

Pettigrew Keeps Belk Fashion-Forward

*From [Careers and the DisABLED](#)

Every day Hayes Pettigrew gets to combine two of her loves - fashion and shopping - as a senior apparel designer for Belk's Crown & Ivy private label.

"Crown & Ivy delivers modern and preppy style inspired by the classic design of the new American South," she says. "The brand is available in women's, men's, kids and home, but I design for the women's collection."

Pettigrew recently traveled to Europe and Asia to get a head start on next year's fashions.

"I started off in Europe to shop the retail markets and get a pulse on the newest, most fashion-forward trends," she says.

"I then traveled with my team to Asia to work with our Belk vendors to incorporate those trends and ideas into designs for the Crown & Ivy Spring 2019 line." Belk is a private department store company with nearly 300 stores across 16 southern states. Since Belk is headquartered in Charlotte, NC, Pettigrew made the move south about eight years ago.

"I was looking for a change from New York City, where I lived and worked for almost 10 years," she recalls.

"An opportunity with Belk came up, and I was drawn to the idea of living in North Carolina. On a whim I sent in my application. And the rest is history. I love living in Charlotte!"

Getting into the fashion industry can be difficult, but persistence and hard work pays off, something Pettigrew, who was born with severe-profound hearing loss, knows well.

"Being deaf in a hearing world isn't easy. I've always had to work that much harder than others, push myself that much more. It's been worth it every single day," she says.

"My mother always said, 'The squeaky wheel gets the grease.' Being deaf was never something I was shy about. If I needed extra help, then I asked for it. If I didn't understand something, then I raised my hand. I learned that it's okay to stand out."



Hayes Pettigrew – senior apparel designer for Crown & Ivy

She further advises others to not give up. “Don’t be afraid to fail once in a while. And don’t be afraid to be different. People will remember you, and that’s a good thing.

What Pettigrew loves most about her job is the ability to be creative each day, but that can also be a challenge.

“I have to constantly push myself to keep my ideas new and fresh. If I’m bored, then my customer will be bored. I want to make sure she keeps coming back to Belk and shopping Crown & Ivy,” she notes.

And what she loves most about Belk is not only the sense of camaraderie, but also the opportunity to grow the company’s Crown & Ivy brand.

“It’s great to come into work every day and be surrounded by truly talented, awesome people,” shares Pettigrew. “It’s also really fulfilling to be working on a label like Crown & Ivy that so clearly resonates with the customer. I get to be a part of the team that built this lifestyle brand from the ground floor. It’s not every day that someone gets to build a success story and be able to say, ‘I did that!’”