

News to Suit You

SUMMER

A NEWSLETTER FROM DRESS FOR SUCCESS HOUSTON

2023



"I want you all to know how great Dress for Success Houston is because they are a game changer for me."



"DFS Houston is so much more than I expected. Their professional attire makes me feel confident. Their programming is helping me grow in my career. The people make the difference."



Dear Friends,

We are grateful to have so many things to celebrate this year. We have seen a 39% increase in the women we serve over this time last year. The changes over the past three years taught us innovative ways of engaging and supporting the women we empower by leveraging technology. The continued implementation of hybrid meetings has allowed more women to flourish with a flexible way to access our workshops.



Our in-person option with our clients back in the building is transformative – women are reconnecting, making new friends, and networking. The energy is electric, and that is why we do what we do. Eighty percent of the women we serve are single, and we are the safe space for them to thrive in a holistic way. Thank you to our incredible team and volunteers who ensure we empower the women we serve! View outcomes and programs on the insert.

Filming our meetings over the past few years has allowed us to build a video library which evolved into investing in an online learning platform. We launched the platform to our PWG members in May, and we already have 240 women who have logged in for



educational resources and connection. This tool allows women access to our programs in a way that works best for them, growing our impact in Houston and beyond. Learn more on page 6.

Join us as we celebrate the past 25 years of success on Saturday, October 21 at The Revaire with event chairs Ellie Francisco and Trinidad Mendenhall for an evening of success! We will honor The Altman Goldstein Foundation - Betsy Goldstein, and children Jody Goldstein, Gregg Goldstein, and Amy Rincon with their vision to empower women through education.

While we partner with government and



United Way agencies who refer women to Dress for Success Houston, it is the individuals, foundations and corporations in our community that fund all we provide as an organization. It is invaluable for our women to know they are no longer alone in their journey and Houston is behind them.

Thank you all for your support of the women and families we inspire to greatness in our community!

With gratitude,

LAUREN LEVICKI COURVILLE
PRESIDENT

Her Path Forward

OUR ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

With incredible support from the Houston community, Her Path Forward raised more than \$170,000 during Women's History Month for the women of DFS Houston. The DFS Houston Board of Directors and Advisory Council members Sydney and Jeff Shellebarger matched the first \$25,000 donated through individual donations. We are grateful for their ongoing support.

Donation drives are a huge part of Her Path Forward. Seventy-five local companies and organizations hosted individual donation drives collecting over 13,500 pieces of professional attire. This donation equates to 25% of the professional attire needed each year! Thank you to everyone who hosted a donation drive.



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



Models of Success

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Two hundred DFS Houston supporters celebrated the inspiring stories from eight ambassadors at the 20th annual *Models of Success*, presented by **Chevron**. While it starts with a suit, these clients have been impacted by the agency's 20+ programs, including the Professional Women's Group, Women Veterans Program, Job Search support, and the Altman-Goldstein Scholarship Fund.

ABC 13's Mayra Moreno emceed the evening, sharing stories of perseverance and hope. We also honored the agency's sponsors as they kicked off *Her Path Forward* month.



I struggled with depression and anxiety while looking for work. After being suited with Dress for Success Houston I eventually landed a job. I joined the Professional Women's Group where I participated in career development meetings, Financial Literacy and Fit4Success. These programs have helped me be more financially secure and improved my health and well-being!

—CARMEN



Legacy Giving

PLANNING FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS

an appreciation luncheon at Tony's. Their generosity and pledges totaling over 3.2 million dollars ensure future generations of women

Success Houston's impact on her life, career, and family. Thank you, Nancy Levicki, Dress for Success Houston Co-Founder and Founding Director of Legacy Giving, for your dedication to the women and families of Houston. To be part of the Legacy Giving Society, contact Nancy at nancy@dfshouston.org.



On May 12, 2023, Legacy Giving Society members were recognized for their commitment to the future of Dress for Success Houston at

access Dress for Success Houston's life-changing programs. Client Ambassador Paula Lara shared her journey and highlighted Dress for



PowHER Hour

This year's Corporate Guild PowHER Hour, an incredible wine-pairing dinner presented by the Four Seasons Hotel Houston, was a sold-out event! Thank you to Nikki Wente of Wente Vineyards for representing women vintners and her family's commitment to empowering women so beautifully through their

wines. The evening wrapped up with the fun heads or tails game sponsored by J. Landa Jewelry, and we raised more than \$42,000 for the mission of Dress for Success Houston. Thank you to our Corporate Guild Members and community partners for making this event a success.



THANK YOU POWHER HOUR SPONSORS



Wente Vineyards, Total Wine & More, Chevron, Reliant an NRG Company, United Airlines, Courtney and Zac Harmon, Daikin Comfort Technologies, First Horizon Bank, SLB, Jill Talisman, Houston Modern Luxrury, and AVmedia

Please join us in Celebrating

25 Years of Empowering Houston Women with Dress For Success Houston

SATURDAY
October 21, 2023
from 6 to 10 pm

THE REVAIRE
 7122 Old Katy Rd, Houston, TX 77024

EVENT CHAIRS
 Ellie Francisco & Trinidad Mendenhall

Houston's top chefs will serve famed cuisine and libations. The talented Kristine Mills will provide live entertainment.




