

# brOKen Clothing: Fauquier entrepreneurs look to redefine streetwear with a powerful message

[Grace Schumacher, gschumacher@fauquiernow.com](mailto:gschumacher@fauquiernow.com)



Daniel Lough (left) and Luis Soto will cut the ribbon on their new business located in the Warrenton Towne Centre on Saturday, Nov. 23 at 1 p.m.

Grace Schumacher | FauquierNow

Friends Daniel Lough of Marshall and Luis Soto of Bealeton shared an amused look when asked how they felt about opening their first business as young entrepreneurs. At 19 and 21 years old, they hesitate to embrace the label—“That’s scary ... it’s a big title,” they laughed—but their mission is bigger.

While many dream of making the world a better place, Lough and Soto are taking steps to do just that. Since the summer, the duo have poured their energy into launching their streetwear brand's first location, set to celebrate its grand opening Nov. 23 at 1 p.m.

Located at 579 Frost Ave. in the Warrenton Towne Centre, "[brOKen Clothing](#)" is a brand rooted in personal experience. Its mission is to raise awareness about mental health, suicide and drug overdoses through designs inspired by hip-hop, rap and music icons while donating a portion of profits to charities dedicated to these causes.

For Lough and Soto, mental health awareness isn't a marketing angle—it's deeply personal.

Daniel (left) grew up in Warrenton, but now lives in Marshall with his family. Luis (right) was born and raised in El Salvador before he moved to Bealeton in 2016.

Grace Schumacher | FauquierNow

## Meet Daniel Lough and Luis Soto

Born and raised in Warrenton, Lough launched his first business at 15, reselling Legos and video games on eBay before shifting his focus to clothing. The concept for brOKen Clothing came to him late last spring and by summer, it had taken shape as an online store.

Soto, a Liberty High School graduate who moved to Virginia in 2016, started a clothing business shortly after graduation, specializing in creating uniforms for local businesses. The two met while working at Staples in Warrenton, where a conversation during a slow shift sparked a friendship and later a partnership.

"I saw him working on a design on the computer and we got to talking," Soto recalled. "Eventually, we found out we were each working on our own clothing [pursuits] and bonded over that."

Their collaboration became official when Lough pitched the idea of opening a brick-and-mortar store.

"[Lough] said to me, 'Let's combine our interests and strengths ... I'm gonna do what I'm good at, you do what you're good at,'" Soto said. "I said, 'I'm in.'"

Both founders have felt the impacts of the struggles they aim to address through their brand.



Daniel (left) grew up in Warrenton, but now lives in Marshall with his family. Luis (right) was born and raised in El Salvador before he moved to Bealeton in 2016.

Grace Schumacher | FauquierNow

“Mental health and suicide awareness has been big for me personally. I attempted suicide last year,” Lough shared. “At first, I was very stubborn and didn’t think I needed help ... But the thoughts and depression were still there, even if I wasn’t directly thinking about it. Thankfully, my girlfriend, Kat, helped me realize I needed help—badly.”

That experience changed Lough’s perspective and inspired him to create a business that could make a difference. brOKen’s mission also grew in response to Lough and Soto’s shared experience: a loss in their close friend group to suicide and a desire to address isolation and mental health challenges facing today’s youth.

Soto reflected on how small acts of connection can make a big difference, saying, “Even for that one friend we lost, it helped him a lot to just meet up with us, even if we only went to Walmart to walk around. We’re gonna try to create a place where people can just meet up, chill and hang out with one another. That way they don’t feel so lonely.”

Daniel and Luis create brOKen label clothing from start to finish. Here, Luis irons then carefully spaces t-shirts on a hanging display.

Grace Schumacher | FauquierNow

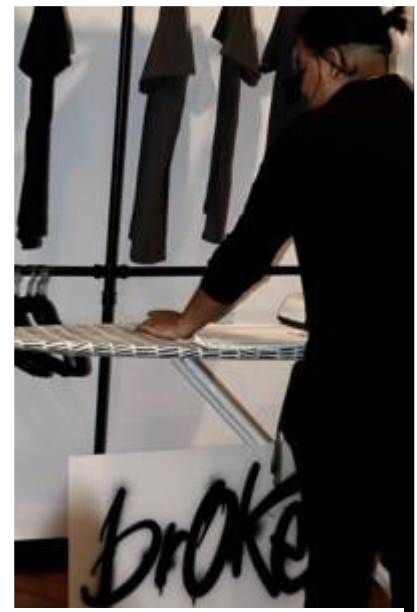
## Making an impact

Lough and Soto are determined to make mental health discussions more accessible to young people, starting with local high schools like Fauquier, Liberty, Kettle Run and Culpeper.

