

Berkeley College Interior Design Students Learn About the Product Lifecycle at Samuelson Furniture in Paterson



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BERKELEY COLLEGE INTERIOR DESIGN STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT THE PRODUCT LIFECYCLE AT SAMUELSON FURNITURE IN PATERSON



Photo Caption: *Berkeley College Interior Design students and professors visited Samuelson Furniture in Paterson, NJ, on Thursday, February 26, 2026, where they learned about product design, the lifecycle of Samuelson Furniture pieces, and the manufacturing processes – from sketches to shipping the final handmade products.*

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Berkeley College Interior Design students and professors visited Samuelson Furniture in Paterson, NJ, on Thursday, February 26, 2026, where they learned about the innovations and nuances behind product design, the lifecycle of Samuelson Furniture pieces, and the manufacturing processes – from sketches to shipping the final handmade products. The field trip is another example of the College’s commitment to experiential learning, providing students the opportunity to step beyond the classroom, engage in hands-on experiences, and see firsthand how their degrees can translate into a variety of career paths.

[Samuelson Furniture](#) is a four-generation, family-owned company that recently celebrated its 90th anniversary. Laurence “Larry” Chalfin, CEO, Samuelson Furniture, is the third generation of his family to run the business and shared the key to remaining successful in the furniture industry with students: “Nothing is a piece of furniture anymore – it’s a piece of furniture with technology,” he said. “Most of the things we do or come up with that are great are driven by adversity.”

Chalfin showed the students how the company remains on the cutting edge of technology, including by creating patented designs to assist senior citizens with everyday functionality.

Students interacted with BUILD Walls by Samuelson, a patented design software that allows users to configure rooms with Samuelson Furniture’s customizable products.

“I was in awe of Samuelson Furniture’s commitment to craftsmanship and high-quality products,” said student Valerie Ornstein of Wyckoff, NJ, who is pursuing an Associate’s degree in Interior Design. “I admired their ability to collaborate, innovate, and problem solve.”



Photo Caption: (Left) Laurence “Larry” Chalfin, CEO, Samuelson Furniture, shows Berkeley College students and professors around the company’s showroom (right). Berkeley College Interior Design students and professors visited Samuelson Furniture in Paterson, NJ, on Thursday, February 26, 2026, where they learned about product design, the lifecycle of Samuelson Furniture pieces, and the manufacturing processes – from sketches to shipping the final handmade products.

About three dozen people manufacture the Samuelson furniture, which has branched from its origins in structural frame making and crate building during World War II to furnishing luxury hotels and high-end companies, from Disney World's Animal Kingdom to Tiffany's in New York City.

Larry Chalfin and his sons, Michael Chalfin, President, and David Chalfin, Sales, spoke about the importance of product quality and relationships.

"You always need to look at the bigger picture," Michael Chalfin said. "We are not a transactional company; we're based in relationships."

"It took 90 years to build our reputation; it takes one job to lose it," Larry Chalfin said. "The relationships you develop are the key to everything. Don't burn your bridges."



Photo Caption: *Michael Chalfin, President, Samuelson Furniture (center, black sweater) demonstrates BUILD Walls, a patented design software that allows users to configure rooms with Samuelson Furniture's customizable products. Berkeley College Interior Design students and professors visited Samuelson Furniture in Paterson, NJ, on Thursday, February 26, 2026, where they learned about product design, the lifecycle of Samuelson Furniture pieces, and the manufacturing processes – from sketches to shipping the final handmade products.*

The Chalfin family also spoke about the administrative side of their business, sharing client portfolios including ideas, sketches, and different versions of designs.

"I like how the designers have documented all steps of the process – it is great to have for my own professional portfolio moving forward," said Gabriela Villasante, of Caldwell, NJ, who is pursuing an Associate's degree in Interior Design.

The Chalfins encouraged up-and-coming interior design professionals to ask questions and seek new opportunities.

“Hone your skills,” Michael Chalfin said. “Don’t lose sight of picking up a pencil, and don’t rely on artificial intelligence. ... You drive the aesthetic, the feel of what we are doing. Don’t lose sight of that.”



Photo Caption: *Laurence “Larry” Chalfin, CEO, Samuelson Furniture, shows students Samuelson Furniture chairs and structural frames from more than 90 years ago. Berkeley College Interior Design students and professors visited Samuelson Furniture in Paterson, NJ, on Thursday, February 26, 2026, where they learned about product design, the lifecycle of Samuelson Furniture pieces, and the manufacturing processes – from sketches to shipping the final handmade products.*

About Berkeley College

Berkeley College, founded in 1931, is a career-focused institution accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education that offers students Master’s, Bachelor’s, and Associate’s degree and Certificate programs in more than 20 career fields. The College also offers Continuing Education programs to enhance career credentials.

Berkeley College has campuses in New York City and in Newark, Woodbridge, and Woodland Park, NJ, with more than 4,000 students enrolled. In addition, Berkeley College Online® serves a global population. *U.S. News & World Report* has named Berkeley College among the Best Colleges for Online Bachelor’s Programs and among the Best Online Bachelor’s Programs for Veterans for 13 consecutive years. Berkeley College is also ranked among the Best Regional Colleges/Universities in the North in the 2026 edition of the *U.S. News & World Report* Best Colleges survey. The website address is <https://BerkeleyCollege.edu>.

The mission of Berkeley College is to empower each student to achieve lifelong success.