

## FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

The Fashion Institute of Technology is a selective, State University of New York (SUNY) college of art and design, business and technology, with more than 40 programs leading to associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees. Known worldwide as the premier educational institution for fashion and its related fields, FIT offers an unmatched combination of specialized curricula, in-depth liberal arts education, affordable tuition, and an extraordinary location in the center of New York City, world capital of art and commerce.

The college's faculty—drawn from the city's art, business, and design professionals—provide instruction rich in real-world experience, and their classes are built upon a core of traditional courses in the humanities and sciences, providing students with critical thinking abilities, communication skills, and a global perspective.

Each year, FIT serves more than 12,000 students from New York City, throughout the state, across the country, and around the world, offering full- and part-time study options, evening/weekend programs, executive training, precollege programs, and online studies. Field trips, guest lectures, internships, and sponsored competitions draw upon the vast resources of the city, and introduce students to the challenges and opportunities of their chosen discipline. For those looking to gain valuable international experience, study abroad partnerships and programs are available in countries from Australia to China, Italy to Mexico.

Well-known alumni include Calvin Klein, Norma Kamali, Nanette Lepore, and Chris Madden. Whether a student's interest is in fashion design or fashion business, computer animation or cosmetics, illustration or international trade, FIT is where creativity gets down to business.

This timeline reviews some highlights of FIT's past.

**1943** Regents Plan establishes framework for technological institutes, mainly for returning veterans and retraining of war workers, but does not include apparel industry.

**1944** The Educational Foundation for the Apparel (now Fashion) Industries is granted a charter by the Board of Regents to develop a technical institute to prepare students for careers in the New York apparel industry.

FIT, with Mortimer C. Ritter as director, opens as a post-high school institute with 100 high school graduates.

**1946** FIT's evening division opens.

## FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

(continued)

- 1948** Legislature institutes SUNY and a program for two-year community colleges is created.
- 1950** FIT's first research project – on seams and pressing qualities of five new synthetic fabrics – is initiated.
- 1951** New York State law establishes a partnership for education: NYC Board of Education, State University of New York, and the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries.
- Mortimer C. Ritter is named president of FIT, now the second community college of SUNY.
- 1953** Lawrence L. Bethel is appointed president.
- FIT Alumni Association is founded.
- 1957** Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredits the college's curricula.
- 1958** Cornerstone is laid for FIT's first building on West 27<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 1959** The new building opens with four hundred students.
- Haft Auditorium, named for Morris W. and Fannie B. Haft, is dedicated.  
(Morris Haft was a cloak and suit manufacturer and a member of the high school's needle craft commission.)
- 1961** The cornerstone of the first dormitory, Nagler Hall, is laid.
- 1962** Nagler Hall, named for Isidore Nagler, an FIT trustee and vice president of the ILGWU, opens in the fall.
- 1964** FIT establishes technical assistance program with Shenkar College, Israel.
- 1966** FIT's third president, Lawrence L. Jarvie, is appointed.
- 1969** Groundbreaking is held for the college's next four new buildings.
- 1971** Marvin Feldman is appointed president of FIT.

## FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

(continued)

- 1973** SUNY celebrates its 25th anniversary.
- 1974** The Shirley Goodman Resource Center, named for the executive director of the Educational Foundation, opens. (Ms. Goodman helped draft legislation to establish the college as part of the SUNY system. Throughout her 42-year career, she was one of the driving forces behind FIT's evolution.)
- 1975** The Brooklyn Museum's costume and textile collections are loaned to FIT to launch what is to become The Museum at FIT, one of the world's largest collections of fashion and textiles.
- State Education amendment authorizes FIT to confer Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees.
- Coed Hall opens.
- David Dubinsky Student Center, named for the former president of the ILGWU, opens in fall.
- 1976** Business and Liberal Arts Center opens. First bachelor's degree programs are offered.
- 1979** A State Education amendment authorizes FIT to offer master's degree programs.
- 1982** Computer Graphics Lab opens.
- 1983** FIT's Design/Research Lighting Laboratory opens.
- The Small Business Center at FIT is established.
- FIT's Export Advisory Service is launched with support of U.S. Department of Commerce.
- First AAS degree program in Accessories Design is offered.
- 1984** FIT's art and design programs receive accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

## FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

(continued)

