

Rachel Schostak

Stylist and Tech Entrepreneur

Fashion stylist and tech entrepreneur Rachel Schostak is just 27 years old. But don't underestimate her because of her youth — a distinctive business savvy has guided her since high school.

The Birmingham resident's business, Styleshack.com, aims to revolutionize the ease of shopping locally for fashion items for both men and women. An equally important companion blog to the site features style tips, fashion trends and design inspiration to help guide consumer decisions.

Neighborhood SEEN magazine caught her at the end of a busy casual Friday. Ever fashionable — the dark-haired beauty likes to teach her college interns about dressing appropriately for business — she was dressed in a great-looking buffalo plaid jacket over a white top and jeans.

Professionally speaking: I grew up in Farmington Hills and was always artistic and involved with art. I went to the University of Michigan, thinking art was what I wanted to pursue, but began doing fashion sketching and realized that if I wanted to be successful I needed to go to the epicenter of fashion, New York City. So I transferred to the Fashion Institute there.

After graduation, I worked as a personal assistant in the fashion industry for five and a half years then moved to Chicago where I handled retail sales and styling for a great company. It sounds glamorous, but I worked really, really hard. In January 2013, I left a stable job to develop my own business. It taught me a lesson since I was sure I was going to get financing for my idea right away. I did not get funding until eight months later.

Industry changes: I think people like the idea of shopping locally but don't always have the time to spend. I thought my website would make it easier to stay local and be fashionable. I think that's a trend.

I finally won approval for my business plan and blog in August 2013 and joined Bizdom, a startup accelerator founded by serial entrepreneur Dan Gilbert. The Styleshack.com site launched its first iteration in January 2014. The latest version of my site launches this month and will be expanding its fashion offerings to men's and children's clothing as well.

In my spare time: I love art, especially creating collages, designing and sketching. One day, I'd love to do a fashion line. I also love reading — both fiction and non-fiction — and writing my blog, which is an amazingly fun activity. Also, when I have time, I like to go camping.



The plaid jacket Rachel is wearing is by BB Dakota and is available at Guys N Gals (where the photo was taken) and also online at styleshack.co/guysngals.

Favorite place to hang out: I spend a lot of my time at work. It is really important to me to see this venture become a success. I only have one full-time employee, but use lots of college interns. I get a great feeling mentoring them. It's something I feel I can share since I've had some wonderful mentors myself.

My perfect day: I love walking around the Quanton Lake area and Cranbrook. I do some of my best "business thinking" on these walks. The beauty of Cranbrook particularly inspires me.

Inner circle: I have an amazing older brother, who

is a scout for the Baltimore Orioles. Of course, my husband, who is in real estate, and my equally great in-laws. I have lots of girlfriends who live all over the world. David Farbman, my mentor, is incredible. Fortunately, my parents are still nearby in Farmington Hills. And, as I said, I've had wonderful female mentors, like Denise Ilitch here in Detroit, who still inspire me.

What most people don't know about me: I think every day is a new adventure, especially when you own your own business. I really love the problem-solving part of being an entrepreneur. **NS**

— Interviewed by Julie Baumkel