

Young Founders Take On the Future of Beauty

Garrett Greller, Patrick Finnegan and Tylor Frankel discussed the opportunities — and challenges — of being Gen-Z entrepreneurs.

By [Jennifer Weil](#)

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Taylor Frankel, Patrick Finnegan and Garrett Greller. KATIE JONES/WWD

Generation Z is a holy grail of consumer cohorts, but it also counts a number of young dynamic entrepreneurs.

Garrett Greller, a cofounder of Uncle Bud’s Hemp, was 19 years old when he started

his company. He had been diagnosed with arthritis in his knees, hips, back and ankles when he was 14, and tried traditional medicine to help with that, but they gave bad reactions.

“That was when I went on a mission to create something that was more natural, effective and affordable than what I was using,” he said. “I contacted an FDA-registered lab because I learned all about the simple, amazing ingredient CBD and hemp from a documentary. I wrote up a four-page paper, put it on my mom’s desk and said: ‘We got to give this a try.’”

Greller found it worked better than anything else. “I wanted to bring it to the world, because it really changed my life,” he said, adding Uncle Bud’s has grown from pain relief to self care, personal care, feminine hygiene and wellness.

Taylor Frankel, chief brand officer and cofounder of Nudestix, was 17 when she began her company with her mother, Jenny. Early on, Frankel was very involved with communications and education; today she leads marketing and creative teams to be

sure there's a cohesive brand identity across all Nudestix channels and platforms.

Patrick Finnegan, managing partner of Intuition Capital, was 16 when he launched his first venture, but was on the campaign for former President Barack Obama even earlier — at 11.

“I was able to connect with people of all generations,” said Finnegan, about his start in finance. After dropping out of high school, he began connecting with smart, young entrepreneurs whom he wanted to back.

“I learned the difference between influence versus affluence,” he said. Finnegan began bridging both worlds — of people who had money and the influential members of his generation. “Then, just serendipitously, I got approached to work for a fund,” said Finnegan, adding soon thereafter he launched one of his own with partners.

“I go with my gut,” he said of investments, adding as an investor one must have persistence, drive, integrity, humility and honesty.

As a Gen Z-er, Frankel has spent time combating impostor syndrome by consistently picturing and embodying a vision of herself years down the line, and by relishing the positive power of youth. “Being a young entrepreneur founder is a superpower,” she said. “We have so much insight into what our generation wants. We keep each other and we keep companies accountable — whether it's sustainability, clean **beauty**, social issues, impact.”

Among Greller's challenges in starting his company as a sophomore in college was making sure people didn't think he was selling weed out of his dorm. “Uncle Bud's is exactly the opposite of that,” he said. “We want to change as many lives as possible, creating an authentic brand that's educating this consumer on a brand-new ingredient.

“To be able to lend credibility as a young founder, you need to be able to partner with the right people,” continued Greller, citing folk such as Toni Braxton and Magic Johnson. Authentic storytelling and messaging are key, too. “I talk to customers on a daily basis, because I like to hear their pain points,” he said.

Community-building and social impact are also key at Nudestix. “Every month we're activating women-led initiatives for our community,” said Frankel. “In addition to that, we also work very closely with environmental scientists.”

What does the future of **beauty**, 10 years down the road, look like to these entrepreneurs?

“It's something that's not about what social media has made people believe they need to look like. It is about what makes them feel beautiful inside,” said Finnegan.

“In my opinion, the future of beauty is going to come down to holistic wellness,” said Greller.

Frankel said it's about “developing beauty products for real life — and what does that mean? It's multitasking beauty products, minimalist beauty products that are clean.