

The Women of Oklahoma

The Newsletter for Every Oklahoma Woman

Summer 2020
Volume 1, Issue 3



Baylee Bardot

A New York Model back in Oklahoma

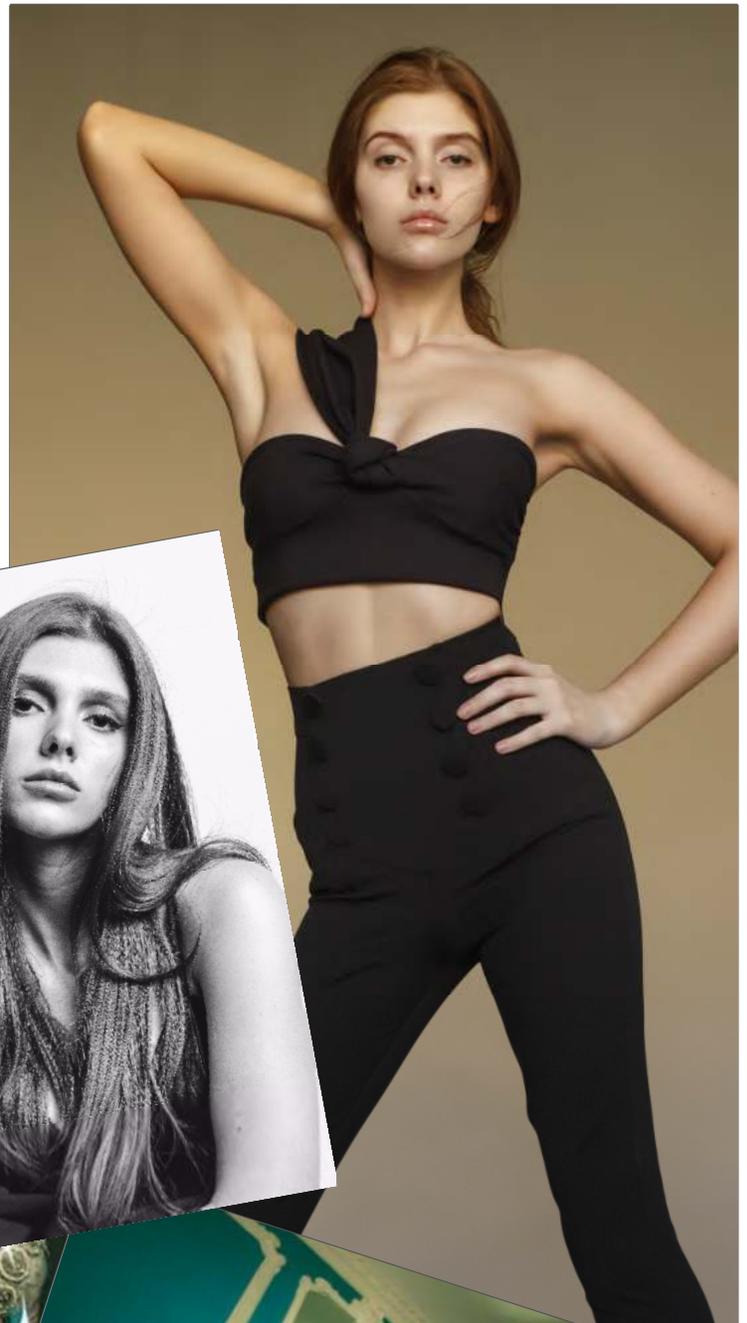
COVID-19 has definitely changed the way we work in America. For the rest of the year, The Women of Oklahoma Newsletters will highlight women who are telling their stories of change; whether she is on the frontline, working from home or lost her job and not working at all.

This issue features Oklahoman, Baylee Bardot. She was working in New York City as an editorial and runway model, and then the COVID-19 hit the world. Read her story.

*“Unlike some industries that are still able to work from home during this time, the fashion industry and my career, is completely on **PAUSE.**”*

Baylee Bardot

A New York Model
back in Oklahoma



In this issue, The Women of Oklahoma interviewed fashion model, **Baylee Barget**. Due to the pandemic, Baylee moved back to Oklahoma. Read her story and how the industry has changed since COVID-19.

How did you get started in the fashion modeling industry?

In June 2019, I took a risk and left Oklahoma to pursue modeling in New York City. I wasn't signed with a modeling agency, so I spent the entire month of June going to every modeling agency open casting calls that New York City had to offer.

I was offered a contract at the first agency I visited, but I wanted to be certain it was "the one" before making a decision. I had a few more contract offers but ended up choosing the first agency.

