

Donald S. Pollard Jr. MBA

Creative Director | Entrepreneur | TEDx Speaker | Educator

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An insightful cross-cultural leader with the creativity and business acumen to match.

A 2017 TEDx speaker with 20+ years of combined experience in executive and entrepreneurial roles, having launched several startups from concept to profitability. A self-motivated, resourceful, team-builder and mentor and educator, with the ability to influence, unify, and lead teams and peers across all company functions. Driven by developing strategic partnerships, new business, and increasing profitability by expanding vision, maximizing opportunity, and overcoming organizational inertia.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Human Centered
- Strategic Management
- Advisory & Mentoring
- Startups & Entrepreneurship
- Problem Solving
- Product Development

EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Adjunct Professor – Entrepreneurship (*In Person*)

01/23 – Present

Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, NY

This course introduces students to entrepreneurship and its applicability to the creative arts, and the service industry while identifying the characteristics necessary for achieving success as an entrepreneur.

- Areas examined include design ideation, product development, target market identification, retail, retail sales, merchandising, and product market fit
- Students consider the industry intersects with emerging tech, innovation, and sustainability, and will explore the evolution of fashion as a multibillion-dollar industry from ready to wear, streetwear, luxury, retail and hospitality

Managing Partner (*Remote*)

10/22 – 4/23

Sovereignty Fashion CEOs Accelerator, Los Angeles, CA (*Remote*)

Funded by Wells Fargo, the Sovereignty Fashion Accelerator exists to bridge the gap between entrepreneurs, innovators, companies, policymakers and everyday people to create climate neutral fashion solutions.

Business Mentor – Volunteer (*Remote*)

06/22 – 8/22

MIT Solv[ED]

solve.mit.edu

Mentoring a FinTech startup in Harare, Zimbabwe, that uses machine learning tools and accessible technologies that fosters inclusion for smallholder farmers, creating financial resilience, profitability and increased harvest through data analytics and AI solutions.

Founder – Creative Director

04/12 – Present

DONN STERLING Group Inc., Brooklyn, NY

donnsterling.com

Private Label Menswear Company

- Develop and implement strategic plan; operationalize growth strategy, branding, and market research
- Manage a small team of creatives, researchers and consultants as well as all B2C and B2B relationships
- Lead all manufacturing workflow between US Bulgaria, and China

Co-founder – Managing Partner (*Remote*)

01/20 – Present

Impact Mentors, Brooklyn, NY

impactmentors.co

Impact Mentors aims to unlock systemic barriers that have historically withheld equal access for minority entrepreneurs through mentorship as a potential pathway to funding

- Built successful MVP with over 100+ active users
- Operationalize strategic plan, startup strategy framework, accountability for all facets of organizational impact
- Built methodology success track, a pathway to increase founder preparedness and investor deal flow

Managing Partner – Director of Business Development (*Remote*)

05/16 – 12/19

Startup Home U.S., Brooklyn, NY

startuphome.us

Creating Diverse and Inclusive Entrepreneurial Ecosystems in a Co-living Environment

Business Mentor (*Remote*)

01/21 – 05/21

YLAI, (Young Leader of the Americas Initiative supported by USAID) Córdoba, Argentina (*Remote*)

ylai.state.gov

- Advised executive team in identifying areas of growth: 400% growth from inception to date: value proposition, product market fit and key partners
- Strategized with the team to measure KPIs and overall impact by leveraging support from existing and nonexisting partners to scale generating revenue towards a path of profitability

CONSULTANCY

Independent Consultant

01/06 – Present

Strategic Advisor: Consulted for various startups in the consumer-packaged goods, beauty and apparel industry

- Guided executive teams through an in-depth analysis of business goals and objectives, understanding alignment towards production strategies, opportunity management, marketing, social media strategies and web development
- Designed business models, strategic plan and provided organizational readiness for investor and pitch decks
- Assisted founders on efficient planning, developing, and launching of products, product extensions and new categories

Business Development Consultant

01/06 – 09/11

Tarantino & Co., New York, NY – Milan, Italy

A full-service Global Business Development, Brand & Strategic Management Agency

Fashion Ventures

01/20 – Present

Executive Fashion Consultancy, Accelerating Fashion Entrepreneurship

fashionventures.co

PAST TEACHING EXPERIENCE

MKTG 395: Intro to The Business of Fashion (Undergraduate - Penn State University, Harrisburg PA)

Comm 105: Small Group Communications (Undergraduate - Frederick Community College, Frederick MD)

FM 10: Intro Fashion Merchandising (Undergraduate - Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY)

SELECT PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

- Harlem Fashion Row 2nd Annual Sustainability Forum – participated as a panelist. *Discussed how Black creatives are building sustainable business models in the fashion industry, challenges and insights* (4/23)
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/donaldspollard_fashionsustainability-fashion-sustainability-activity-7054643423290494976-RoHj?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop
- Fashion Academics LinkedIn Live Panelist - Discourse to challenge social norms and be a champion of diversity to build and share knowledge. (1/23 – Present) <https://www.linkedin.com/company/fashion-academics>
- Created and organized “*Fashion to the Future*” an exploratory conversation around the intersection of Fashion and Technology, its impact and role. Panel guests included former Nike executive and former Giorgio Armani designer at Harrisburg University (7/22)
<https://cie.harrisburgu.edu/fashion-ii-the-future-july-20-2022/>
- Delaware Valley Green Building Council – Presented at the 7th Annual Sustainability Symposium – “*The Built Environment: What’s the entrepreneurial impact practices in developing live/work/play communities*” (4/17)
- Guest Lecturer at Alabama A&M University and Tennessee State University regarding the “*Influence of Japanese Fashion on Western Style*” (11/14)
- Co-created a fashion based undergraduate exchange program between LIM College and Bunka Fashion College in Tokyo, Japan which was funded by The Japan Foundation (3/14)

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

MBA in Fashion Management & Entrepreneurship, LIM College, New York, NY

May 2013

Bachelor’s of Arts in Communications, Penn State University, Harrisburg, PA

Dec 2002

Intensive Study in Milan, Italy

- *Strategic Management, Brand Management* *Bocconi University, Milan, Italy*
- *Intense study of Italian Language, Grammar and Conversation* *University of Cattolica, Milan, Italy*

Certifications

Sustainability Expert: Circular Economy Innovative Skills Textile Sector

bit.ly/3dj5roL

Business and Impact Planning for Social Enterprises

bit.ly/33UCixf

BOARD, MENTORSHIP & ADVISORY POSITIONS

- [The Nativity School](#) – Board Member (1/23 – Present)
- [Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz](#) – Board Member (1/24 – Present)
- [Ascot’s Father](#) – Advisor (8/23 – Present)
- [OuttaWRLD](#) – Mentor 8/23-12/23 - Advisor (1/24 – Present)
- [Virtual Pro](#) – Mentor (8/23 – Present)