

She Struck Golde

Meet **Trinity Mouzon Wofford**, one of the youngest Black women to launch a line at Sephora

BY MARQUITA K. HARRIS

When Trinity Mouzon Wofford was growing up in New York's Hudson Valley, her family was, as she describes it, "crunchy." Long before almond butter and cod liver oil became trendy, the Wofford clan kept their cabinets stocked with these and other natural goods. But it was her mother's positive experiences using holistic treatments for her rheumatoid arthritis that changed Wofford's career path. In 2017 she created Golde with her fiancé, Issey Kobori. The Brooklyn-based health and beauty company uses superfoods as its core ingredients. "We do ingestible and skin care products that are all about making you look and feel your best," says Wofford. Here she dishes on her entrepreneurial journey.



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ESSENCE: What was it like at the beginning of your venture?

TRINITY MOUZON WOFFORD: We were literally mixing up turmeric blends in a commercial kitchen and hand-bagging every product. We knew we were going to push turmeric-based items first because it's such an incredible anti-inflammatory. It's great for your skin and your health.

ESSENCE: How did you get on shelves and get noticed?

WOFFORD: While I was establishing Golde, I also was working full-time at Chillhouse, which is a wellness spa and café in New York City. I interviewed with one of the cofounders and said, "Hey, I've got this turmeric product that I'm going to launch." She

was so excited, she brought it right into their store. So within a month of us existing, we were on the shelves of one of the hottest wellness destinations in a major city.

ESSENCE: What do you wish you had known before launching?

WOFFORD: I'm decent with money. I don't have issues with it. But when I had a salaried job, it was so easy for me to save because I was like, "Okay, well, I'm going to take a thousand dollars a month and stick it in this savings account." And you don't really have to worry because what are your expenses anyway? Rent and shoes? But when you're running your own company, it requires a whole different mind-set.

ESSENCE: You founded Golde without outside funding. Why?

WOFFORD: The issue I had with taking venture capital very early on was that the return and pace of growth that would be expected felt very uncomfortable, as I was still learning how to run a business. At 25 years old, I did not want to be responsible for taking someone's million-dollar check and having to flip that into a \$5 million return on the person's investment.



EXCLUSIVE

To learn more about Trinity Mouzon Wofford's career, check out the UnBossed podcast, hosted by ESSENCE Senior Editor Marquita K. Harris