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**Trash’N Fash’N Fashion Show Combats Fast Fashion**

WILMINGTON, NC-July 24, 2023-A group of local high school students is shining a light on the harsh realities of “fast fashion,” ---the rapid mass production of clothing in order to meet the public’s ever changing demand. Many current style trends are now dictated by platforms such as Instagram, Tik Toc and the online Chinese retailer, SHEIN. They generate “microtrends,” which are fashion fads that surge in popularity before quickly falling out of favor.

What’s produced is often poor quality that leads to justification of its quick disposal. The Ellen McArthur Foundation estimates that a “truckload of abandoned textiles is dumped in a landfill or incinerated every second.” The fast fashion industry relies on the labor of low-wage workers that typically put in long hours in inhumane conditions. The garments are frequently made of synthetic materials that lead to the spread of micro plastics. Billions of these particles end up in the ocean, make their way into the food chain, and are a source of health problems worldwide. Clothing made from natural fibers like cotton and wool can pose problems as well. The Organic Center’s Dr. Jessica Shade notes, “These fabrics can include ammonia, azo and heavy metal-based dyes, flame retardants, formaldehyde, petroleum scours, and softeners.” The production process also requires excessive water usage. Considering all of these factors, it’s clear that fast fashion is detrimental to the planet.

To create awareness and offer alternatives to the pitfalls of following fast fashion trends, students from Issac Bear Early College are hosting the 2nd Annual Trash’N Fash’N Show on Saturday, August 5th from 6-8pm. The local nonprofit, Plastic Ocean Project, is sponsoring the event that will take place at the NHC Arboretum. Area fashionistas and mindful creatives of all ages are encouraged to make and model their own unique garments. Anyone with a desire to show off his or her design skills is welcome to enter! A panel of judges will award prizes to top-scoring looks. The NHC Arboretum is located at 6206 Oleander Drive. Pepe’s Food Truck and Sweet Cleo’s Frozen Desserts will also be on hand.

The group’s goal is to make consumers aware that they have the ability to make significant changes by focusing both on how clothing is produced and where it ends up. Options such as clothing repair, recycling, buying second hand, making one’s own or upcycling used pieces are all ways to avoid fast fashion.

For details on how to participate or attend, learn more here: <https://www.plasticoceanproject.org/trashn-fashn-show.html>

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