

RETAIL

Saks honors Black History Month by centering mental health, community

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Designers Dani Evans and LaQuan Smith are helping Saks kick off Black History Month. Image credit: Saks

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Ecommerce platform Saks is kicking off Black History Month with a partnership with the Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective (BEAM).

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Together, Saks and BEAM will be highlighting the positive effect of community on mental health and healing. Saks Foundation will be making a donation to the organization as it looks ahead to a month of digital content, programming and virtual events.

Celebrating Black History Month

Saks Foundation will make a \$60,000 donation to BEAM which helps support Black mental health at the community level, providing local educators, coaches, stylists and more with mental health resources and support tools that center on Black healing.

Saks is also collaborating with designers LaQuan Smith and Dani Evans. The pair are sharing some of their favorite Black designers while sharing their thoughts on community and mental health.

Shop Dani's Picks



Monrowe
Release III Franklin Hat
\$440



Balmain
Button-Embellished Leather Dress
\$3,095



Balmain
Double-Breasted Wool Blazer
\$2,850

Consumers can shop some of the designer's favorite looks. Image credit: Saks

Multiple events dedicated to Black History Month will be held on the Saks Live platform over the next few weeks.

Programming includes a Feb. 2 event hosted by Peloton instructor and Love Squad founder Ally Love highlighting her favorite styles from Black-owned brands; a Feb. 17 event hosted by designer Felicia Noel where she will debut her brand Fe Noel at Saks and more.

Saks will also be holding a virtual panel discussion for its employees on Feb. 3 entitled Destigmatizing Black Mental + Holistic Health. Elisa Shankle, cofounder of HealHaus, will moderate the panel, which will also feature Yolo Akili Robinson, executive director and founder of BEAM and Naiylah Warren, licensed marriage and family therapist.

There will also be a window installation at the Saks New York flagship through Feb. 14 dedicated to Black History Month which will showcase and honor Black designers, featuring creations from Kimberly Goldson, Wales Bonner, LaQuan Smith and more.

As luxury conglomerates make strides to become more inclusive organizations, leaders will have to be intentional to ensure consumer-facing efforts are effective and reflective of each brand's individual DNA.

Last year, executives from Kering and Mot Hennessy spoke about the challenges of making luxury more inclusive during a discussion hosted by the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. As part of the Leading Diversity@Wharton lecture series, the women discussed the differences, difficulties and thoughtfulness that encapsulate luxury brands' diversity and inclusion efforts ([see story](#)).

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