



WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

2022 Fall in Fashion: "Transformed"

Who's on the Runway?

We asked our models, "What makes you fierce?"

The definition of a fierce female is a multifaceted woman who works to empower herself and empower others. She isn't afraid to acknowledge her fears, her doubts, and her insecurities, but she tries hard to be brave and courageous. She works hard and is unflinching in the belief of her personal values.

This inspiring and diverse group of women walking the runway today represent the best of Buffalo. Read more about them as they model the trendiest local fashions.

Half & Half Boutique

Half & Half Boutique is a women's and lifestyle clothing store located in Buffalo, NY. Located in the Elmwood Village, Half & Half offers a carefully curated selection of women's clothing, small goods, and lifestyle pieces. Creating a bridge between traditional tastes and new trends, mother-and-daughter owners Jennifer and Kilby bring a refreshing take on style to a resilient rust belt city.

The Models

Abigail Skinner

Abigail is a 40-year-old Black Indigenous Arabic Femme who recently moved to Buffalo two years ago. She worked in fashion design as a technical designer for seven years. Currently, Abigail is a remote psychotherapist for NYC Affirmative Psychotherapy and provides individual and group therapy to queer people of color.

What Makes You Fierce?

I have the ability to emotionally connect from a place of truth and authenticity.



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Marina Boswell

Marina is a photographer, and sales ambassador and manager for Half & Half Boutique. As a Buffalo native, Marina has a degree in marketing from Canisius College.

What Makes You Fierce?

My kindness and empathy.

Lindsay Kasprzyk

Lindsay is the social media coordinator at Half & Half Boutique.

What Makes You Fierce?

My agility.

Debbie Blask

Debbie worked in the travel field for 40 years at the Buffalo Niagara Airport and now works in member relations at the Lancaster Depew Elma Chamber of Commerce. She is also vice president of the Lancaster Opera House. The mother of two children, Debbie is passionate about the outdoors and loves hiking, kayaking, skiing, and snowshoeing.

What Makes You Fierce?

I embrace life, maintain a positive attitude, and try to raise up others.

Marvel Ibrahim

A dual-degree, final-year student at University at Buffalo, Marvel will graduate with a degree in mechanical engineering and an MBA. She currently works as an intern on the engineering team at Raytheon Missiles and Defense, which creates and manages the missile and security defense system for the U.S. military.

What Makes You Fierce?

I love a good challenge. As an engineer, I exist in a man's world. My ultimate goal is to be seen as equal to all the men I work around.

Jenn Bronstein

One half of Half & Half, Jenn has been involved in charity organizing for years. She was a part of the team that started and named Fall in Fashion, some 20 years ago!



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Kilby Bronstein

Kilby is co-owner of Half & Half Boutique and a managing partner in Bronstein Family Partners, which manages two beautifully restored buildings in the Elmwood Village. Kilby currently sits on the Future of Roswell Society board and the planning committee for the Burchfield Penney Art Gala. Kilby believes that as a business owner we have a responsibility to our community to give back.

What Makes You Fierce?

Strength & resilience; my ability to overcome challenges and persevere.

Lace & Day

Lace & Day is Buffalo's premier bra fitting, lingerie, and swim store. Located in Allentown, their expert fitters have been making the women of Western New York comfortable and confident for over seven years. Lace & Day is the pajama destination for the holidays!

The Models

McKenna Lalonde

A communication/global affairs major minoring in nonprofit leadership at UB, McKenna currently interns with the WNY Women's Foundation. She also plays UB Club Soccer. McKenna looks forward to finding a permanent position in the nonprofit sector after graduation.

What Makes You Fierce?

My power of persuasion and ability to connect with anyone.

Lauryn Thornton

A Syracuse native, Lauryn currently studies criminology at UB. Lauryn plays club soccer and enjoys coaching.

What Makes You Fierce?

My sense of optimism.



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Jocelyn McNamara

A sophomore at UB studying communications, Jocelyn loves music, art, and fashion. Jocelyn aims to work in marketing after graduation.

What Makes You Fierce?

Through the hardships in my life, I've learned to overcome them and thrive.

