

March 6, 2026,  
Dear Mentored Student Research and Creative Activity Review Team,

As Assistant Professor of Fashion Design and Merchandising (FDM) at West Virginia University, I, Dr. Angela Uriyo, served alongside Colleen Moretz, Associate Professor for FDM, as mentors to James as he developed his creative research project through a rigorous and industry-aligned design process. This project investigated the integration of conceptual development, advanced pattern construction, and digital innovation within a cohesive collection framework. Our mentorship ensured that his work reflected both technical precision and research-driven inquiry.

James began his creative research by developing a comprehensive mood board grounded in a clearly articulated customer profile. Through guided critique and analytical discussion, we challenged him to support his aesthetic direction with demographic and psychographic research, strengthening the conceptual foundation of the collection. This process positioned his work not merely as design exploration, but as informed creative investigation.

From this research base, James developed a series of fashion illustrations that translated the concept into wearable form. Through iterative review, we encouraged refinement in silhouette, proportion, and construction logic before advancing a selected design into technical development. He drafted the pattern, constructed a muslin prototype, and progressed to a completed garment. This progression from two-dimensional ideation to three-dimensional realization reflected meaningful growth in structural analysis, fit evaluation, and craftsmanship.

Central to this creative research project was the integration of traditional and emerging methodologies. James expanded the collection with professional technical flats, detailed tech packs, and comprehensive specification documentation to clarify production intent. Simultaneously, he translated the collection into Browzwear, developing three-dimensional digital prototypes that explored virtual sampling and contemporary digital workflows. This dual engagement with physical and digital processes demonstrated an understanding of how research, innovation, and industry practice intersect.

As mentors, we sought to cultivate designers who approach creative work as inquiry by testing ideas, refining through iteration, and documenting process with professional rigor. James embraced this research-driven approach with focus, resilience, and intellectual curiosity. His ability to synthesize concepts, construction, and digital technology reflected both adaptability and emerging professional depth.

James's creative research project represented more than the completion of academic requirements. It demonstrated the development of a designer who understands how conceptual exploration, technical craftsmanship, and digital innovation converge in contemporary fashion practice. We strongly supported his nomination for this award, as his work demonstrated creative growth, technical advancement, and significant potential for continued excellence in the field.

Sincerely,

*Angela Uriyo*

Angela Uriyo, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
Fashion Design and Merchandising  
School of Art and Design  
College of Creative Arts and Media

*Colleen Moretz*

Colleen Moretz, MFA  
Associate Professor  
Fashion Design and Merchandising  
School of Art and Design  
College of Creative Arts and Med