



Network It!

THIS MAY, LA FASHION FIXTURE **RACHEL ROY** AND STEP UP WOMEN'S NETWORK ARE CELEBRATING GIRL POWER...ONE T-SHIRT AT A TIME. **BY JESSICA ESTRADA**

"We're responsible for our life, but we can [live] it in a really beautiful way; we can *design* it," says fashion powerhouse Rachel Roy. It's just a casual Tuesday afternoon—she's sipping coffee on a chic white swing couch hanging in the foyer of her artfully adorned Sherman Oaks home—but even so, the California-born designer is poised, perfectly polished, and exudes a palpable sense of contentment with the life she's designed for herself.

As the founder of a veritable empire comprised of a luxury fashion label and a wildly successful secondary line for Macy's, Roy, 41, is the true embodiment of what her latest women's empowerment campaign, Self Rule, is all about: celebrating individuality and living life on your own terms.

Driven by her philanthropic passion and desire to inspire the next generation of women—including her two daughters, Ava, 15, and Tallulah, 6—Roy designed a T-shirt in conjunction with Step Up Women's Network, with the net proceeds helping to sustain the Los Angeles-based nonprofit's mentoring programs

for girls in under-resourced communities.

The shirt, Roy says, serves as a visual reminder of her SelfRule message. "The flag represents strength," she says of the design, which has the words "Self Rule" emblazoned across it. "Sometimes we feel like we're not part of anything. In this country, we're all part of America and what it stands for: freedom."

Roy also enlisted influential women, including socialite Olivia Palermo, celebrity makeup artist Charlotte Tilbury, and FEED Projects' Lauren Bush Lauren to share their bits of wisdom through social media. "I think any time you can get your story out immediately and feel like you have a voice, it's another step in owning your power," says Roy on how social media empowers women.

"[Rachel is] a really good example of someone who's following her dream," says Jenni Luke, CEO of Step Up Women's Network. "Not only [is she] following it for herself, but [she's also] giving back in the process. She's a fantastic role model." rachelroy.com **LAC**

"I THINK ANY TIME YOU CAN GET YOUR STORY OUT, IT'S ANOTHER STEP IN OWNING YOUR POWER."—RACHEL ROY