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H.S. students bring talents to the runway

By **BRANDON LAUSCH**
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NORTH PLAINFIELD — One jetsetting youngster has dreams of hitting the links in Dubai. Another hopes to rub elbows with the upper crust while at a yacht party in southern France.

But before the globetrotting students can hit their international destinations, the first and arguably most important question must be answered.

What will I wear?

As part of Fabricland's "Make it International" challenge, 25 children and teens from throughout Central Jersey are customizing clothing patterns best suited for attending an event in the country of their choice, whether it's catching the Olympic Games in Beijing, touring the Louvre Museum in Paris or embarking on a rainforest safari in South America.

The 10-week competition — which the North Plainfield business has dubbed "Project Fabricland II" after Bravo's "Project Runway" television show — will approach the finish line tonight when a panel of expert judges will watch the students model their own designs before inspecting the clothing for sewing quality and other factors, such as creativity and fit.

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Submitted photo

■ A fashion show, which will be held at North Plainfield High School on Saturday, is expected to draw a guest appearance from Kevin Christiana, above, a Fairfield native and cast member of the fourth season of "Project Runway."

Runway

By **A1**

Saturday morning, the designers will hit the runway again, this time at North Plainfield High School in an event expected to draw at least 170 people for the show's presentation and to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. It is expected to draw a special appearance from Kevin Christiana, a Fairfield native and member of the fourth season of "Project Runway."

never really modeled before," said Christiana, a 12-year-old from North Plainfield who participated in last year's competition by making a party dress for a friend. "I have made stuff before, but this is kind of exciting because there's a huge audience watching me."

"Project Fabricland," the brainchild of store owner Bruce Heyman and education coordinator Nancy Plominski, gives youngsters with sewing experience a chance to customize designs and improve their techniques in a friendly — albeit competitive — atmosphere, organizers said.

The \$250 course, which Plominski teaches with Kim Rhodes, has drawn participants from Basking Ridge to the Hudson County town of West New York. The budding designers compete in two groups — the kids division (age 10 to 13) and teens (13-year-olds in high school to 17).

"I think it's really cool to be really proud of my work and what I do," said Mackenzie Farrell, a 12-year-old from Bridgewater whose attire is fit for a global rock star pitstopping in Rome. "In all my designs that I

made, it's really cool to see what it comes out to be because you might go into it thinking it's something else and it might go another way — it might be a better way."

Brielle McCormick, a 16-year-old from New Providence, chose to create an outfit suited to attend the exclusive Cannes Film Festival in France. McCormick opted for white high-waisted jeans and a layered top, which she fashioned with sheer burnout silk and crystal organza.

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