



KAREN THOMPSON *LSL BRANDS Founder and President*

I think the #1 question I get asked is, “How do you know what to stock in your stores?”

And the reality is, I don’t. You do.

Let me explain.

When I opened my first store more than 33 years ago, there were definitely a lot more mistakes than successes made in choosing what types of items to put in the store. What I thought would be sure hits ended up being misfires, and what I thought were items some people might like turned out to be most-wanted items. But I didn’t see these early misfires as mistakes; I saw them as learning opportunities. Having my own store, I realized, wasn’t about just stocking it with things I liked. It needed to be a place where you, our guest, could have assurance you would find the right thing, at the right time, and—this is key—get it right now.

But I also stock my stores with more than just merchandise. One of the most important parts of retail is to create an experience that leaves the guest happy, helped and understood. That’s why, beyond merchandise, I also invest in my team. To be blunt, they are core to the success of every store. They have opinions about what’s on-trend and share information on what you’re asking for. I always listen and tuck it away to think about. I seek out team players who not only live in the community but are excited to come in every day, and build their career in the retail hospitality field. And you can see and feel the difference

when you shop in our stores—the difference between someone who wants to help you versus someone who is told to help you.

I have so many people to be grateful for, especially my husband Dave. He has always been such a great supporter of what I want to do in my balance of growing a company and career.

The vision is big: develop a business that will hit its 100-year mark in 2088. I might not be here, but the values will live on. My career in retail has been one of the greatest rides of my life. And while there’s a place for ecommerce platforms like Amazon, it’s also more important than ever to embrace locally owned retail stores. It’s not just a cozy pajama set you’re buying at Lace Silhouettes; it’s the perfect fit, color and fabric you can wear for a Friday night movie party at home. And it isn’t just a Yeti tumbler you find at our newest store, Fox & Holly; it’s your morning buddy, filled with coffee made exactly the way you like it as you journey your way to your destination.

So, how do I stock my stores? I stock them with team members who love their community, love their careers, and love helping our “guests” find that perfect thing to make their day extra lovely.



KERRAN THOMPSON (KERRY) *LSL BRANDS Merchandise & Visual Coordinator*

As the famous quote says, “Just know, wherever you go, you can always go home.”

Nothing could be truer about my journey to find my place in the world of great style and great service in a great community.

Born and raised in Bucks County, I thought I needed to leave this small town to find my voice in the world of fashion. And I did! I went to New York City—like many aspiring fashion designers—and attended the Fashion Institute of Technology. But what I thought would be like “The Devil Wears Prada” ended up being more like CNBC for the fashion community. That’s when I had my “aha!” moment: Since I’d grown up in the family business of building stores that the community loved, I realized almost immediately that my teenage years were an amazing crash course in the business of fashion.

But I still yearned to see more, so I worked for Ralph Lauren in places like Aspen, Beverly Hills and Nantucket, where I sold his runway collection. It was a thrill! And it was fascinating to work with international clientele who not only expected educated service but also loved fashion, too. But still,

that inner voice in me said, this place was not for me.

So back to that quote, “you can always go home.” I longed to go back to the place where I felt my heart and soul were: Bucks County.

What I love most about Bucks County are the people. The people here care about others, and the people here brighten my day when I see them. I don’t see our customers as just customers; I see them as extended members of my family. They are guests. I can’t tell how many times I run into our guests who remember me as a small child in my mother’s first store. And now almost a dozen stores and 3 decades later, every day feels like a reunion when I meet and reunite with these amazing folks.

My journey is not to sell clothes. My journey is to spark joy in every guest’s experience, whether it’s a teenage girl using her hardearned money to buy an UGG sweatshirt, helping a dad quickly find that perfect Patagonia jacket, or helping our regular, beloved customers get that perfect look. My journey isn’t really my journey at all. It’s our Guests journey, to help them feel their best and look their best so we can all do our best to make Bucks County the best.

Shop the top brands of the industry



LIVERPOOL LOS ANGELES



YETI

free people

him. her. shoes.

Karen Thompson founded Lace Silhouettes Lingerie Inc. in 1988 in Peddler's Village in the quaint town of Lahaska. Karen's passion to develop a strong business starts with the core of a strong team and supportive community. Since the start of the company, she has always focused on building the business—one guest at a time. This means slowing down, understanding your guests' needs, and filling them. And it means keeping the retail excitement happening visually and professionally—something that is the core of the company's success today.

At Lace Silhouettes, each customer is a "guest" in their home. Service and a friendly smile have been the basic core, along with leading brand partnerships. Lace Silhouettes Lingerie Inc. (LSL Brands) is a family of retail hospitality stores under many different names such as Cotton Company, Village Outfitters, Sunflowers, and one of their newest additions, Fox & Holly, also located in Peddler's Village, Lahaska. Karen Thompson and her team, including her son, Kerry Thompson, are proud to have a fashion company headquarters in Bucks County. Celebrating the start of her 33rd year in business, Karen is thankful to her team for always wearing many hats to keep the company strong.

A pandemic story from a local business owner What's Next? One Day at a Time...

Questions to always keep in mind as the pandemic began:
What does "mandatory shutdown" mean? How long will it be? Should I shut down our warehouse to new deliveries? How long can this last? What should I advise my team to do? How do I address the bills that need to be paid on time? Should we go into the office?

The list goes on and on...so many questions and so little direction. Ok now, my only thought was that we will deal with this "one day at a time." I was and still am extremely thankful for my team who stayed on board to keep the company moving in some "fashion". I like to think we moved it forward.

I had to make a tough decision to not immediately reopen Fox & Holly after the government shutdown that had forced all nonessential retail to temporarily close. I was so sad to have to close the pop-up location. Realizing 26,000 square feet might not be the easiest to navigate at this time, I had to look at all options to create something new again...something again unique.

I wanted to create a new wave of a boutique department store, filled with the brands our guests love. I have always believed that, when one door closes, another door opens, and when I walked into the new space that in the past I loved as "Left Bank Home" and "Village Flower Shop," I had a vision—a multilevel shopping experience.

Now, 19 months after the pandemic started, I begin my 33rd year in business, and the fun has just begun. My belief still stays true...let's take this one day at a time.

Everything will be alright.

