

SUNNY FASHION FORECAST

Experts and local 'Top Model' candidates give style predictions

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There are thousands of people you could ask about what to wear this summer, from fashion designers to clothing store managers. But why not start with Katelyn Turner, who showed up at a casting call earlier this month for the reality series *America's Next Top Model*, a show devoted to high fashion?

America may not decide to mimic her blonde-tipped mohawk, but the art major at Bowling Green State University who wants to go on to study fashion design isn't far off from industry insiders when it comes to some of her predictions. No. 1 on her list: sundresses.

"I think that sundresses should always be in style," said Miss Turner, 20, of Cincinnati, who recently made her own sundress. "A lot of styles are coming back that used to be popular, so why not now for this style?"

Nancy Stanforth, associate professor of merchandising at the Fashion School at Kent State University, agreed that long sundresses are going to be popular among women.

"That's going to be really big," she said.

She expects consumers to be blown away by bright color too.

"I think the big color story for summer is going to be this bright yellow with black and white for accents," Ms. Stanforth said. "You're seeing it almost everywhere these days."

Maybe the change in color has something to do with an uptick in the nation's attitude.

"Last year, we were still in the throes of the recession and I think everyone's feeling brighter and has a sunnier outlook, so maybe that corresponds," speculated Jenny Heisler, associate manager for Old Navy public relations.

She sees bold and bright colors everywhere, from wedge sandals to bangles to sundresses.

Just as the economy is making a comeback, so are some fashion staples: shorts. After taking a backseat to skirts and dresses last summer, they're back, Ms. Heisler said.

"This summer expect to see a lot of shorts, like short shorts. Even what used to be called hot pants are making a big comeback," she said.

On the other end of the spectrum, there's baggier shorts known as boyfriend shorts too, she said.

"The boyfriend jean is so popular, this is sort of a new take on that," Ms. Heisler said.

Men may seem to be more timeless when it comes to fashion, but Jerry Talamantes, director of special events and public relations for Dillard's Midwest, is noticing the reinvention of the jacket and the way it's being pieced together with other items.

"They're showing a lot of jackets with shorts. The shorts are a little longer," he said.

The casual jackets can even pull off being part of an ensemble with lounge pants and a T-shirt, he said.



Katelyn Turner, left, and Sarah Vonderbrink joke while waiting for their turns at the casting call. (AMY E. VOIGT/THE BLADE)

For women, he said there's a massive focus on prints, including a lot of botanicals, and the texture of fabrics.

"We're seeing a lot of draping and fabrics stretched to create new texture," he said.

That doesn't sound too different from some of the thoughts of Aleha Almester, a 19-year-old from Rossford who showed up at the *America's Next Top Model* casting call in a layered, flowing top. It's part of her must-haves this summer that include florals and racer-back tank tops.

"I have already purchased a bunch of those," she said.

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