“We want to encourage mental health conversations while spreading our brand to those schools,” Lough said. “[Talking about it] may feel embarrassing for a minute, but it’s normal and not something to be ashamed of. If you don’t get help, it builds up and affects your mind ... Once I got help, I was able to live more happily. If you’re happy and in control, you can make a positive [impact] on others' lives.”

A portion of every brOKen Clothing sale, starting at 3%, is donated to mental health charities.

“We’d like to provide customers with a list of organizations they can donate to directly,” Lough said. They also plan to collaborate with organizations to create exclusive designs that feature their messages, with a long-term goal of one day establishing their own charity.



Daniel and Luis create brOKen label clothing from start to finish. Here, Luis irons then carefully spaces t-shirts on a hanging display.

Grace Schumacher | FauquierNow

Soto sees the brand as a way to give back to a community he's grown to love since moving from El Salvador.

“We know the transition out of high school can be stressful,” he said. “We want to be a resource for local kids. If we create a space where kids can talk openly and make connections, we're helping them find support.”



The "brOKen Basic Tee," embellished with the brand's logo, is one of a number of graphic tee collections found at the streetwear store in Warrenton.

Grace Schumacher | FauquierNow

## **brOKen Clothing**

The brand blends Lough and Soto's interests: reselling, thrifting, skateboarding, music and digital design. Their storefront aims to be a hub where young people can connect.

“There’s not much young people can do at night,” Soto said. “After school, they just go home. We want to create a space where they feel comfortable.”

The shop’s industrial vibe reflects skateboarding, hip-hop and streetwear culture. Open Thursday and Friday evenings from 5 to 10 p.m. and Saturdays 1 to 10 p.m., the hours cater to students. Lough and Soto believe this accessibility will be key to fostering a sense of community.

Beyond their mission, Lough and Soto take pride in the quality of their products. Everything from design to printing is handled in-house to ensure a standard they can stand behind.

“This approach is important to us, it allows us to control quality. It's very demanding but it's worth it. I wouldn't want to spend my money on something low-quality,” Lough said.

The business is constantly growing its collections. Featured shirts include artists like Mac Miller, Kurt Cobain, Juice WRLD, MF Doom and more.

The brand also hopes to attract interest from the local skating community.

“There’s a huge skating community in Culpeper,” Lough said. “Word spreads quickly when you have a good product and a genuine message.”



Located at 579 Frost Avenue in the Warrenton Towne Centre next to Phoenix Nails, brOKen Clothing streetwear will have its grand opening on Nov. 23 at 1 p.m.

Grace Schumacher | FauquierNow

## Looking to the future

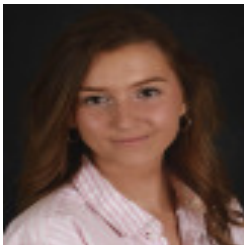
While brOKen Clothing is still in its early days, Lough and Soto have big dreams. They hope to expand storefronts, collaborate with more charities and turn brOKen into a household name.

“Warrenton isn’t the only area with kids who need to be understood or who are going through tough times,” Soto said.

The journey hasn’t been without challenges. Funding comes entirely from their personal savings, but the support of friends and family has been instrumental. Soto credits his stepdad, mom, friend Karen and his older brother, who runs a business in Miami.

“My brother showed me that anything is possible if you keep a positive mindset,” he said. “It’s been stressful, but we stay positive. When things don’t work, we acknowledge it and move on.”

“You don’t have much to lose when you’re young,” Lough added. “Worst case, we learn. We don’t let ourselves believe we can fail.”



**[Grace Schumacher](#)**

[gschumacher@fauquiernow.com](mailto:gschumacher@fauquiernow.com)