



FLAWLESS: Melanie Bragg has battled mental health all her life and was thrilled to be a part of the campaign for the Coast's own opal bikini.
Photo: Patrick Woods

Passionate women behind \$35k bikini

Jeweller, designer and model share the same vision

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THE stunning opal bikini designed and created on the Sunshine Coast is more than just clothing, but a beacon of hope for mental health.

A team of three women, all passionate about mental health awareness, are behind the \$35,000 creation consisting of three opals set in gold on quality fabric. From the initial thought, the sketches and the creation to the final product, the bikini was designed and modelled with an important message embedded.

Here are the stories of the designer, jeweller and model behind the project that is set to turn heads for all the right reasons.

Vanessa Nock - jeweller

Creating the centrepiece of a one-of-a-kind bikini was "written in the stars" for jeweller Vanessa Nock, who says it was the highlight of her career.

The talented jeweller jumped at the chance to design and craft the unique piece after "clicking" immediately with



GIRL POWER: UniqueNess Designer Jewellery master jeweller Vanessa Nock (left) and Veve Swimwear owner and designer, Vanessa Boyce.
Photo: Contributed



Veve Swimwear designer Vanessa Boyce.

Ms Nock's love for jewellery started in high school where she was the only girl in her metal work class - and loved it.

"I really love making people's dreams become real and into something they can hold," she said.

After more than 15 years of experience on the Sunshine Coast, Ms Nock recently started her own business - UniqueNess Designer Jewellery.

The opal bikini was her first creation under the new brand. "A statement was what we were looking for... we needed movement in the design and a functional purpose," she said.

"It's been such an amazing experience to see it come to life."

Vanessa Boyce - swimwear designer

Behind the glistening gemstones of the bikini lay a message of hope that Sunshine Coast designer Vanessa Boyce hopes to spread around the world.

The Veve Swimwear owner always dreamed of creating a gemstone piece for her label and unveiled the opal-encrusted bikini with help of jeweller Vanessa Nock. The duo's combined love for opals matched their passion for mental health awareness which spurred them to create the piece with three large gemstones set in gold and quality fabrics.

With 15 years in the fashion industry, Ms Boyce has dealt with depression and anxiety, but was shocked when one of

her colleagues, Bailee Schneider, took her own life. As well as spreading the message of mental health awareness, she said the bikini was a tribute to the young model's life. Ms Boyce hoped to collaborate with celebrities and dreamed of seeing the dazzling bikini on Beyonce one day.

Melanie Bragg - model

When Melanie Bragg's phone rang as she was evacuating from the Townsville floods, nothing could have prepared her for the news she received.

The real message behind the bikini was what resonated with Ms Bragg, who had struggled with mental health from a young age. The passionate mental health advocate said the news was "a sign" and she felt honoured to be a part of a "massive" swimwear line.

"I've lost friends who have become overcome by depression and this is at least spreading that awareness," she said. "If this helps even just one person to get out of that struggle, then my goal is accomplished."

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