



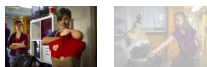
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Fashion Camp takes to the runway in Biddeford



Lillith Young, 13, center-right, and design partner Elsa Hersey pose with their mannequin as they design a paper grocery bag dress at a Fashion Camp held at Engine this week.

ALAN BENNETT/Journal Tribune



By ALAN BENNETT
Staff Writer

BIDDEFORD — It's Fashion Week in Biddeford.

A group of about a dozen ages 10 to 14 have been hard at work at Engine, the city's downtown arts collaborative and maker-space, designing and making clothing as they gear up for a "Project Runway-

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work by hand.

For Hackemer, the experience has been a unique way for her to use the skills she learned when she was even younger.

“My grandma originally taught me how to sew and I started getting into it. ... When I came here, I can actually do that and it’s been really fun,” she said. “My dad said, ‘If you ever want to open up your own shop, I want to work with you.’”

Others with less experience have learned a thing or two about themselves during the camp, like Parisa Schirazi, 11, of Biddeford.

“I might want to be a designer when I grow up,” she said.

And for others, the camp has reinforced what they’ve known all along.

“I really like fashion and I want to do it when I’m older,” said Sydney Gaumont, 11, of Saco.

The process is all about finding one’s own style, Krasnow said — something the girls will have to do not only in fashion, but in life.

“The whole thing is to watch people find their own style,” she said. “Even if you don’t go into fashion, it’s something you have to do anyway.”

Young Emma Parker agreed, saying she’s found Engine to be a place where she can find herself.

“Engine does all these different camps ... all the camps help you learn stuff that you normally wouldn’t learn about yourself and a lot of other things if you hadn’t come,” she said.

While some said they were a bit nervous to begin the camp, several had advice to those who love fashion but aren’t sure how to get started.

“Just go with what feels right for you,” said Lillith Young, 13, of Hollis, who with her partner Elsa Hersey is designing a pleated dress crafted from Trader Joe’s grocery bags. “If you want to do an interesting piece that’s never been done before, try making it in your own way, with your design.”

Hackemer agreed.

“If you think something’s right, why don’t you just try it out? It all depends on how you feel about it and the people around you feel about it,” she said.

Hackemer also said the camp allowed her to take risks — and, although nobody left — there was the option to leave after the first day if campers found they weren’t up to the challenge.

“You can think freely, where if you go to some camps you have to stay the whole week,” she said.

The Fashion Camp’s Community Fashion Show takes place Friday at 1 p.m. at Engine, 128 Main St., Biddeford.

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