

**NCSU College of Textiles**  
**Executive-in-Residence Program: Textile and Apparel Management Program**  
**Robyn Waters**  
**RW Trend LLC**  
**September 27, 2006**

Robyn Waters is founder and president of RW Trend, LLC, a trend consulting company based in Minneapolis, MN. She brings over twenty five years of experience tracking and translating trends into sales and profit to this venture. Throughout the retail world she is described as an Ambassador of Trend, a Champion of Design, a Builder of Brands, a Purveyor of Passion, and a Cheerleader of Possibilities. *Fast Company* magazine featured her as one of the top twenty 'Creative Mavericks' in their June '04 *Masters of Design* issue.

Most recently, Robyn was Vice President of Trend, Design and Product Development for Target, a \$48 billion upscale discount store based in Minneapolis. Under her direction the trend and design team traveled the world tracking and translating trends into unique product designs that enhanced Target's upscale brand image of "Expect More, Pay Less." One of Robyn's core values is the belief that good taste and great design don't have to be expensive.

In her view, successful trend merchandising means not just being 'up-to-the-minute,' it means knowing and anticipating *where that minute is going*. Robyn's world is three-dimensional. She is grounded in the real world of the *moment*. She is a student of the *past* with a great love of history, ancient civilizations, and lost cultures. Simultaneously she enjoys inspiring new ideas and motivating others to get excited about *the future*.

Robyn is the author of the book *The Trendmaster's Guide: Get A Jump on What Your Customer Wants Next*, a practical and fun handbook designed to simplify and demystify the art of trend tracking. Each letter offers an insight into navigating the unknown and a helpful hint to prepare you for what's next. She's also a contributor to *The Big Moo: Stop Trying to Be Perfect and Start Being Remarkable*, an "unprecedented collaboration of 33 of the world's smartest business thinkers," in the company of Tom Peters, Malcolm Gladwell, Alan Webber, and Seth Godin. Her next book, *The Hummer and the Mini: Navigating the Contradictions of the New Trend Landscape* is slated for release October 2006 from the Portfolio division of Penguin USA.

Prior to joining Target, Robyn directed the Fashion and Trend Merchandising departments of several top department stores in the United States, including Jordan Marsh of Boston, McRae's of Jackson, Mississippi, and Donaldson's, Minneapolis. Robyn graduated Magna Cum Laude from Mankato State University with a BS degree in Business Administration, Marketing, and Textile and Clothing Merchandising. She studied International Business Policy at the University of London, Birkbeck College, London, England.

**Schedule:**

September 26

Arrive RDU (Cassill meet at airport):  
Dinner with College of Textiles' faculty  
Dinner 7:00 p.m.: 518 West (W. Jones Street)  
<http://www.518west.com/>  
Hotel: Sheraton Raleigh Hotel

September 27<sup>th</sup>

8:00

Cassill pick up at Sheraton

8:45 – 9:15

Coffee & informal discussion, with College of Textile (COT) faculty (#3436)

9:35– 10:15

TAM 219 (Fashion Studio; Topic: Trend Analysis)

10:15 – 10:45

Tour Fashion Studio and Digital Design Center

10:45 – 11:15

Meet with College undergraduate and graduate students (#3436)

11:15– 12:15

Textile and Apparel Management *Design/Development Faculty Study Group* (Istook, May, Powell, Parrillo-Chapman, Little, Seyam, Cassill) and other TATM faculty (box lunch - 11:45).  
Topic: Design and Development program emphasis to meet industry needs

12:15 – 12:45

Break/set-up for lecture

12:50 – 2:10

Lecture: “*Trend/Countertrend: The Power of Paradox*”,  
Convocation Center

*Seminar Abstract:*

Trend used to be so simple. Once upon a time a trend was a trend specifically BECAUSE everyone wanted the same thing. Today, the “next big thing” is in reality many different things and it is not unusual for complete opposites to be deemed trendy at the same time. Trend/Countertrend explores the polarity of macro trends influencing the marketplace today. Can a commodity be a luxury? How do you customize your product for the masses? How can you make something old “brand” new? What is extreme relaxation all about anyway? And can you do good AND make money in today’s business environment? F. Scott Fitzgerald once said that the test of a first-class mind was the ability to hold two opposing ideas in the head at the same time and still be able to function. This presentation will help you embrace that concept in a practical manner that makes sense for business today.

2:15 – 3:00

Reception and informal discussion (#3436).

3:30

Depart for RDU airport