

ISABELLE HILLESTAD

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SUMMARY

Creative leader with experience in fashion, visual merchandising, and event production. Skilled in directing shows, managing operations, and driving marketing strategies that strengthen brand identity and audience engagement.

EXPERIENCE

Merchandise Team Leader, Part-Time Merchandise Lead, Senior Brand Ambassador

American Eagle, Buffalo NY

May 2024 - Present

- Elevates visual merchandising strategies to optimize product presentation, enhance guest experience, and drive sales.
- Oversees daily operations and staff management, including supervision, training, scheduling, and performance development.
- Partners with leadership to uphold and exceed brand standards across salesfloor, fitting room, cash & wrap, and stockroom.
- Coaches and mentors associates in the AEO Selling Model to strengthen customer engagement and maximize sales conversion.

Director of Productions, Marketing Director

Blueprint Fashion Organization, Buffalo NY

March 2025-Present

- Oversees day-to-day operations, ensuring efficient workflows and alignment with organizational goals.
- Directs and executes marketing campaigns to strengthen brand presence and audience engagement.
- Organizes and produces fashion events from ideation through execution, managing budgets, logistics, and creative direction.
- Leads cross-functional teams, ensuring cohesive collaboration and timely project delivery.

Creative Director

Buffalo Art Movement, Buffalo NY

March 2023 - April 2024

- Oversaw all projects from concept through execution, including digital campaigns and physical exhibitions.
- Developed and maintained brand identity through strategic social media initiatives and gallery promotions.
- Fostered and sustained strong client and artist relationships.
- Organized logistics for high-profile fashion collaborations with SUNY Buffalo State University's Fashion Department.
- Curated, uploaded, and managed e-commerce platforms to expand sales and reach.

Backstage Assistant

FlyingSolo NYFW, New York NY

September 2023

- Helped models with quick changes to ensure smooth runway transitions.
- Assisted stylists in creating finalized looks before models went on stage.
- Prepared and organized garments, accessories, and lineup order for each segment.
- Supported backstage flow by keeping the area organized and assisting stage managers as needed.

Director, Marketing Director, Marketing Team Member

RUNWAY, SUNY Buffalo State University, Buffalo NY

February 2022 - May 2024

- Developed and executed multi-channel marketing strategies aligned with RUNWAY's fashion show objectives.
- Directed and styled photoshoots, video campaigns, and overall production, including VIP Lounge and Back of House operations.
- Coordinated designers, models, staff, and logistics while maintaining detailed schedules to ensure flawless execution under tight deadlines.
- Analyzed digital performance metrics to optimize marketing strategies and maximize audience engagement.

Team Lead, Key Holder, Sales Associate

Plato's Closet, Buffalo NY

September 2019 - October 2022

- Advanced from Sales Associate to Key Holder (2020), then to Team Lead (2022), reflecting strong leadership and sales results.
- Managed daily operations including staff scheduling, customer service, trend forecasting, and buying.
- Increased engagement and sales through targeted social media content creation.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Fashion and Textile Technology, Concentration in Fashion Merchandising

SUNY Buffalo State University

GPA: 3.7+

Murial A. Howard Honors Program

SKILLS

Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere Pro, Lightroom), Canva, Figma, Microsoft Office Suite, Google Workspace, Shopify, Squarespace, Wix, WordPress, BigCommerce, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, Pinterest, X (Twitter), LinkedIn, Mailchimp, Constant Contact, Klaviyo, Trello, Asana, Monday.com, Slack, Eventbrite, Later, Hootsuite, and a general understanding of SketchUp.