Jasmin Yeung

Jasmin is a junior communications major at UB and writes for the student newspaper. She enjoys shopping for alternative fashion, hiking, and writing.

What Makes You Fierce?

I was born in Hong Kong, and I moved to the U.S. to live with my grandmother when I was 10. I think it made me tougher and lot of more independent and taught me how to fend for myself.

Katie Van Cott

Katie, a freshman at UB studying business, plays on the university's club soccer team and plays lacrosse. Originally from Long Island, Katie tutors children in math.

What Makes You Fierce?

I'm very sensitive, so I can understand people's viewpoints and strive to always treat people with kindness.

Hailey DeLong

Hailey majors in political science at UB and wants to become an environmental lawyer. Hailey is from Jamestown. She enjoys playing tennis and traveling.

What Makes You Fierce?

I get my strength from my family.

Ms Eye Candy

Ms Eye Candy is a women's clothing and accessories boutique specializing in unique finds for the most fashionable woman. Pieces are hand-picked and offer glitzy and unexpected details. The boutique carries a variety of items that set people apart from the run-of-the-mill crowd. Stop in today and let us style you! You are sure to be someone's eye candy!



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The Models

Kai Ellis

A Howard University graduate with a degree in marketing, 22-year-old Kai works as a freelance model, stylist, fashion designer, and creative director.

What Makes You Fierce?

My ability to maintain my resilience in tough situations and my determination to do that.

Maya Pazmiño

A current student at UB studying English education, Maya plans to teach high school after graduation. She assists students as a writing consultant and plays soccer.

What Makes You Fierce?

I come from a lot of cultural backgrounds, so I feel like I can relate and connect to a lot of people. I'm Ecuadorian, Dominican, German, and Italian.

Amaya Dyckman

A full-time model, Amaya works in Buffalo's creative scene helping local brands showcase their work. She appears in music videos, poses for merchandise shoots and walks in runway shows.

What Makes You Fierce?

Being both black and white and having both aspects for me is important. I think it's great how the modeling industry is diversifying itself. It's a great opportunity for people who never thought they would be represented and now they have that chance.

Jetaun Louie

Jetaun is all about entertaining. She has a degree in opera from Hampton University and performs frequently in musicals around the city. She also does commercial and print work. When she's not entertaining, she is crocheting, decorating, or maintaining one of her three businesses.

What Makes You Fierce?

I'm a proud mother and HBCU grad, and love being in the entertainment world.



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Salena Melody

Salena graduated from Performing Arts in Buffalo with a dance and arts diploma and studied dance at SUNY Buffalo State. When she's not working full-time at West Herr as a title and billing clerk, Salena works as a model and teaches dance classes. She had the opportunity to participate in NYC Fashion Week this year.

What Makes You Fierce?

My mentality and my energy. I have a very contagious energy and try to be positive. I'm very strong-minded and independent and want to be successful in both my modeling and dancing careers.

Breauna Crumpler

Breauna serves as Vice President, Private Client Advisor II at Bank of America Private Bank. She is also Chair of this fabulous event!

What Makes You Fierce?

The fact that I never give up and try to keep diversity, equity, and inclusion top of mind for everything I do.

Symphonie Allen

A small business owner, Symphonie created Her Sacred Way to promote safe spaces of wellness for Black women in Buffalo. She offers yoga, prenatal yoga, and Raiki services

What Makes You Fierce?

Her Sacred Way sprouted because I have MS and when I was on my wellness journey looking a way to feel better, my roadblock was I didn't feel like people were talking to me. I'm in the body of Black woman and I need to be seen. My goal is to see Black women so I can help them on the path to wellness.

Black Monarchy

BLACK MONARCHY is a black-owned, global artisan and fashion lifestyle brand that promotes cultural confidence through Luxury African and African-inspired fashion. Founded in 2016, the boutique curates the vividness of cultural clothing and jewelry made of raw authentic materials and authentic fabrics that recreate the conglomerate of our world. Its flagship store, Black Monarchy New York, is located on W. Utica Street.



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The Models

Linda LaLonde

During Linda's 34-year career, she worked in home child care and as a production planner and scheduler. A mother of three and grandmother of four, Linda lives in Watertown, N.Y. Her last year being employed with Graphic Controls was spent here in Amherst and traveling home on weekends as she balanced work life and family life.

