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YOUNG FASHION STAR WINS BT EMERGING FASHION DESIGNER AWARD

Young fashion star Christopher Esber last night won the BT Emerging Fashion Designer Award at a celebrity-studded event attended by some of Australia's leading fashion identities.

Announcing the winner at the BT Runway For Success event, BT Financial Group Chief Executive Brad Cooper said Esber had not only demonstrated his creativity but had begun laying the groundwork for a sustainable business.

"Christopher's talent has been recognised in Australia and overseas and he is a worthy winner of the BT Emerging Fashion Designer Award," said Mr Cooper. "He is clearly one of Australia's most exciting new design talents and we are extremely pleased to support and help him prepare for the best that seems certain to come his way."

Esber not only collects \$10,000 from financial services specialist BT but will also have access to mentoring and a financial planner to help him establish a sound financial plan to assist him with achieving his business and career goals.

Since graduating from The Fashion Design Studio in 2007 Esber has showcased his collections at New York Fashion Week and last year was named the L'Oreal Melbourne Fashion Festival National Designer award winner.

Esber showed his collection at Runway For Success alongside finalists KAHLO and TOME. The Emerging Fashion Designer collections were followed by runway shows from some of Australia's best known fashion labels – Willow, Carl Kapp, Bianca Spender, Lisa Ho, Lee Mathews, Little Joe Woman, Manning Cartell, Wayne Cooper and Orotan.

Runway For Success also provided a boost for Fitted For Work, a not-for-profit organisation supported by BT that helps Australian women prepare for employment by providing second-hand donated clothing suitable for job interviews as well as transition to work programs.

Guests were asked to donate a garment to Fitted For Work and with more than 400 of Australia's best dressed men and women attending the event at Australian Technology Park, Redfern, there was plenty of designer-label booty collected on the night.

The BT Emerging Fashion Designer Award is a partnership between BT and the Council of Textiles & Fashion Industries of Australia.

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Council of Textiles & Fashion Industries of Australia CEO Jo-Ann Kellock said: “The Council of Textiles & Fashion Industries of Australia has been actively supporting the Australian fashion industry for many years, more specifically through our Fashion Export Cluster. The BT Emerging Fashion Designer Award certainly answers a real need to help our up and coming designers in their desire to grow their business. Both the mentoring from a highly regarded Australian designer and a cash injection will certainly help them on their road to success.”

Mr Cooper said that through BT’s sponsorship of the Emerging Fashion Designer Award the company was investing in the future of talented young Australians.

“We are helping young designers to reach their full potential by showing them how to invest in their future and grow their wealth,” said Mr Cooper. “Creative talent has brought them to this point but a sustainable business requires goals and a plan to achieve them.”

Attending BT Runway For Success were designers Bianca Spender, Lisa Ho, Carl Kapp, Lee Mathews, Gail Elliott, Cheryl, Gabrielle and Vanessa Manning, Ana Maria Escobar and Kit Willow. Guests included Layne Beachley and Kirk Pengilly, David and Libby Koch, Deborah Hutton, Terry Biviano, Holly Brisley and Jane Flemming.

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