with Department Medal recipient Coleen Celentano of L’Oréal, David Rubin of Unilever, and Jerry Vittoria of Firmenich.