# vAaron Philip: The trans, disabled model taking on a $2-trillion industry

aron Philip's life has been transformed by becoming the first black, trans, disabled model to sign for a major agency. Since joining the renowned Elite Model Management last September, the 17-year-old has shot editorial for i-D magazine and been named in Teen Vogue's "21 Under 21," among much else.

This isn't to say she'd struggled to forge her own opportunities -- Philip had already modeled for the likes of ASOS and H&M through her own volition. But the backing of an agency (one that has represented Heidi Klum, Naomi Campbell and Tyra Banks) has opened access to an industry ill-equipped to meet the needs of a wheelchair user.

"I freelanced for a year and I was doing jobs by myself and trying to navigate a career on my own (while in my) junior year at high school," she explained on a video call from her home in the Bronx. "Sometimes I'd have to coordinate photo shoots myself, (or) with the people around me, and find people to assist me or help on set. It was a lot of back and forth."

"There's been a really, really dramatic difference," she added.