

# Case: invisawear

Dr. Jack M. Wilson, Distinguished Professor of Higher Education, Emerging Technologies, and Innovation



## INTRODUCING INVISAWEAR

Smart jewelry and accessories that could save your life



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<https://www.inisawear.com/>

## The story begins

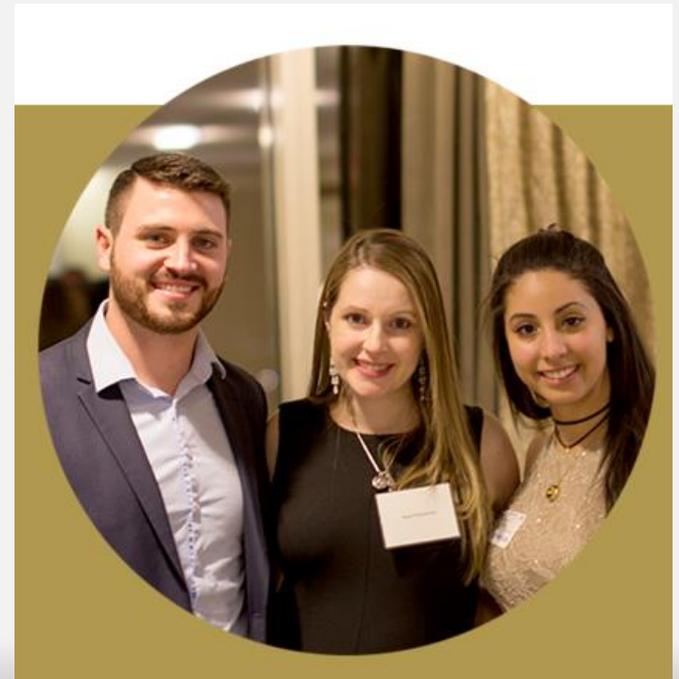
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One night after an event with Ray, Rajia was walking back to her car when a car full of guys rolled down the window and started yelling inappropriate comments, the car stopped and one of the guys started to get out. Luckily, Rajia was able to run and get in her car, unharmed. Though she was now safe, Rajia felt completely helpless.

Although her phone was right in her purse, she didn't have that split second to find her phone and call the police or her friends who were still inside, at the event, less than a block away.

Rajia (invisaWear's CEO) and Ray (invisaWear's CTO) first started working on invisawear while in college. After exploring safety devices that provide S.O.S solutions, Rajia and Ray felt defeated. The current options were too big and bulky, or displayed a "panic button" feeling. They wanted a stylish, discreet S.O.S device, ideal for everyday wear. Thus, invisawear was born!

[-https://www.invisawear.com/](https://www.invisawear.com/)



# Invisawear Appears on National TV

- Invisawear was credited with saving a woman's life after she crashed her car.
  - <https://www.invisawear.com/>



# Jenelle Valdina was saved by her Invisawear

Valdina was trapped in her car after a bad accident, but summoned help from both the police and her family using her Invisawear Jewelry.



# What can invisaWear do?

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- The purchaser downloads a free app to their phone. And pairs it to their phone using Bluetooth.
- They enter up to five emergency contacts.
- In an emergency, they click firmly on the back of the piece – twice – to alert contacts through text. The contacts and a 911 dispatcher are also notified of the person's exact location.
- It will:
  - Share your location in an emergency: Send your location to your loved ones and 9-1-1 even if you don't know where you are or can't speak.
  - Send an Emergency Alert: A text message notifies up to 5 pre-selected emergency contacts that you're requesting help.
  - contact 911: Enable the free and optional contact 911 feature to connect your emergency contacts with police close to your location.
  - Create and share a Personal Profile with responders: Share personal information like your name with dispatchers to aid in responding to your emergency.

## The Jeweler can provide both reassurance and assistance

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“Wearing This Ugly Smart Necklace Helped Me Deal With My Most Traumatic Memory;” Victoria Song in Gizmodo; May 2, 2019.

– <https://gizmodo.com/wearing-this-ugly-smart-necklace-helped-me-deal-with-my-1834118959>

- Leaving aside the description as ugly (with which many disagree!), the story provides a strong rationale for the use.