I signed with Fenton Model Management and booked my first modeling job soon after. It was a video campaign for the hair brand AMIKA. I was elated that for my first job, I booked a client whose product is sold in Sephora.

What other type of modeling jobs have you booked while living in New York?

I mostly booked beauty and editorial shoots. Ironically, the three things that I was self-conscious about growing up: Red hair, pale skin, and freckles--are the things that get me booked as a model.

Since the start of my career in August 2019, I've worked for brands such as: CoverGirl, L'Oreal (twice), ORIBE, and Bare Minerals. I was lead in a music video "Si Te Vas", by two popular Latin singers Sech and Ozuna. The music video currently has 148 million views on YouTube, and it lead to me being featured on my first Billboard in Times Square (only 18 days after I booked my first job). I shot an editorial in Barcelona, Spain. I have been published in British Vogue, and Vogue Italia and walked two seasons of New York Fashion Week.

At what point in your life did you realize you wanted to become a fashion model?

I was Miss Oklahoma Teen USA 2017, and placed in the Top 15 at Miss Teen USA (Miss Universe Organization). As Miss Oklahoma Teen USA, I had some pretty amazing opportunities. During my title year, the well-known fashion/prom dress designer, Sherri Hill, invited me and the other title holders to her New York Fashion Week Show (NYFW). NYFW is pretty exclusive, so it felt like a once in a lifetime opportunity. Going to NYC to watch the Sherri Hill show was what made me see modeling as an actual option for my future and I decided then, that I wanted to one day walk in a show at New York Fashion Week. Fast forward two years later to August 2019. I had a casting for Sherri Hill's New York Fashion Week show and she remembered who I was from my time in pageants.

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How did you prepare yourself to become a model?

Pageants and my time as a dancer prepared me so much for modeling in New York. In pageants, I learned that you can't compare yourself to others because it's up to what the judges want at that moment, and if there were a different panel of judges, there would be a different winner.

You might lose one pageant but win the next. So, I learned the lesson that you can't control anything, except what you do. I go to modeling castings like I would a pageant--I prepare like a winner and go in to win. But if I don't get cast, it's okay because another job is just around the corner.

The world has a funny way of working itself out for exactly what you need, when you need it (even if you don't realize it).

How has the pandemic affected you as a model and the modeling industry?

The coronavirus has added a speed bump to the track I was on.

Unlike some industries that are still able to work from home during this time, the fashion industry and my career, is completely on pause.

I came home to Oklahoma right before New York City went on lockdown and I have been struggling with the idea of what my career will be like when I return.

Everything was going well and I don't want it to end prematurely. It will be interesting to see how the dynamic on a fashion shoot set will change. I am constantly in close proximity to people; stylists, hair, and make-up teams.

I imagine there will be less people on set and the big castings with 100+ models waiting in a room will be divided into time frames to keep numbers down.

Even though the future is scary and unknown, the silver lining for me is that I am getting to be with my family more than just the week I was home at Christmas.

It's time with my mom and sister that I wouldn't have gotten otherwise.

Although it physically pains me to see the news or updates especially about New York, I really needed this time with my family even more than I initially realized.

As for the future, I can't wait to return to New York City, but I also want to be versatile and work in other markets.

In addition to New York City, I want to sign with an agency in Los Angeles or even abroad.

I would love to shoot for GUESS or Sports Illustrated, walk for VERSACE, and even get into acting. But, my biggest modeling goal is to be on the cover of American Vogue!

Breast Cancer Fact Sheet



1 in 8 women in the U.S. will be diagnosed with **breast cancer** in her lifetime.

IN THE UNITED STATES

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the U.S., accounting for 30 percent of newly diagnosed cancers.

Every 2 minutes, one case of breast cancer is diagnosed in the U.S.

In 2020, more than 276,000 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in women and more than 2,600 cases in men in the U.S.

In 2020, more than 42,000 women and men in the U.S. are expected to die from breast cancer.

Improvements in early detection and treatment led to a 40 percent decline in breast cancer deaths in the U.S. between 1989-2017.

In the U.S., breast cancer mortality is about 40 percent higher in black women than in white women.

In the U.S., it is estimated more than 154,000 women are living with metastatic breast cancer.

There are more than 3.8 million breast cancer survivors in the U.S.

AROUND THE WORLD

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women around the world, with an estimated more than **2 million new cases** recorded in 2018.

Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women around the world.

Every 50 seconds, somewhere in the world, someone dies from breast cancer. That's more than 1,700 women and men every day.

