



Linda Xiong

Competition Yields an IU Plaid

APPAREL MERCHANDISING MAJOR'S DESIGN TOPS 25 OTHERS

Following in the footsteps of basketball's candy stripes is a new IU pattern — plaid.

Linda Xiong, BA/BS'12, created the crimson-heavy design while she was a senior at IU studying apparel merchandising and fashion design.

"I wanted [the design] to be more crimson than cream because crimson is a color that people relate to IU," says Xiong, a native of Carmel, Ind., who begins in September as a product development coordinator at Kohl's headquarters in Milwaukee. "I also wanted it to be simple but recognizable."

"I'd love to see Tom Crean in a plaid tie."

Linda Xiong, BA/BS'12

Her design earned its stripes.

Students in Free Enterprise, an IU organization, chose six of the 26 student-submitted entries to put in front of the contest's judges.

Ashley Hasty, who teaches in the Department of Apparel Merchandising and Interior Design and who served as the plaid project's organizer, says the number of strong entries pleasantly surprised the group.

"But it was a lot more difficult to narrow them down than we imagined," Hasty says.

The group ultimately chose six designs, and a panel of judges winnowed the field down to four. From there, online voting in early 2012 — with nearly 8,000 votes cast — determined the winning design.

"We were thrilled at how many people voted," Hasty says.

The design is now licensed and trademarked through IU as the university's official plaid, representing all campuses.

The first batch of IU plaid products — including a men's tie and a women's silk scarf — is expected to be available in October. Outlets include the IU online store at IndianaUniversityStore.com.

The IUAA has plaid you can add to your Facebook page at alumni.indiana.edu/show-pride/downloads/facebook.html.

Looking ahead, apparel merchandising undergraduates will use the official plaid to design new products each year.

"We can manipulate the design to traditionalists and to those more fashion-forward," Hasty says.

Xiong — who says she created four other plaid designs as she prepared for the contest — looks forward to seeing her winning design on a particular IU person.

"I'm a huge basketball fan," she says. "I'd love to see Tom Crean in a plaid tie."

CONVERSATION J T. Forbes

In his role as leader of the IU Alumni Association, J T. Forbes, BA'90, MPA'96, is never far from an IU connection.

"You might know Manny Rodrigues, BS'92. We met him on a trip to Colorado about a year ago. He's originally from New York, came to IU, and now he's in Denver. This summer he's taken this motorcycle tour through the West, and he's been posting photos and stories. It's such a cool experience for him, and it's been great following him."

"When you're part of the IU community, alumni like Manny immediately want to share their stories with you. Seeing someone wearing an IU shirt or with an IU luggage tag is an invitation to a conversation. We start talking, and this whole IU world lights up."

"We do our fair share of 'business stuff' here at the IUAA — data analysis, marketing, budgets — and that's important, but it's those human interactions that are so inspiring to those of us on the alumni office staff."

"Which makes me think of Megan Caldwell, BA/BS'12, who we got to know as leader of the Student Alumni Association at IUB. Megan landed a terrific job in Washington, D.C. She is a consummate network-builder who drew on these relationships to get off to a great start."

"We do our best to find connections that help people on their paths. We'll help connect them to an alum who's interested in the same thing, or working where they want to work, or living where they'll be going. You begin to see IU as this web of relationships that helps people find their way in the world."

"It's neat to be in a role where you meet so many wonderful people and try to help them. We've got a global network of 558,000 living IU alumni. A big part of my job is making that huge number more manageable for people, making it real. It is the human touches that make being part of the IU network such a special, personal experience." ▶