*Back in December 2017, I was innocently catching a late-night screening of I, Tonya when somebody in the theater screamed, “He has a gun!” What ensued was mass panic as the entire theater stampeded toward the exit. In the confusion, I lost my coat, backpack, shoes, and most devastatingly, my iPhone.*

*This was terrifying for a lot of reasons, but the thing I remember most was thinking, “Oh shit. I have no way to tell my friends I’m safe. I have no way to call 9-1-1.” I was extremely lucky that one of my friends found me, shivering barefoot right outside the movie theater.*

*Everything was fine. There was no gunman—it was a “joke” pulled off in poor taste. Yet, over a year later, I couldn’t stop thinking about the experience while testing invisaWear, a piece of smart jewelry that you can press to alert your contacts and emergency services of your location.*

*The news is scary, and whether its reports of mass shootings, bad encounters with rideshare drivers, natural disasters, or assault, it’s not unreasonable that a person—and women in particular—might want something like invisaWear.*

# The founding team

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- **Rajia Abdelaziz, Chief Executive Officer**
  - Rajia was a 2016 electrical engineering/computer science graduate of UMass Lowell who turned down many large offers to go to major technology companies like Google in favor of starting her own company -invisaWear
- **Raymond Hamilton, Chief Technology Officer**
  - Ray is a 2017 graduate of UMass Lowell in Electrical Engineering.
- **Susy Portocarrero, marketing and communications director**
  - Susy was the first hire as they launched the company. She brought eight years of consumer goods marketing experience.

How Two College Friends Launched a Successful Smart Jewelry with Life Saving Technology Business

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvVQzh8iLTY>



## A (financial) path to success

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- Ray and Rajia met in their engineering classes and began working together on projects.
- After hearing of the Difference Maker Program at UML, they decided to enter. In 2016 Ray and Rajia won the Difference Maker's Idea Challenge as the Most Innovative Solution. It carried a \$4500 prize to help the startup.
- In the summer of 2017, they were invited to join the 2017 Mass Challenge international startup accelerator, which helps emerging businesses refine their products and business models - 1,700 companies applied, and only 128 were accepted into the start-up program.
- In February 2018, they launched a 30-day IndieGogo crowd funding campaign and met their \$20,000 goal in a week –eventually raising \$36,432. They nearly doubled their original goal!
- They earned more than \$15,000 in prizes,
- They raised \$100,000 in their first round of funding. They were also one of three companies that received the first loans from a new, \$1 million fund operated by the Lowell Development and Financial Corporation.
- Arrow Electronics made an investment
- Their first round of funding as a new venture eventually raised \$500,000.
- By mid 2018 they were selling their first products at \$129 per device.
- In December 2020 ADT made a large investment in a joint venture with Invisawear
  - <https://news.adt.com/news-releases/news-release-details/invisawear-and-adt-collaborate-next-generation-wearable-safety>

# Female Founders –Five Things You Need to Know to Thrive and Succeed...

 **Holly J. Lalos** • 1st  
Director, Rist DifferenceMaker Institute at University of Massach...  
9mo • 🌐

Congratulations to Rajia Abdelaziz, CEO of invisawear and 2016 DifferenceMaker Idea Challenge winner on this great interview and article!

...see more



Female Founders: Rajia Abdelaziz of invisawear On The Five Things You Need To Thrive and Succeed as...

