

Wearbest Ramps up Design Initiatives

BY CAROLE SLOAN

GARFIELD, N.J. — Wearbest Siltex Mills here has launched a series of new design and product initiatives to create new opportunities in both the residential and contract segments of the market, as well as moving into a specialty segment of the wall coverings business.

Wearbest president and principal Irwin Gasner said the moves “are designed to augment our in-house design studio’s activities as we restructure our residential and contract design teams.”

Among the moves he outlined is the hiring of Studio Colorworks, headed by Paulina Muzekari and Thomas Glabman on a consulting basis to develop new avenues in color, texture and design. The duo is working

on fabric development for special fabrics that will be produced both at the firm’s headquarters weaving mill here and off-shore in China, said Gasner.

“We are looking for them to create totally new color and aesthetics with new novelty yarns.”

In addition, Gasner has contracted with textiles designer Elizabeth Whelan “to create a new range of woven wall coverings with our studio for both contract and residential.” The move into wall coverings is a first for the company, he noted. The program initially will be an augment to the contract fabric business.

Krista Stack for Wearbest will be a new direction and “a new handwriting for the contract business.” Stack’s background includes the Jack Lenor Larson Studio.

These three initiatives, Gasner explained, will create “new aesthetics and new products for existing markets.”

In addition, Gasner proudly announced the fourth generation of the company, his son Ari, who will focus on the company’s Bella-Dura fibers for the outdoor market. Bella-Dura, a proprietary acrylic yarn, was first launched in July 2005. “He will work with the sales team to bring us to a new level of excellence.”

The company also has moved its New York design offices to 247 West 36 Street. And the company has launched a new web site that addresses domestic and international customers.

Overall, he said, “This shaping up as a good year for us, and we’re focused on bringing new looks for our customers.” **HTT**