

College Job Outfits Her for Future

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For some, a college job is just a way to make ends meet. For others, it's an opportunity to put into practice what they've learned in class. For a lucky few, it can snap into focus what they want to do after they graduate. For junior Rachel Schwartz, her job at NOLA Couture has proven to be all three.



Student interns work at the NOLA Couture booth at the recent Crawfest music festival on the Tulane campus. The junior business students are, from left, Rachel Schwartz, Lauren Roche and Andrew Gordon. (Photo by Sally Asher)

When Schwartz, a marketing and entrepreneurial management major in the [A. B. Freeman School of Business](#), first started at the New Orleans-based clothing retailer that creates locally and Gulf Coast-themed apparel, it was “just a job.” In working there for the last two years, however, she has gained valuable real-world experience in every aspect of the business.

“I have my hands in everything, which is the best part about working with a small business,” Schwartz says. “I think that's why I like it so much □ because it's opened up so many doors and allowed me to explore my interests.”

Conceiving NOLA Couture after Hurricane Katrina, founder Cecile Hardy built charitable donation into her business plan. The company supports charities such as the Greater New Orleans Foundation's Gulf Oil Spill Recovery Program, Louisiana SPCA and Second Harvest Food Bank. Schwartz says that when she strikes out on her own, she will take with her a similar commitment.

"I think it's really important, and I think it adds an interesting dynamic to the business," Schwartz says. "You're not only concerned about your bottom-line; there is something for the greater good that is going on. We believe it's important to give back to the city that has given us so much."

While Schwartz says she doesn't anticipate a career in retail apparel, she definitely sees herself starting a small business.

"I really love the small business atmosphere," says Schwartz. "My dad started a couple of businesses when I was younger so I've always been around small family businesses. That definitely had impact."