There are more than 6 million breast cancer survivors around the world.



Sandy Finestone, PsyD
*Scientific Advisory Board and
AIS Steering Committee*

Marian Johnson-Thompson, PhD
*Komen Scholar and
AIS Steering Committee*



Mary B. Gray: *A Poetess with a Message*

Born and raised in Lawton, Oklahoma, Mary received her Bachelor of Arts in both Journalism and English Writing, as well her Master of Public Administration (MPA), from the University of Oklahoma. She also earned a Master of Fine Arts from Oklahoma City University. Mary's work has been published in *Ain't Nobody That Can Sing Like Me: New Oklahoma Writing*, and *Territory Magazine*.

Below, enjoy her poem Little Girl Blue, previously appearing in *For the Sonorous*.

Little Girl Blue

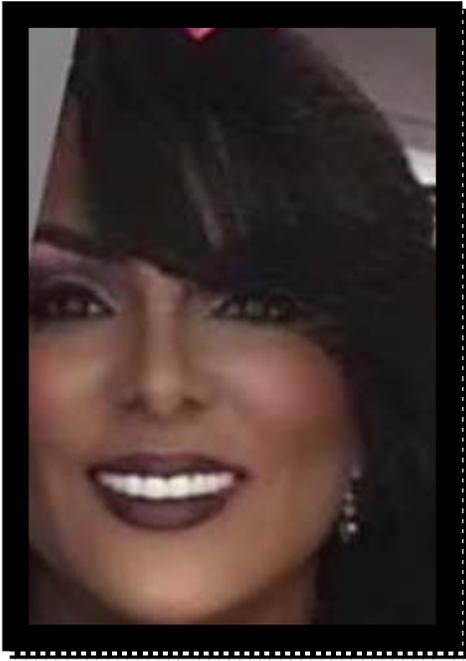
Little Girl Blue never blew her horn
a trumpet that came all the way from south Texas
found its way to little girl blue
in 6th grade (when she stood hardly five-foot-two)
the grade they introduce musical instruments
into the lives of youths
form bands all across Oklahoma lands

Little girl blue wanted to play the clarinet
it was a cute instrument, black,
slender, with polished keys
like all her friends

Grandma stuck her with the horn
worn brass she could barely grasp
'cause it was already in the family
wouldn't cost to buy or rent
she settled for what was sent
where is the girl with the song so soulful

Little girl blue figured she'd play some blues
after she learned the scales of course
put her lips to brass and that little girl
blew and blew and blew 'til her cheeks couldn't take no more
waited for a note to escape the bell
the trumpet didn't yell so her eyes fell,
she looked to the band director searching, searching for an answer
why couldn't little girl blue blow the blues?

Mr. Band Director looked her square in the eyes
diagnosed the problem as too big lips
Little girl blue never blew that horn again
had it sent back down south Little girl blue fast asleep
will they wake her, will she get woke
you see she hadn't yet heard of Louie Dizzy Tiny Valaida
didn't know there is no blame no shame in luscious large lips
Little girl blue never blew no horn



Founder/CEO of
National Women In Agriculture Association
The largest non-profit Women In Agriculture Organization in the World!

Dr. Tammy Gray-Steele

**AGRICULTURIST. ENTREPRENEUR.
STRATEGIC BUSINESS DEVELOPER.
EDUCATOR.
CIVIL RIGHTS WOMEN & CHILDREN ADVOCATE.**

The Women of Oklahoma team spoke with Agriculturist and Oklahoma Entrepreneur, **Dr. Tammy Gray-Steele**. Her knowledge of the business is apparent, and most definitely, this Oklahoma woman loves what she doing and she does it well!

The Women of Oklahoma Team also caught a glimpse of Dr. Steele at one of her out-of-state conferences. The Women of Ag is growing, and we can see why!

Continue to read her story and how Dr. Steele is building her program all around the country!

Dr. Tammy Gray-Steele is the first American agricultural specialist, agriprenuer, educator, and women and children's advocate. Born and raised on a farm, she received her secondary education in the rustic and rural community of Wewoka, Oklahoma.

Upon graduating high school, Dr. Steele left Oklahoma to pursue a dual educational and business career in New York City.

Armed with the legal degree she obtained from New York University Law School, and the requisite legal business experience she acquired on Manhattan's Wall Street, she returned home to her family farm, and started to give back to the Oklahoma rural communities. At the same time, she worked full-time in the Oklahoma Corporate legal arena, devoted time to study for a Master's Degree in Business Administration (MBA), along with Horticulture and Childcare Development Certifications.

