

## PRESS RELEASE



### **Natural Diamond Council and Black In Jewelry Coalition Join Forces to Create First-Ever Jewelry Education Program in a New York State Public High School In Long Island**

**New York, NY. December 13, 2023** – [Natural Diamond Council](#) (NDC) in partnership with Black in Jewelry Coalition (BIJC) announce the first of its kind jewelry education program at Baldwin High School, in Baldwin, New York. The pilot program will begin in the Fall of 2024 and it will explore each sector of the jewelry industry from bench to design to retail.

“Natural Diamond Council is proud to be partnering with the Black in Jewelry Coalition in 2024,” said Kristina Buckley Kayel, Managing Director at Natural Diamond Council. “Following the success of the past three years of our Emerging Designers Diamond Initiative (EDDI) program in partnership with Lorraine Schwartz - in which 18 BIPOC designers received unparalleled mentorship, press, vendor access, and retail presence - we remain committed to the growth and advancement of the jewelry industry, with a firm belief in creating opportunities for diverse students aspiring to enter this field. It is critical we facilitate and expand entry into our legacy industry, where long term quality careers are possible from design to technology to retail and beyond. Joining forces with BIJC to train, inspire and mentor potential talent among a high school population on the fundamentals of jewelry is a catalyst towards realizing our collective mission of building a more equitable future for the diamond jewelry industry. Our ambition is that this program serves as a pilot to be rolled out to high schools across the country,” adds Buckley Kayel.

To ensure optimal support of the NDC x BIJC initiative through a financial grant to fund research and education for the program, NDC will subsequently pause the EDDI program in 2024.

As part of the Academic Academies program at Baldwin High School, the NDC x BIJC jewelry education program will allow students to connect the classroom to the working world through a combination of professional shadow days, internships, and inter-school, regional, and national competitions as well as co-curricular activities. The goal of the program is to provide students with a multitude of learning experiences to ensure they gain the skills and knowledge required to succeed despite the challenges they may face.

“BIJC takes pride in collaborating with NDC to introduce a high school jewelry program at Baldwin High School,” said Annie Doresca, BIJC Board President. “Our goal is to inspire students and foster their passion for the jewelry industry while introducing them to modern and ancient techniques in jewelry manufacturing. Introducing such programs to high school students is a positive direction towards enhancing diversity within the industry and making a meaningful impact,” adds Doresca.

“The Baldwin School District is thrilled to launch this innovative partnership with Natural Diamond Council and Black in Jewelry Coalition,” said Dr. Shari L. Camhi, superintendent of Baldwin Union Free School District (UFSD). “Our district is committed to cultivating professional partnerships that will equip our students with the skills necessary to succeed in the future. To be able to launch this jewelry education program at Baldwin High School will open the door to a myriad of opportunities within the jewelry industry. We are humbled by NDC and BIJC’s decision to collaborate with our district and look forward to seeing the program come to fruition.”

#### **About Natural Diamond Council**

Natural Diamond Council (NDC) is here to advance the integrity of the modern diamond jewelry industry while educating, inspiring, and protecting consumers. NDC’s *Only Natural Diamonds* platform is the authoritative publisher on all things natural diamonds including celebrities and culture, epic diamonds and style, engagements and weddings, and diamond myth-busting and education. NDC also provides marketing, media and educational services to brands, designers, and retailers, to promote the values and beauty of natural diamonds and the integrity and responsible practices of the industry. NDC is a global organization whose members’ operations span four continents and ten countries including Canada, South Africa, and Botswana. Their modern mining operations support the livelihood of 10 million people globally and protect biodiversity and vulnerable wildlife at a scale four times of land used.

NDC operates out of offices in New York, Shanghai, Mumbai, and Antwerp, with satellite teams in the UK and France.

#### **About Black In Jewelry Coalition**

Black in Jewelry Coalition (BIJC) is the first international non-profit membership association dedicated to the inclusion and advancement of Black professionals within the gem, jewelry, and watch industry. Founded in August 2020 by a group of Black professionals in an effort to collectively end systemic racism while improving diversity and inclusion in the jewelry industry. BIJC’s mission is for the advancement of Black professionals within the gem and jewelry industry through networking, education, representation, and an abundance of resources. Promoting change in the jewelry industry through the fundamental understanding that by uniting resources and partnering with allies, they cultivate growth and create opportunities through an alliance that is for us, by us. BIJC provides tools and resources for professional success, growth, and recruitment for increased representation through heightened awareness.

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