

EDUCATION

LVMH debuts first US registered apprenticeship program with Tiffany brand

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First batch of apprentices in the U.S. Mtiers d'Excellence Institute program. Image credit: (c) Johnny Vacar, LVMH

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

French luxury conglomerate LVMH unveiled its first registered apprenticeship program in the United States called the Mtiers d'Excellence Institute program during the National Apprenticeship Week.

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Tiffany & Co., now an LVMH brand, partnered with New York State's Department of Labor to participate in the program. LVMH and the jeweler officially began operations this week, aiming to train the next wave of jewelry craftspeople.

"Establishing the Mtiers d'Excellence program in the U.S. will expand our pipeline of talent and advance our goal to promote workforce diversity in the luxury industry," said Gena Smith, chief human resources officer of LVMH North America, in a statement.

"By providing an exceptional cohort of apprentices with the opportunity to learn from experienced craftspeople, Mtiers d'Excellence ensures that these skills are passed on to early career professionals and teaches apprentices to uphold LVMH's longstanding standards of excellence," she said.

The program will offer trainees the opportunity to learn and hone skills in jewelry design and fabrication over two years. This will also include rotations through Tiffany workshops.

Based in New York, Tiffany is the premier jeweler in the United States.



An apprentice at work at Tiffany in LVMH's first U.S. Mtiers d'Excellence Institute program. Image credit: (c) Johnny Vacar, LVMH

Diamonds in the rough

The apprenticeship application process began over the summer, focusing on recruiting artists from diverse, historically underrepresented communities to create opportunity and build an inclusive talent pipeline.

Following an extensive review, LVMH and Tiffany picked and recently onboarded eight apprentices for the first cohort: Diana Olivarez, Elizabeth Shoobs, Elizabeth Matthan, Evan Martinez, Jiwon Hong, Isabella Dias, Maria-Emilia Proao and Marianne Nieves de Banegas.

The apprenticeship program's news comes on the heels of a recent effort called Tiffany Atrium meant to support Black college and university students in arts ([see story](#)).

Registered Apprenticeships are industry-vetted and approved, validated by the U.S. Department of Labor or a state apprenticeship agency. They offer participants a portable, nationally recognized credential.

Also, these programs provide a critical pathway for people to access quality career opportunities through hands-on learning and direct work experience.

Indeed, this week kicks off not only an important career opportunity for young people, but a needed conversation in luxury business practices.

Mtiers d'Excellence will also address economic growth, education accessibility, racial and gender equality, and community building.

LVMH and **Tiffany & Co.** have focused on their goals of furthering diversity in the business.

The summer recruitment sessions worked to bring in those from historically excluded communities, creating opportunities for inclusion. Eight talented apprentices were chosen, their two-year training having begun this week.

This expansion of career accessibility is considered to be an important step in making the luxury industry more equitable.

Learning exercise

The debut of the Mtiers d'Excellence program in the U.S. with Tiffany is the first of LVMH's Mtiers d'Excellence initiatives in the country. Several other **LVMH** brands plan to join the program next year.

Since its start in France in 2014, more than 1,400 students have participated in the Mtiers d'Excellence program in seven countries.

The success rate has been tremendous, per LVMH, with 78 percent of apprentices continuing their studies or joining professions where they apply the skills they learned, many of which are at LVMH brands or external partners.

"We are excited to commence the Mtiers d'Excellence program following our recently launched social impact platform, Tiffany Atrium," said Mary Bellai, global chief human resources officer of Tiffany & Co, in a statement.

"The Mtiers d'Excellence initiative will enable us to reinforce the diversity and inclusivity of Tiffany & Co.'s workforce through one of our core pillars of Tiffany Atrium: education," she said.

"Our efforts will support the long-term growth and development of students, early career professionals and educational institutions in the U.S.," she said.

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