

THE JEWELRY EDIT FOUNDATION IS EMPOWERING JEWELRY PROFESSIONALS

Brecken Branstrator, GIA GG

Rosena Sammi wants to make the jewelry industry more approachable to everyone.

The first way she did that was through her jewelry retail website, The Jewelry Edit (TJE), launched to bring buyers a more personal shopping experience to find the pieces that truly suit them and at the same time elevate designer voices that share her beliefs in sustainability and diversity in jewelry.

"I wanted to create a curation of designers who felt as passionately about me around social responsibility and who were very much into storytelling and not mass production," Sammi told GemGuide.

Sammi was a lawyer before she came to jewelry, designing and crafting under her own namesake line before launching TJE, which she said gave her an intimate look at how hard it can be to break into the industry.

"As someone who came up with no connections and no family (in the industry) and not seeing a lot of people that looked like me as a young designer ... it was such a challenge. I didn't know at all how to get around that or how to find my way in," she said. This led her to launch small-scale but impactful programs through the retailer.

But she eventually realized the way to have the most impact was to lean on the support of the mentors she had built along the way. This led to her next effort to make the industry more approachable and elevate and empower new and veteran jewelry talents: The Jewelry Edit Foundation (TJEF).

The board includes heavyweights like Todd Kahn, CEO and brand president of Coach; Diane Mahady, president and CEO of Hermès Americas; Dana Naberezny, chief innovation officer of jewelry at



Sisters Dana Naberezny (chief innovation officer at Tiffany and TJEF board member) and Sloane Crosley (bestselling author and Guggenheim Fellow) are pictured here with TJEF founder Rosena Sammi (at center) during a Masterclass-style talk about exploring creativity across disciplines.

Tiffany & Co.; and even jewelry enthusiast and actress Lynda Carter, best known for her role as Wonder Woman.

As one can see, there are voices from both inside the industry and out, a component Sammi felt was critical to learn from other luxury industries. These voices have offered their expertise in a [MasterClass-style video series](#), which have so far ranged from Carter speaking on her rise to stardom to Michael Robinson, founder and designer of David Michael Jewels, diving into how creators can develop their signature look.

The videos are available now on the foundation's website for members, a component new to TJEF and added so they can track the impact of their programs and analyze what works versus what doesn't. Initially open to anyone who wanted to be a part, the foundation is now asking interested participants to sign up as members. Starting membership is free and gives access to videos and resources, a monthly newsletter, and event updates. There are membership levels with added benefits for a fee from there.

Other videos offered by the foundation will be a four-part series looking at the behind-the-scenes of JCK Las Vegas, offering designers who want to do a show but have never been through the experience a look at what it's like. There will also be an eight-part series called "Fundamental for Jewelry Designers."

Additionally, there is a resources page on the website, offering members information on business topics like diversity and inclusion, and strategies for growth.

Their recent programming has included the "Designing a Responsible Future" program, presented by LVMH North America and The Jewelry Edit Foundation. The immersive program brought together 15 early-career professionals to explore career opportunities across LVMH's maisons, spanning design and craftsmanship, marketing, retail, sourcing, and leadership.

The next big program for TJEF is "From Bench to Blue Box," a two-day, in-person immersive experience offering 15 participants an introduction to Tiffany & Co.'s craft and design legacy and explore what it's like to work for the iconic American luxury brand.

The experience will offer participants a combination of education, mentorship, networking, and professional development, including behind-the-scenes access, interactive sessions with Tiffany & Co. professionals, and creative exercises.

It will be hosted at key Tiffany & Co. locations in New York City, including the Tiffany Design and Innovation



As part of its programming, TJEF held a pro bono legal clinic at Tiffany & Co., where jewelry designers took a deep dive into intellectual property fundamentals.

Workshop and The Landmark, Fifth Avenue flagship. Participants will follow the journey of a Tiffany & Co. jewel from inspiration to finished piece, gaining insight into the technical skills and expertise behind fine jewelry, exploring CAD and engineering, and learning about the importance of gems and diamonds to the pieces along the way.

The experience is aimed at those developing their careers, looking to deepen their understanding of the broader jewelry industry, and exploring career options depending on their skills and ambitions. It is designed for jewelry students or professionals with a foundation in jewelry design and/or making.

Applications for the Tiffany program are open now through Oct. 1 and can be submitted on The Jewelry Edit Foundation website. ♦

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