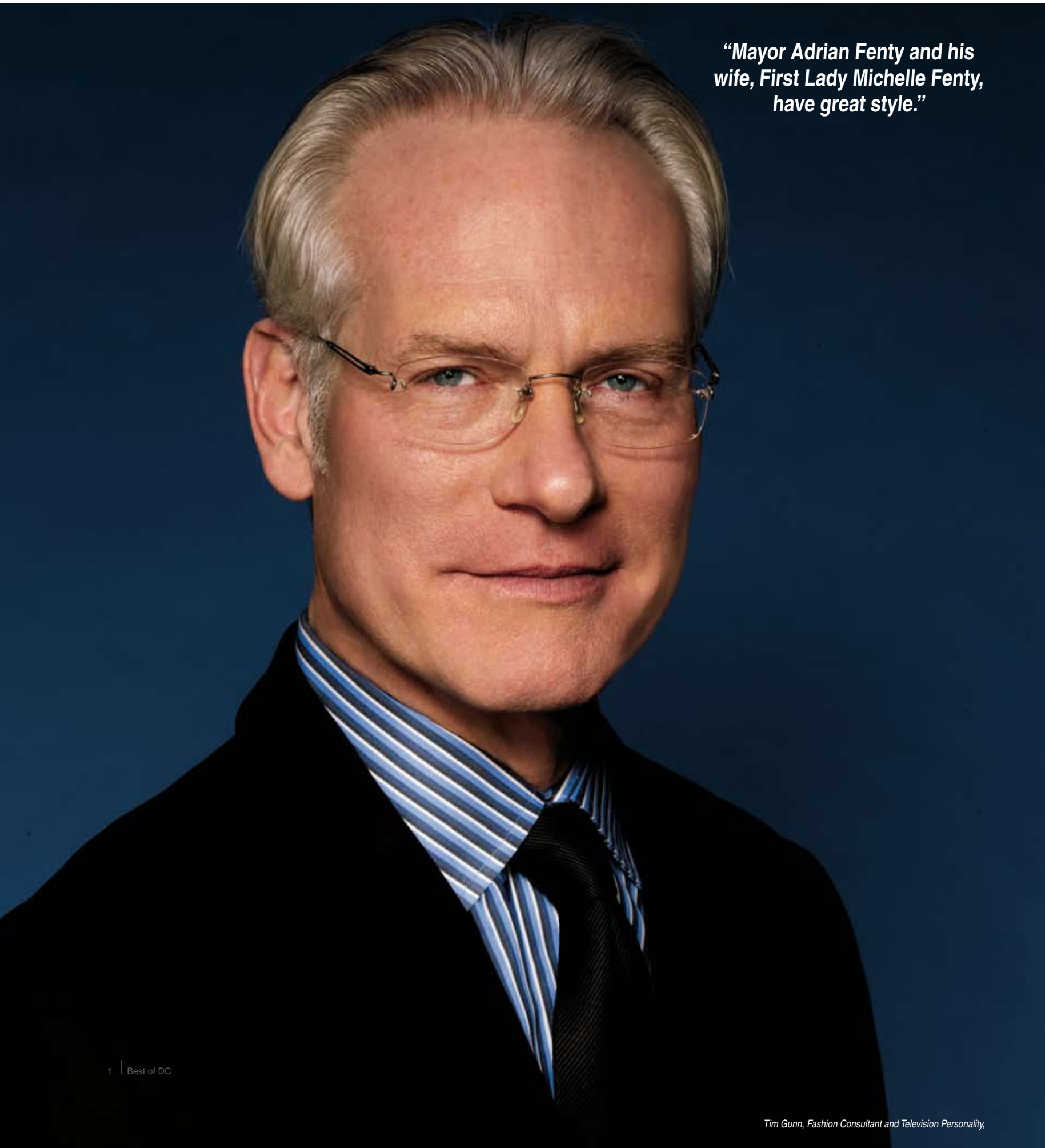




Washington, D.C. - Designers & Couture

The nation's capital is quickly becoming a fashion destination. A Capital City from its inception, Washington has taught the world how to dress for success - one power suit at a time. Yet, the city's conservative fashion identity though well known is hardly representative of the District that can be found nestled deep within its neighborhoods. Case in Point: Tim Gunn.



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Tim Gunn grew up in Georgetown, is a graduate of the Corcoran School of Art, celebrity mentor on the Bravo television reality series, Project Runway and Chief Creative Officer at Liz Claiborne Inc. Prior to joining Liz Claiborne Inc., Gunn served as a member of the administration and faculty at Parsons The New School for Design for close to 24 years. In 1990, he became Associate Dean. When asked who sets the pace for fashion in WDC, he replied, *“I think the real barometric gauge of Fashion in Washington comes from the top.”*

“Mayor Adrian Fenty and his wife, First Lady Michelle Fenty, have great style.” But, he cautioned, *“it is up to them to send a profound enough message that can alter how others view the Nation's Capital.”*

Is Washington, DC becoming a fashion destination? It depends, Gunn explains during an interview

aired at the Capital Catwalk Fashion Event. *“First, WDC has to have a fashion culture.”* He believes, *“it starts with education in the high school at the very least and ideally in colleges with solid curricula. It helps to have support for young designers through something like a fashion incubator. And it helps to have a retail environment that is welcoming to young entrepreneurial designers.”*

A lot has happened since Tim Gunn made these statements at the annual Capital Catwalk Fashion Event held at the historic Carnegie Mellon Auditorium. Mariessa Terrell White, Founder of Simone's Butterfly, a local fashion branding firm drafted Bill 17-176 to create the Commission on Fashion Arts and Events. On April 3, 2007, DC Council Members Kwame Brown, Harry Thomas, Jr. and Marion Barry introduced the Bill before the full City Council in November 2007. The Bill was co-sponsored by Council Chair Vincent Gray, Council Member Carol Schwartz and Council Member Tommy Wells. The Bill became a law in April 2008.

Meanwhile on the Executive side of DC government, Mayor Adrian Fenty, launched a retail action strategy to identify best practices on how to grow the city's retail offerings without sacrificing local

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independent boutiques. In August 2007, the Mayor hosted a District Summit to explore how the city can leverage its creative economy (an economy fueled by the power of innovative thought and ideas) to improve the city's overall economic vibrancy.

By encouraging the flourishing of small businesses and the development of creative artful elements in education, Mayor Adrian Fenty, like New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Chicago Mayor Richard Daley has taken steps to create and grow a new economy in the city; a fashion economy.

www.bravotv.com/Tim_Gunn