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What you Shea?

Shea Moisture commercial fail sparks an uproar

BY KONNER JOHNSON
SOUTHERN DIGEST - STAFF WRITER



DIGEST ART

Earlier this week, well known hair care brand Shea Moisture suffered a lot of backlash on social media after the family-owned business launched a controversial commercial that opened with a black woman discussing the difficulties of dealing with her natural hair, but quickly transitioned to two white women -- a blonde and a redhead. One said she didn't "know what to do" with her hair and the other complained about dyeing it.

The intended message was, "Break free from hair hate," but loyal consumers found the juxtaposition to be very insensitive.

Shea Moisture, a black-owned business began over twenty-five years ago, and gained success selling a range of products for textured hair. However, the ad focused on women disliking their natural hair, primarily featured white women and mostly excluded models with dark skin and natural hair. This ad ended with the slogan, "Everybody Gets Love," prompting users to object with an "AllHairMatters" hashtag. The hashtag, a reference to people who dismiss the Black Lives Matter movement by saying "All Lives Matter." The company apologized and quickly took the ad down. In a Facebook post, Shea Moisture stated, "We really f-ed this one up, please know that our intention was not and would never be to disrespect our community, and as such, we are pulling this piece immediately because it does not represent what we intended to communicate."

Richelieu Dennis, the company's founder and CEO stated, "women of color continue to be the company's focus."

This big controversy wasn't the first time Shea Moisture faced major backlash for appearing to shift their marketing toward white people.

In February 2015, the brand faced criticism for using a white baby in a social media post. Also, just weeks before the April 2017 ad aired, the brand was criticized for "rebranding their products" and ingredients to benefit white consumers." They strongly denied that this was the case, saying in a statement, "We don't have to change our award-winning formulations to appeal to someone they weren't made for. We simply innovate new products to solve the needs our community identifies."

In September of 2015, they announced a partnership with a minority, non-control investor. "We are still an independent, family-owned and operated company – and we are still at the helm…running the business, making the decisions and focused more than ever on YOU," Shea Moisture said in a statement. For a brand designed to cater to women with natural and textured hair, this video didn't seem to align with its mission. Shea Moisture isn't the first company to get slammed for an ad campaign on social media in recent weeks.

With Shea Moisture releasing their apology, people on social media were still not happy and basically stated that they keep their apology. The questions now are, do you think the Shea Moisture ad was a good idea? Or Will Shea moisture lose a lot of customers due to this ad?

Proctor & Gamble leaders give back as alumnus

BY BRIA GREMILLION
SOUTHERN DIGEST - MANAGING EDITOR

Several alumni members employed by Procter & Gamble (P&G), the largest consumer packaged goods company in the world, gave back to their alma mater through a Personal Development and Leadership Institute for SUBR students on April 21st and April 22nd.

P&G's theme for the event was $1MM investment in you. The alumni, who also serve as top managers with the company, have all been employed by P&G for over ten years.

The alumni managers presented a plethora of topics to students such as leadership, emotional intelligence, unconscious bias, the importance of performance, image, and exposure, and the importance of the "elevator speech".

The SU alums also shared what skills are needed to obtain executive level positions at Procter & Gamble along with key learnings from their work experience.

Global Fabric Enhancer Supply Chain Leader at Procter & Gamble and one of the speakers in attendance, Lenette Newbold has been employed with P&G for 24 years now. Newbold graduated from Southern University (SU) in 1996 with a degree in Electrical Engineering.

P&G's Global Business Services, Information Technology Senior Manager/Fabric Innovation Leader, Bennette Veals is a native of Baton Rouge and graduated from SU with a BS in Computer Science. Veals has been employed with P&G for 31 years.

P&G Sales Manager and 1996 graduate of Southern University, John Montgomery speaks of the creation of the leadership institute.

"The Leadership Institute was truly a group effort and a testament to the current SU alumnus at P&G and their love for Southern. While many of us have freely given our time to Southern University through formal events such as career fairs or more informal classroom visits, it was mutually agreed that the company, and the university could do more together. It was clear that P&G needed to increase its exposure on Southern University's campus. Tide PODS Operating Department Leader of the P&G plant in Alexandria, Larry Wright, partnered then with Director of Southern University's Career Services Center, Tamara Montgomery, to foster the idea of the Leadership Institute. Our P&G SU Alumni Recruiting Team rallied to ensure we deliver a strong Leadership Institute," said Montgomery.



From Left to Right: John Montgomery (P&G), Bennette Veals (P&G), Tamara Montgomery (SU Career Services), Natalie Hurks (P&G) and Lenette Newbold (P&G)

Montgomery goes on to explain that the Leadership Institute was successful because of the energy, engagement, and dedication of the highly talented group of Southern University students.

Freshman business major, Eddie L. Pikes reflects on his time at the institute.

"I really enjoyed the enthusiasm and passion of those involved as well as the information provided," said Pikes.

Director of Career Services, Tamara Montgomery speaks highly of P&G, stating that they have raised the bar for companies looking to partner with the university in the future.

"It was very refreshing to see alums in those high leadership positions from SU who are graduates of SU who came back to the university to pour into the lives of our students," said Montgomery.

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children to support, so for sure!"

Zolciak isn't the only original RHOA cast member who's been planning comeback on the show. It was rumored that NeNe Leaks was also set to return to RHOA for season 10, but it doesn't seem likely being that Leaks told "People" that she turned down an offer to return to the hit reality show due to conflicts in negotiations with the network for the current season nine. Leaks stated "When we couldn't work the deal out on me making appearances, then they went to Kim to work the same thing, I suppose. I'm assuming she took it." When asked how she felt about Zolciak returning Leaks expressed how she found it odd that she was returning to the show after years of not being on but also thought the fans would love to see her back. With the shocking news that Phaedra Parks was fired and Kim Zolciak is being rehired it's safe to say season 10 will be very interesting.