



Girl Crush: Entrepreneur & Vixely Advisor, Lauren Maillian Bias



Lauren Maillian Bias, serial entrepreneur & Vixely advisor.

Meet **Lauren Maillian Bias**, serial entrepreneur, inspiration and Vixely's new advisor. Lauren is most recently the Founder and CEO of **Luxury Market Branding**, a strategic marketing and branding consultancy, and is also a Founding Partner of **Gen Y Capital Partners**, an early stage accelerator focused on growing innovative start-ups. Prior to launching her latest ventures, Lauren was the Founder and Chief Operating Officer of **Sugarleaf Vineyards**, the only African-American owned and operated winery in Virginia. After being open to the public for less than five years, Lauren transformed Sugarleaf into a nationally recognized, internationally award-winning, cult vineyard and brand.

Prior to her

entrepreneurial and marketing career, Lauren was a recognized international fashion model. Lauren's formal expertise and education in marketing coupled with her career as a model in high fashion gives Lauren a keen sense of how to brand and maintain the image of both individuals and companies in various industries.



Lauren and the Vixely team at Vixely's Endless Summer Cocktails & Benefit.

LAUREN MAILLIAN



Lauren's writing on entrepreneurship has been featured in key media outlets such as *Forbes* and *Fast Company*, and she was honored at The White House in 2011 by the Kauffman Foundation for her addition to the Impact100 list, which recognizes the top 100 entrepreneurs under 30. Lauren is very active in various philanthropic organizations that affect youth and poverty, and is a Lifetime Member of the Children's Aid Society.

Vixely is thrilled to join forces with Lauren as an entrepreneur and mentor we deeply admire, and are excited to bring Vixely to more women through our work together. Read on to learn more about Lauren from her inspirations to her life as a proud single parent (of two absolutely beautiful children, we might add!) and why always "moving forward" is her best advice.

Vixely (V): What is your role and the name of your company?

Lauren Maillian Bias (LMB): Founder and CEO, *Luxury Market Branding* and Founding Partner, *Gen Y Capital Partners*.

V: Where are you from and where do you live now?

LMB: I am born and raised in New York City, Manhattan specifically. I went to the Fashion Institute of Technology and after living abroad in three countries, at 27, I still call New York City home.

V: What made you decide to pursue this path and start your own company?

LMB: I have always been a big dreamer and a fearless doer. I know no other way than making my own path to success and I find the journey of entrepreneurship to be empowering, thrilling and rewarding. Being able to do what you love successfully is truly a gift.

LAUREN MAILLIAN



V: What has been the most fulfilling aspect of being a female entrepreneur or changemaker?

LMB: The most fulfilling aspect of being a female entrepreneur is the ability to shed light on windows of opportunity for other women by leading by example. Once you become successful and respected in your industry, you can not only serve as an inspiration, but actually act as a conduit by opening doors to help catapult someone else's success. We need more strong women out there making waves, and for me, as a mother, making sure that my children see the head of their household as a strong, vibrant, successful leader is fulfilling enough for me.

V: What sort of women do you try to reach with your company and brand?

LMB: Most of our clients at Luxury Market Branding consider the strong, smart, fashion conscious, professional woman between 21-45 who loves to be an early adopter of aspirational luxury goods to be their target consumer. Not always, but when it comes to luxury goods and women, that's a good start!

V: Who are your inspirations?

LMB: I am constantly inspired by innovation, the various cultures and religions of the world, artistic trends and anything that motivates and engages consumers. In the creative realm, I am inspired by vivid color palettes and intuitive designs that captivate people. I am always inspired by how worldly experience can shape such different perspectives and narratives. I am always equally fascinated yet humbled to understand how the world looks in the eyes of another person.

V: What do you do for fun? What makes you the most happy?

LMB: I enjoy traveling with my children for fun. I am the most happy when they are happy, so that probably means we would be on a beach somewhere!

LAUREN MAILLIAN

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Lauren and the First Lady, Michelle Obama.

V: If you could invite anyone to a dinner party, dead or alive, who would be sitting at your table?

LMB: Michelle Obama.

V: Favorite public moment involving yourself or your brand:

LMB: Being honored at the White House by the Kauffman Foundation in 2011 as an Impact100 Honoree, which lists the top 100 entrepreneurs under 30. It was an absolute honor and a surreal experience to be recognized and have the opportunity to speak at The White House.

V: Last trip or holiday you took?

LMB: Turks and Caicos—I love that place!

V: What are you reading?

LMB: Vixely!

V: Turn-ons?

LMB: Swag! I always look for someone with confidence, intelligence and morals who is spiritually grounded (in anything!) and comfortable in their own skin—oh yes, and athletic!

V: Turn-offs or dealbreakers?

LMB: Any combination of terrible nails, teeth, back hair or shoes is a major no-no.

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V: What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

LMB: I do double parenting duty; I am 100% a single parent (and proud of it)!

V: What is something you are the most proud of?

LMB: I am most proud of starting my first business at 19. When I founded my first company, I just thought I was working hard at something fun; in hindsight, I was one of the younger entrepreneurs out there with a wild and successful vision!

V: If you could give the 18 year-old version of yourself one piece of advice, what would it be?

LMB: Don't stop to cry, there are better things to do, like keep moving forward!



Lauren and her two beautiful children.

LAUREN MAILLIAN