On the broader national turf, Dr. Steele is a former USDA-SARE Advisory Main Council Member.

Additionally, she had the rare honor of being appointed by President Barack Obama's Administration as a distinguished USDA-NASS Advisory Councilwoman. She served on USDA Grant Panels and as a USDA Strategic Action Team Leader.

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Dr. Steele serves on various scholarship committees that were instituted for the educational empowerment of youth. In addition, she offers invaluable support to the Oklahoma City Black Chamber of Commerce, and volunteers on various rural Chamber of Commerce boards.

Deploying uncommon intellectual energy and superlative personal industry to achieve exemplary and duly-acknowledged results-oriented performance in both individual and team activities, Dr. Steele has demonstrated unrivaled commitment in assisting counties in the State of Oklahoma with expert knowledge in healthy food production at a level that matches any known empirical and international standards.

In the process, she has managed to build for herself an unassailable reputation, and a formidable pedigree, as a widely-sought after agricultural expert who is never short of strategic, innovative and entrepreneurial solutions to challenges in the agricultural sector of the economy.

Dr. Steele has embarked upon a personal crusade to develop good character amongst women and children.

With a total belief in the credo that, "A child can only be developed if her mother provides sufficient support and resources," and with a legendary passion for empowering disadvantaged women and women of color in rural America, she strives to ensure that no woman, and no child, with whom she comes into contact, is socially and economically marginalized in the scheme of things.

Sincerely motivated by an altruistic desire to empower the socially and economically disadvantaged, and to deliver timely awareness and education to those who truly desire a sustainably healthier lifestyle, Dr. Steele established National Women In Agriculture Association in 2008.

Since then, she has employed the powerful and influential instrumentality of NWIAA to pursue her agenda of sustainable development in America's agricultural sector.

To this end, in January 2014, Dr. Steele opened NWIAA's first Sustainable Agriculture Academy in the United States, located on the Eastside of the Oklahoma City Metro Area, and in close proximity to the city's largest African American population.

Dr. Steele was recognized at the White House in February 2014, for leading the country in efforts to save and educate America's youth using environmental and innovative agriculture-based sustainable best practices, and in the spring of 2013, she was awarded a humanitarian honorary doctorate for exemplary performance as one of the most influential U.S. agri-business community developers of her generation.

Dr. Steele has received awards from Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma Conservation District Cooperatives Department, Oklahoma Legislative Black Caucus, Tuskegee University and other educational institutions in genuine appreciation for her support of various economic empowerment entrepreneurship programs.

She has written testimonial articles with New York Magazine and other Agriculture Journals.

She can be reached at: womeninag@gmail.com or (405) 424-4623 for speaking engagements, and for teaching sustainable business techniques that can rapidly develop communities.

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Victoria Bohler

An Oklahoma Fashion Designer on the Rise

One of the Women of Oklahoma team members had the opportunity to connect with the school Clary Sage in Tulsa, and was excited to feature a story on one of their recent graduating fashion designers: **Victoria Bohler**. *Read Victoria's story.*

Why did you get started in fashion design?

I started school originally thinking I would increase my knowledge of basic sewing and construction. My intention was to start a small sewing business from my home, making baby blankets, home decor, etc. Within the first month of school, I realized there was more I wanted to offer. So, I started thinking about what it was I wanted from my education, from my business, and for my community.

Clary Sage's Fashion Program is the best in the area because you get both technical and hands-on learning. The teachers are devoted to the students, constantly adapting to each student's needs and identifying to what boundaries they can push each student.

My instructor, Michelle, knew I could handle projects myself up to a certain point, and even then she would try to guide me through the project instead of just giving me the answers. I have done other schooling previously (two-years of Pre-Law and one-year of Archaeology), and never before have I seen a teacher really connecting with her students. The program also helped me figure out what I wanted from my business.

Tell us about your business.

My business goal for "Bleu" is to research and develop an affordable line of clothing for amputees and those with "disfigurements." I know to make that happen, I have to have funding. So I am working hard to create designs interesting enough to put my name on the map.

More than anything, I want to help people. This is why during this time of the pandemic, I organized a small group to make hospital grade cloth masks for a memory care/assisted living facility in Missouri.