What Makes You Fierce?

Linda uprooted her life and moved to a new town to be close to her husband. A dedicated wife through hard times, she took care of him at a nursing home for six years.

Malanna Fuentes

Malanna is a free-spirited entrepreneur who has always been fascinated with the beauty of life, and the different perspectives of what beauty is. Malanna has a bachelor's degree in fashion and will soon graduate from esthetics school. A personal fashion stylist and esthetician, she owns her own company, Hhead to Toe. Malanna is a single mother to her beautiful little girl, Nyannah.

What Makes You Fierce?

My grit.

Grace Frosolone

A freshman at Niagara County Community College majoring in liberal arts, Grace is from Grand Island and hopes to be a nurse someday. She enjoys playing piano and outdoor activities like hiking and biking.

What Makes You Fierce?

My mom inspires me a lot. I look up to her and do a lot of things because of her.

Madison Bryant-Wagstaff

Madison is a junior at SUNY Buffalo State pursuing a bachelor's degree in fashion textile technology with a concentration in fashion merchandising. A Muriel A. Howard Honors student, she's the president of the Buffalo State Fashion Club. She plans to pursue a career in the fashion industry and wants to be a CEO own brands.

What Makes You Fierce?

I am very dedicated and passionate about my passion for fashion! I have a strong Christian faith. My dedication to being authentically and unapologetically myself is what makes me such a fierce force.



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Madeline McDaniel

Originally from Rochester and of Haitian descent, Madeline is a graduate student at Buffalo State majoring in creativity. She has a bachelor's degree in public relations and advertising, with a minor in fashion. She aspires to build her own fashion empire.

What Makes You Fierce?

My drive to change the world.

Stacey Lalonde

A wife of 24 years, Stacey is a proud mom of two children. Stacey has a bachelor's degree from SUNY Plattsburgh and master's degree from SUNY Potsdam. She has worked in the General Brown School District near Watertown, N.Y. as a speech therapist for 28 years.

What Makes You Fierce?

Perseverance, no matter what comes my way.

Sandy McIsaac

Born and raised in Buffalo, Sandy has a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from UB. She works at Aflac as a benefits advisor. Sandy loves living life to the fullest and just went skydiving a couple weeks ago.

What Makes You Fierce?

My energy. I can adapt to any situation and make the best of any crowd.

Made by Anatomy

Buffalo native Ali Eagen, a Fashion Institute of Technology graduate, realized her dream of creating her own brand and store when she opened the doors to Anatomy in 2010. Anatomy's showroom inside the Hotel at the Lafayette houses a made-to-measure bridal collection and other local accessories, as well as a work space for constructing garments.

The Models

Lauren Rao

Lauren works in all things weddings and events. In her free time, she hikes, paints, plays piano and tries to find new hobbies. She works for Beck & Forth Florals and EVL Events as a coordinator.



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What Makes You Fierce?

I grew up in athletics and participated in the Junior Olympics in field hockey for six years.

Hailey DeLong

Hailey majors in political science at UB and wants to become an environmental lawyer. Hailey is from Jamestown. She enjoys playing tennis and traveling.

What Makes You Fierce?

I get my strength from my family.

Kai Ellis

A Howard University graduate with a degree in marketing, 22-year-old Kai works as a freelance model, stylist, fashion designer, and creative director.

What Makes You Fierce?

My ability to maintain my resilience in tough situations and my determination to do that.

Haleigh Cole

A full-time nurse, Haleigh has been modeling for almost eight years, mostly in bridal runway shows. She has walked for Fashion Week Rochester and is proud to walk for another organization to benefit the community.

What Makes You Fierce?

My perseverance.

Marina Boswell

Marina is a photographer, and sales ambassador, and manager for Half & Half Boutique. A Buffalo native, Marina has a degree in marketing from Canisius College.

What Makes You Fierce?

My kindness and empathy.

ARW

ARW is an independent line addicted to creating locally handmade pieces with intricate construction. Creator and designer Ashton Warner aims to take simplistic shapes that flatter any body type and give it constructional detail to create a piece that will last season after season. Ashton creates each piece independently in her North Buffalo studio.



