



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
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**CONTACT:** [pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov](mailto:pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov), (212) 788-2958

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**MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT RECEPTION TO KICK OFF FASHION WEEK**

**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and First Lady Chirlane McCray tonight hosted and delivered remarks at NYC Kicks Off Fashion Week at Gracie Mansion. Below are Mayor de Blasio’s remarks as prepared for delivery.

*Remarks as Prepared for Delivery*

Thank you to our CFDA president Diane! CFDA is a leading organization that plays an invaluable role in this industry, and I’d like to thank them for helping us host this event. Let me also thank Chirlane for kicking things off—doesn’t she look beautiful tonight? And so does my daughter Chiara.

I’d like to also take a moment to acknowledge some of my colleagues in government: Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney; New York State Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins; City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito; and the following members of my administration: Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen; Chief of Staff Laura Santucci; MOME Commissioner Cynthia Lopez; Senior Advisor Gabrielle Fialkoff; and EDC President Kyle Kimball.

Under the leadership of Deputy Mayor Glen, Kyle and his team oversee all our City does with the fashion industry, including three initiatives we are announcing tonight. One member of my staff, our first deputy press secretary Marti Adams, was just featured in a fashion spread in the September issue of Marie Claire. I’m happy for Marti—but a little jealous. The press hasn’t been as kind about my fashion sense. As the Times put it, I’m not “exactly a fashion plate.” The Daily News was quick to add my “clothes don’t quite cut it.” Mayors have feelings too, you know.

But things are looking up. New York Magazine’s The Cut blog said this party is the “Most Fashionable Thing de Blasio’s Ever Done.” Look, I may not be a “fashion plate,” but fashion’s in my blood. My maternal grandmother, Anna Briganti, opened a tailoring shop at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 35<sup>th</sup> Street called “Misses Briganti” – “high class ladies dresses.” So in all seriousness, I grew up with a lot of respect for the work everyone in this room does.

And I want to thank you for it. Thanks to each and every one of you, New York City is the fashion capital of the world. The Big Apple is headquarters to more than 900 fashion companies and employs more than 180,000 workers, which brings nearly \$11 billion in wages each year. That’s a huge boost to the city tax base. And Fashion Week, which we’re celebrating tonight, not only shows off New York City to the rest of the world, but draws nearly 230,000 attendees each time—a nearly \$900 million economic impact. New York is thankful to you—so give yourselves a hand.

We are committed to helping all 180,000 fashion workers, including designers, tailors, seamstresses, and embroiderers. And we're committed to growing the fashion industry for tomorrow. Our work began back in February, when I stood beside Diane to announce inaugural winners of Fashion Manufacturing Initiative, a \$3 million public-private program for small businesses.

Today, we're proud to announce three new initiatives. First, the NYC Capsule Collection. In partnership with CFDA, this will celebrate local designers, help produce collections in local factories, sell through local retail partners, and help generate buzz around clothes they create. Our second initiative is to help designers brand their products. In that spirit, we have exciting news about three iconic words: Made in NY.

For almost 10 years, the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment has used this logo to promote local film and television productions. It's been a tremendous success – a globally recognized symbol of innovation and quality. And the City has recently expanded "Made in NY" to the tech industry and more than 1,000 New York City-based digital companies. Now, we're expanding to fashion – to brand our local fashion companies. This is more than a logo—it comes with a team of promotional talent behind it. By the way—there is a photo booth here tonight in the Peach Room, where you can take a picture with the logo.

And finally: we're announcing the first participants in NYC Fashion Production Fund—a joint venture of EDC and Capital Business Credit. Together, it solves a problem that has stymied many emerging designers: receiving an order from a retailer, but not having enough capital to produce the clothes.

This fund will provide short-term loans to emerging designers to help finance purchase orders. So far, two talented designers have received loans. One is with us tonight—Karolina Zmarlak, who was born and raised in Poland and graduated from FIT with high honors. Another—Rosie Assoulin, who couldn't join us—is a Brooklyn native who was featured in Forbes' "30 Under 30" list. Both women produce clothes in New York City—making the most of these resources.

Yves Saint-Laurent famously said: "Over the years I have learned that what is important in a dress is the woman who is wearing it." That's very true—and the man wearing the suit. But YSL was also being modest. The work you all do is very important—important to our city.

So thank you for helping to ensure New York remains the world's fashion capital. We look forward to working with you in the years to come.

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