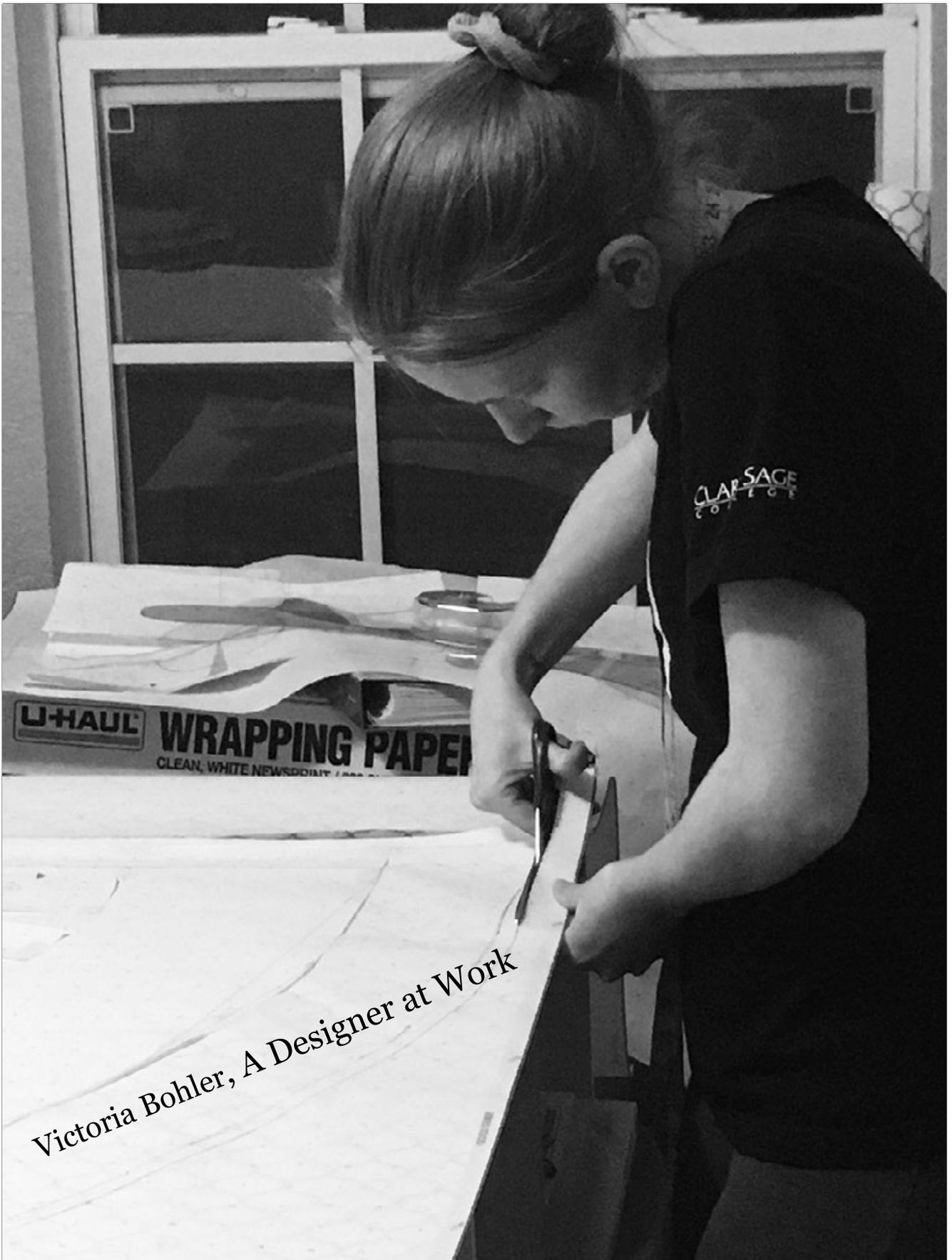
Our goal for just the facility alone was 300 masks, and we will be halfway towards meeting that goal this week. I have also provided almost 40 individual masks to families in the Glenpool, OK area, Houston, and Louisiana. I chose the spelling "Bleu" because I can see that name as a boutique, maybe even an official fashion house one day!

What inspires you, Victoria?

What inspired me to start focusing more on fashion design was actually a documentary I had to watch in one of my fashion courses about Giorgio Armani. His beginnings were so much more humble and relatable than I realized. I felt like we had quite a bit in common, so it kind of tugged me into being more of a designer. I would say Armani is my main designer inspiration.

I also love just looking through magazines and the Vogue Runway show summaries. Truly, my potential customer is my biggest inspiration. I want her to feel motivated, powerful, modest but sexy. She does not have to have a six figure job to attain those qualities. She just needs to find the right clothes.

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Victoria Bohler, A Designer at Work



National Women in Agriculture Association

<https://www.nwiaa.org/>

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