medium.com • 8 min read

# Forbes tells the Invisawear Story!

- Pushing safety fears to the back of her mind, Rajia Abdelaziz had just left an evening event with friends to go home and study for her electrical engineering and computer science degree. She was walking back to her car when an SUV pulled up alongside her: "a group of guys began yelling inappropriate comments at me," she recalls. "When one started getting out of the vehicle, I began to run." She made it back to her car, locked the doors and drove home, shaking. "I was extremely shaken up," she says, "I knew then that as women, we need to be able to protect ourselves, and that I needed to do something to support that."
- Two years later, they took their product to market as Invisawear, now a leading safety device manufacturer, and the first to make jewelry. Abdelaziz had turned down a highly paid job at a FAANG company to use her electrical engineering training to help the one in five women who will be attacked at least once, and the pair worked hard to make their idea reality. Roadblocks were multiple, especially for a young, female entrepreneur trying to secure funding, but they smashed their initial \$150,000 start-up target and went on to raise millions.
- All devices are worn on the body, so they are almost always accessible, and include a hidden panic button which can be programmed to send a GPS location to the emergency services, a pre-programmed text message to five emergency contacts and contact 911 via the home security network ADT. "ADT have the fastest call response time and protect over a million homes, so we reached out to work with them and they came up with some great, proactive ideas." **Invisawear's partnership with ADT** also provides access to video streaming, voice activation and self defense classes as a way of "equipping people to protect themselves," says Abdelaziz. The company recently announced a partnership with a Canadian security provider, and also hopes to expand into Europe and the Middle East.



Rajia Abdelaziz, CEO of Invisawear, a company which makes safety devices hidden inside jewelry. INVISAWEAR

- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/katematthams/2022/11/25/how-one-young-entrepreneur-is-using-jewelry-to-keep-women-safe/?sh=3a3bbe42bbaa>

# Invisawear acquires Flare (3 June 2023)

Ray Hamilton on Linked In:

📣 Exciting News: invisaWear Welcomes Flare to the Family! 🎉

We are thrilled to announce that we have acquired the innovative brand, Flare! With their cutting-edge safety jewelry that enables users to call for help during emergencies, Flare will be joining our portfolio, further reinforcing our mission to empower individuals and enhance their safety.

Notably, Flare was recognized as a TIME Best Invention of 2020, a testament to their exceptional innovation and dedication to personal safety.

We've always strived to develop innovative solutions that provide peace of mind and protection in critical situations. With the addition of Flare to our family, we are taking a significant step forward in advancing our commitment to personal safety.

Our partnership with Flare not only strengthens our dedication to offering exceptional safety products, but also expands our reach in making a positive impact on communities worldwide. As the market leaders in personal safety, we will continue to champion the cause to empower individuals to live fearlessly.

Stay tuned as we work diligently to integrate Flare into our portfolio. We are excited to bring even more innovative solutions that help people stay safe and connected.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in invisaWear. Let's make the world a safer place, one step at a time!

#invisaWear #Flare #Acquisition #SafetyFirst #TechforGood



# Inc honors invisaWear and Rajia and Ray as one of the fastest growing companies.

 DifferenceMaker  
2h · 🌐

👏 invisaWear is making headlines once again! 🎉

Congratulations to Rajia Abdelaziz and Ray Hamilton for their many accomplishments with invisaWear! invisaWear was recognized as one of the fastest-growing companies by Inc. Magazine! Every year, Inc. Magazine acknowledges privately owned companies that have grown exponentially! DifferenceMaker is beyond proud of the achievements made by the invisaWear team!

Learn more about invisaWear's feature in Inc. Magazine: <https://bit.ly/3ThPSon>

#RistDM #DifferenceMaker #UMassLowell #invisaWear



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# invisaWear invited to ring the NASDAQ Closing Bell

- Rajia and Ray find their pictures up over Times Square as two of the “Thirty Under Thirty” entrepreneurs.

**Ray Hamilton** (He/Him) • 1st  
CTO & Co-founder at invisaWear | Forbes 30 Under 30...  
2d • Edited • 🗨️

An unforgettable moment ringing the **Nasdaq** closing bell alongside incredible minds and fellow 30 Under 30 achievers. Still in shock they put it up on a billboard in Times Square. Grateful for the opportunity to celebrate our collective achievements and set new milestones together.

Thank you **Kristin Stoller** and the **Forbes** team for including us in this once in a lifetime experience. Here's to the power of innovation, collaboration, and the relentless pursuit of excellence! 🚀🔔



You and 104 others

31 comments • 3 reposts

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# Questions

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- Team: Is the founding team both compatible enough and diverse enough to be successful?
  - If you were to advise them on adding team members, what would you advise them/
- They have been extraordinarily successful in winning contests and raising funds through prizes. Will this be enough for the future? What else do they need to do?
- What do you see as the largest threat to their future success?
- What do you see as key things that they need to do to create a sustainable competitive advantage?