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The Models

Julie Grygier

A Buffalo native, Julie has a master's in higher education administration and works in software. A portraiture artist, Julie often participates in local boutiques' pop-up shows.

What Makes You Fierce?

I'm not easily embarrassed and always ready to pursue new things.

Ray Henderson

Born and raised in Buffalo, Ray works as an actress, writer, film maker, and entrepreneur. A self-described "fashionista," Ray loves making creative content.

What Makes Fierce?

The confidence to be unstoppable in taking risks.

Amber Edwin

Originally from Brooklyn, Amber studies business administration at UB. She has a bachelor's degree in communications and is interested in diversifying the media space. She currently works as an administrative assistant at Beyond Academy.

What Makes You Fierce?

My go-getter attitude.

Samantha Perry

Originally from Wilson, N.Y., Samantha recently graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in interior design from SUNY Buffalo State. She once sang at Carnegie Hall, having been selected for the Honors Performance Series.

What Makes You Fierce?

If you had talked to me two years ago, I wouldn't have done this. Fashion has made me love myself. Being able to express myself with what I'm wearing is a big part of my life right now.

Marina Boswell

Marina is a photographer, and sales ambassador, and manager for Half & Half Boutique. A Buffalo native, Marina has a degree in marketing from Canisius College.

What Makes You Fierce?

My kindness and empathy



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Anna Dusza

Anna is a graphic designer specializing in fabric design, home furnishings, and editorial design and illustration.

The Models

Courtney Cutter

Courtney is from Buffalo. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in photography from SUNY Fredonia. She is a freelance photographer – so seek her out after the show if you are looking for a portrait or fashion photography. Her favorite photographer is Richard Avedon.

What Makes You Fierce?

I'm unique and seek out every adventure from skateboarding to snowboarding, to exploring and traveling.

Lindsay Kranitz

Lindsay is from Long Island and went to SUNY New Paltz. She moved to Buffalo after graduation "for fun." She works at Urban Outfitters and also works in influencer marketing and events.

What Makes You Fierce?

Just being myself and loving myself.

Julie Grygier

A Buffalo native, Julie has a master's in higher education administration and works in software. A portraiture artist, Julie often participates in local boutiques' pop-up shows.

What Makes You Fierce?

I'm not easily embarrassed and always ready to pursue new things.

Kennethea Wilson

Kennethea is the WNY Women's Foundation's FARE Grant outreach coordinator. She's currently a graduate student at UB.



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Jezabel

Jezabel Velazques is the Buffalo State Fashion and Textile Technology 2022 winner of Senior Collection and Best in Show.

The Models

Linlin Lu

Originally from Staten Island, Linlin is a student at SUNY Buffalo State majoring in fashion design, with a concentration in apparel design. She hopes to eventually develop her own brand and collection. She enjoys scrapbooking and journaling and is a stationary collector.

What Makes You Fierce?

Even though my parents didn't want me to do fashion design or art, I came here and did it anyway. My mom is a seamstress, so she knows the industry is hard, but I feel I have a calling.

Alyssa Arena

A sophomore fashion design major at SUNY Buffalo State, Alyssa is a Buffalo native. Someday she hopes to be an established fashion designer with her own company.

What Makes You Fierce?

My zodiac sign is a Leo, so I have natural ferocity. I try to always empower people to be the best version of themselves.

Jennifer Dethlefsen

Originally from Long Island, Jennifer is a junior fashion merchandising major at SUNY Buffalo State. She plans to be an international stylist and hopes to put on her own runway show someday.

What Makes You Fierce?

I faced a lot of challenges when I was younger that made me the person I am today.

Brianne Douglas

Brianne grew up in the arts. Her grandmother is a seamstress and her father was a musician – resulting in her love of fashion and music. Brianne is from Brooklyn. She pursues her creativity in the fashion apparel and design program at SUNY Buffalo State. She hopes to continue to pursue her loves by making clothes and music. She's a talented vocalist in addition to her talent in fashion design.

What Makes You Fierce?

My drive, my capabilities, and my mindset make me fierce. I'm a lover of all things creative. I hope the audience finds inspiration through today's event.