

# Specialty fabrics Review

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## Recycled fiber: head of the class

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More than 240,000 college graduates will make an environmental statement this year as they ascend an auditorium stage to receive their degrees. The caps and gowns that identify the school, degree type and major course of study will be made of 100 percent recycled—and recyclable—REPREVE®. Unifi Inc., Greensboro, N.C., produces multifilament polyester and nylon textured yarns, some made from post-consumer plastic bottles.

Each gown in the Renew collection made by Herff Jones, an Indianapolis-based company selling graduation apparel, uses fibers from approximately 29 plastic bottles. The Renew collection caps and gowns take nearly seven million plastic bottles a year out of the waste stream.

Sentimental types may keep college graduation robes, but the practical ones “can donate their gowns to be recycled back into REPREVE, helping to create a closed-loop recycling process,” says Tom Carew, vice president and general manager of Herff Jones’ cap and gown division. An estimated 140 colleges and universities choose Renew caps and gowns, including the University of Houston, University of Michigan, Syracuse University, Marquette University, Johns Hopkins University and Providence College.



Many major brands use REPREVE® recycled fibers in products, including Ford, Polartec, Haggard, The North Face, Patagonia and AllSteel. Photo: Unifi Inc.

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