

OAK HALL INTRODUCES CAP & GOWN MADE OF RECYCLED PLASTIC BOTTLES

GreenWeaver line of regalia is latest effort to go green on campus

SALEM, Va. (April 20, 2009) – Recycling just got a lot smarter.

Oak Hall Cap & Gown, a leading manufacturer of academic apparel, has introduced gowns and caps made of 100 percent, post-consumer recycled plastic bottles.

In the latest effort to go green on campus, this new line of graduation wear – named GreenWeaver – is made of fabric spun from molten plastic pellets. It takes an average of 23 bottles to make each gown.

“College students and campuses are at the forefront of environmental conscience and green habits,” says Joseph D’Angelo, executive vice president of Oak Hall. “When we started seeing such campus trends as biodegradable utensils, we felt developing an environmentally friendly gown was the right thing to do for students, colleges and universities and our planet.”

After first experimenting with a mix of bamboo and polyester, Oak Hall eventually turned to recycled plastic bottles – already used to make sweatshirts and other clothing – to change the way academic regalia are made and worn.

The result is a comfortably soft outfit virtually indistinguishable in color, feel or fit from traditional polyester material. The company will begin marketing GreenWeaver this summer, and new caps and gowns will be available for December graduations and fully rolled out in time for next spring’s graduates.

All of the company’s caps and gowns are made in Virginia.

With some 60 million plastic bottles going into U.S. landfills alone every day, GreenWeaver offers colleges and universities a chance to turn trash into keepsakes.

“‘Wow!’ was the first reaction we received when we showed some of our customers,” D’Angelo said. “They’ve told us, ‘I can’t believe that you can make something that can look like this out of plastic. Our students will embrace this.’”

Oak Hall had already taken steps to protect the environment, such as using recycled cardboard in caps and switching to a non-polluting dry-cleaning machine.

“Universities are making the commitment to turn their campuses as green as they can,” D’Angelo said. “We’ve heard that call, and we’re confident that universities will support the GreenWeaver line because that’s what they’ve asked for.”

For every gown purchased, Oak Hall will make a contribution to a campus environmental group as directed by each university’s administration.

ABOUT OAK HALL

Founded in 1889, The Oak Hall Company is one of the country’s leading manufacturers of academic, judicial, and religious apparel. The company operates three sewing facilities in Virginia with more than 330,000 square feet to manufacture and ship graduation regalia, pulpit, choir, judicial, and kindergarten gowns, and related accessories. Oak Hall services more than 1,600 colleges and universities, 6,000 high schools, as well as 10,000 nursery schools and kindergartens, and 2,500 choirs and ministers. To learn more, visit www.oakhalli.com.