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Perfect fit

ULL graduate finds market for her line of shapewear for men

- By [KAREN MARTIN](#)
- Advocate assistant People editor
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For a long time now, women have had garments that whittle an inch or two here and there. Girdles. Shapewear. Spanx.

But what about the guys?

With the increased interest in looking good, why shouldn't men be able to get a little help achieving a defined waist and chiseled abs?

Now Stephanie Thibeaux, a University of Louisiana at Lafayette grad, is giving them that chance.

The 30-year-old Houston resident has designed a line of "compression" tanks, T-shirts and underwear called Sculptees.

"They enhance what you already have and hide what you don't want them to see," said Thibeaux, who grew up in the Lafayette area, where her parents, Margie and Albert Booth, still live.

Made of microfiber nylon-spandex stretch fabric, the various Sculptees tanks and T-shirts offer different levels of control.

For maximum control, there's the "Slim" tank, which offers the most compression from chest to waist. The "Pex" tank has a relaxed fit at the chest and tight control at the waist. Each sells for \$58.

There's a \$78 T-shirt, called "T-Slim Mesh Tee," which hugs the body, pulls up the pecs and aids back posture. The "Bandit," which sells for \$38, is a wide band (think tube top) called a "waist smoother" that provides light to moderate control.

Coming soon is the "Jimmy," a \$54 pair of boxer briefs, which offer "moderate control with relaxed front panel."

Thibeaux said guys are meant to wear Sculptees under their clothes, but noted that some men like to wear them alone with a pair of jeans or shorts.

“They’re designed just like a regular T-shirt or tank,” said Thibeaux, “so no one knows you’re getting a little help.”

Sculptees, which are manufactured in the U.S. in a host of colors, are not as tight as most women’s control garments, she said.

“Women want to look skinny,” Thibeaux said. “Guys want to look sculpted and smooth.”

Surprisingly, it’s not only the guy who wants a little help with his physique who’s buying Sculptees.

“We sell a lot to guys who are already slim and in shape,” said Thibeaux.

“It lets them show off their muscles.”

Thibeaux said she got the idea for Sculptees in 2006 while working on her MBA at Prairie View A&M.

“I was at the gym and I saw all these guys looking at themselves in the mirror — they do much more than women — and I saw that they could show off in the gym shirts, but I wondered what they wore when they left the gym. I mean, there’s tons of stuff for women,” Thibeaux said.

Busy with life, she didn’t do anything at first. When, however, she couldn’t shake the idea, she started seriously researching the market in 2007. Thibeaux, who said she doesn’t know how to sew and had never designed a garment, relied on husband Brian Thibeaux’s feedback to get the garments just right.


“He’s my guinea pig,” she said, laughing.

Two years of development, refinement and finding a manufacturer later, Sculptees came to market earlier this year.

Sculptees are available in stores in California, Texas, Florida, Missouri and New Jersey, and Thibeaux hopes to get a Louisiana retailer soon. You also can find them at <http://sculptees.com> and <http://www.freshpair.com>.

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