



COLLEEN KELLY JOINS ALEX APPAREL AS CEO

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NEW YORK — Colleen Kelly has been named chief executive officer of the Alex Apparel Group Inc., which designs and manufactures eveningwear under the Alex Evenings and Kay Unger labels.

Kelly continues as president of the Kahn Lucas girls' dress firm until Feb. 27 and joins Alex Apparel on March 2. She succeeds Dean Brizel, who cofounded Alex Apparel in 1989 and will become chairman.

"Atlantic Street Capital purchased Kay Unger about a year ago and is really looking to see growth," Kelly said Tuesday. "There's the potential to modernize it, build a broader category range and take Kay Unger to the next level, to more of a lifestyle brand. Right now it's mainly cocktail and evening dresses. There could be a day component." Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue are among the retail accounts.

Alex Evenings, which Kelly called "the mother ship brand," is sold at Macy's, Dillard's and Bon-Ton, among other retailers. Kelly said her objective will be "to modernize it but not too much. It's about keeping the core while giving it a younger state of mind." The group also sells the contemporary Phoebe by Kay Unger label.

"Colleen's appointment is a reflection of the momentum we are building in our business," said Brizel. "I am pleased to have led this company for over 25 years, and as chairman and major shareholder, I will remain active in helping to guide the company's strategic direction going forward."

Peter Shabecoff, managing partner at Atlantic Street Capital and a member of Alex Apparel's board, said he was pleased with the company's growth since Atlantic invested in the business three years ago. (Unger left her company in 2012.) Shabecoff cited Kelly's track record of "building effective teams, major apparel brands and strong profitable businesses."

Kelly is a 30-year veteran of apparel and retailing, serving in such roles as Tommy Hilfiger's group president of wholesale, North America, where she spearheaded the exclusive partnership with Macy's, and president of Calvin Klein Jeans at Warnaco. She was also a senior vice president at Donna Karan and since 2001 has been president of Kahn Lucas.