- 1986** FIT establishes affiliation with the Politecnico Internazionale della Moda in Florence, Italy.  
Art and Design Center is named for Fred P. Pomerantz, founder of the Leslie Fay Company.
- 1987** FIT helps to establish the National Institute of Fashion Technology in New Delhi, India.  
FIT is beta-test site for Silicon Graphics and Computer Design – later purchased by Lectra Systems.
- 1988** FIT's third dormitory, Alumni Hall, opens.
- 1989** FIT is the first college in the world to offer a BFA degree in Toy Design.
- 1992** Allan F. Hershfield is appointed FIT's fifth president.  
Computer-Aided Design and Communications facility, named for Peter G. Scotese, named for the former chairman and CEO of Springs Industries, is completed.  
The Administration and Technology Center is named for Marvin Feldman, the college's president from 1971 to 1992.
- 1993** FIT opens nation's first Quick Response Center.
- 1994** The Annette Green Fragrance Foundation Studio, the first of its kind on a college campus, opens.  
FIT celebrates its 50th anniversary.
- 1996** Federated Department Stores help raise record-breaking \$3.9 million in one night.

## FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

(continued)

- 1997** Advertising and Marketing Communications, Direct Marketing, and Home Products Development and Marketing BS programs commence.
- 1998** Dr. Joyce F. Brown is appointed FIT's sixth chief executive – the first female and African American president.  
Toy Design celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- 1999** Cosmetics and Fragrance Marketing celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.  
Annual FIT gala sets fundraising record, generating \$4.5 million.
- 2000** President Brown announces unprecedented five-year, \$21.3 million investment plan to address college initiatives identified through FIT's first strategic planning process.  
FIT launches new baccalaureate degree in Computer Animation and Interactive Media.  
FIT launches e-Commerce Center.  
FIT signs agreement to assist Zhejiang Institute of Science and Technology establish a fashion college in China.
- 2001** Tiffany & Co. endows Elsa Peretti Professorship with a \$750,000 donation to FIT.  
FIT receives \$10 million gift from Jay and Patty Baker.  
FIT launches certificate program in Outerwear and Performance apparel.  
FIT announces new BFA degree in Graphic Design.
- 2002** FIT offers BFA degree in Accessories Design and Fabrication.  
FIT is named the number one Public Comprehensive Bachelor's College in the North by *U.S. News and World Report*.  
First FIT student is named a Fulbright Scholar.

## FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

(continued)

**2002** FIT breaks ground for first two new buildings since 1975.

Bill Blass bequeaths \$1 million to FIT.

**2003** FIT forms partnership with Istanbul Technical University to establish fashion degree programs in Turkey.

FIT forms partnership with Thailand to collaborate with the Thai Garment Manufacturers Association to establish fashion school in Bangkok.

FIT offers BFA degree in Fine Arts.

FIT is first in fundraising among SUNY community colleges.

FIT announces first certificate program in Haute Couture.

**2004** FIT acquires 15-story building in Hudson Yards for new residence hall.

FIT launches new graduate degree programs in Global Fashion Management, Illustration, and Exhibition Design.

FIT celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

FIT launches first executive education program for the fashion industries.

**2005** FIT announces first degree program in Visual Art Management.

FIT dedicates John E. Reeves Great Hall and opens Conference Center.

The Museum at FIT launches permanent exhibition of fashion and textile history.

FIT holds naming ceremony for the Jay and Patty Baker School of Business and Technology.

FIT announces first BFA in Photography and the Digital Image.

## FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY HISTORICAL TIMELINE

(continued)

- 2006** FIT opens fourth residence hall, named for George S. and Mariana Kaufman.
- President Brown announces plan to increase the size of the full-time faculty by 20 percent within two years.
- 2007** FIT launches a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program in Fashion Design in collaboration with the Politecnico di Milano, allowing students to spend one year studying in Milan.
- 2008** The Interior Design Department celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first graduating class.
- SUNY and the New York State Education Department approve a new Bachelor of Science degree in Technical Design, which focuses on every phase of product development.
- 2010** The college introduces minors offered through the School of Liberal Arts.
- SUNY and the New York State Education Department approve a new Bachelor of Science degree in Entrepreneurship for the Fashion and Design Industry, which focuses on the development and marketing of new products and services.
- 2012** FIT's art and design programs receive accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).
- The Museum at FIT receives accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums (AAM).