Rendezvous with DFS Houston

Thank you to our confirmed culinary concepts and libations as of July 1: *A Fare Extraordinaire, Arnaldo Richards' Picos, Big Vibe Group: Coppa Osteria, Flora and Gratify, Blossom Hotel, CAPS Supper Club & Bar, Chloe Wine Collection, Daily Gather, Eau Tour, Guard and Grace, Hungry's, Lee's Den, Liberty Kitchen, Luloo's Day & Night, Relish, Slowpokes, The Warwick, Total Wine & More, and Whistle Pig.*



Ellie Francisco



Trinidad Mendenhall

Run for a Reason

Team DFS Houston runs to empower women! Join us on our team as part of the Chevron Houston Marathon's Run for A Reason (RFAR) charity race. This event supports our Professional Women's Group's health and wellness initiatives and is a lot of fun! The 2024 event on January 13 and 14 will be our 11th year participating as a RFAR team. With

the amazing support of all our runners and walkers participating in one of three events: We Are Houston 5K, Aramco Houston Half Marathon, and Chevron Houston Marathon, we have raised over \$650,000 towards our mission. Hope to see you at the starting line!



Job Search Program

I wanted to re-enter the workforce. My goals were to update my resume and LinkedIn profile and to develop an elevator speech. I showed up for myself weekly and continued growing. When I landed my job as a Client Services AR Coordinator for FirstService Residential, I was excited to share my first-day pictures and join the Professional Women Group!

—KELLY



In March, Allie Danziger, Ampersand's CEO and Co-Founder, led a Job Search workshop on Career Readiness and a discussion to find the non-negotiables for your job search.

Interested in Volunteering with Job Search? Attend a lunch and learn and join our team supporting the women during their career journey. Email jobsearch@dfshouston.org.



Thank you to Chevron for sponsoring our Job Search program.

For women struggling to gain employment or find meaningful employment, our Job Search Program is making an incredible impact. In the first half of this year, 190 women participated in Job Search.

Partnerships and community support are the key to our success. In our second year of partnering with the Harris County Public Library (HCPL) and the addition of a new partnership, Grow with Google, Job Search participants

are quickly creating cover letters, resumes, and LinkedIn profiles while developing and enhancing their computer skills. HCPL returned in February to teach a Job Search class on video conferencing. As a surprise, HCPL presented each woman in attendance with a brand-new Chromebook! The women were thrilled to receive such a generous gift that helps remove barriers to technology for job searches and other internet-based tools.

Women Veterans Program

OVER 1,500 WOMEN VETERANS SERVED SINCE 2014



With a focus on mental health and wellness, our Veterans' workshops help our women Veterans strive to remain productive and be their best selves while dealing with daily stressors. *Over Coming Adversity* and *Unpacking Your Stress* were popular workshops during the spring.

Managing personal finances can be stressful, and we were pleased to be able to offer a six-week Financial Literacy

Program specifically designed for our Veteran women. Thanks to Mercer Advisors and their certified financial planners, our women Veterans learned to develop a budget, set financial goals, and understand credit and basic investing.

On June 12th, we celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Women Armed Services Integration Act and Texas Women Veterans Day. Worldwide

partner Ulta joined us on Saturday, June 17, for fun and fellowship. Our women enjoyed the one-on-one skincare and makeup tips provided by the Ulta representatives and wrapped up the day with an opportunity to shop for additional professional attire. Thank you to all our community partners and **Halliburton** for underwriting this incredible program.

My overall experience with the DFS Houston Veterans program has been life-enriching. From the awareness of Veterans' benefits and Veterans Service Organizations to excellent self-care classes - I have become a better person. I can't say enough positive things about the Veterans program format at DFS Houston.

—LAURIE, US ARMY VETERAN





PWG Then . . .

HOW IT ALL STARTED



DFS Houston's Professional Women's Group (PWG), created by DFS Houston President Emeritus and Co-Founder Nancy Levicki, met for the first time 23 years ago

and inspiration to achieve self-defined success in career and life. Thirteen years later, Nancy's shared vision was adopted by 71 Dress for Success affiliates, expanding

programs beyond the suit. PWG was the catalyst for many affiliates to establish ongoing workforce development programs that supported the mission directly.

"I find myself continuing to grow in PWG, becoming a stronger, more independent woman. I am no longer alone."

—MARIA

I am so excited to be a member of the Professional Women's Group; it has been an exceptional light in my life. Thank you!

—APRIL

DFS Houston welcomed 172 women to our Professional Women's Group (PWG) kick-off. Our programming supports members once they have landed a job with ongoing personal and professional development. Programs offered this spring included Women 2 Women mentoring, sponsored by **TC Energy**, and a continuation of our Financial Literacy program, sponsored by **Christian Brothers Automotive**. The current Financial Literacy 2.0 group comprises PWG members who recently completed the original program (1.0). They are now taking a deeper dive into investments and retirement planning!

PWG members are also exploring yearlong personal growth opportunities in our Creative Works program. Houston Symphony and

Theatre Under the Stars (TUTS) sent teaching artists with Community Embedded Musicians to host programs modeling collaboration, both in the workplace and in our daily lives. We also welcomed a new partnership with the Houston Ballet this spring. Members learned about the mind-body connection of emotions in the Movement & Emotions program. Teaching artists and Lauren Anderson, the first Black principal ballerina for the Houston Ballet, conducted the three-part series for 25 PWG members.

To further enhance our programming, on May 1, we rolled out the PWG Online Learning Management System (LMS),

sponsored by **PwC**. The LMS serves as the information hub for recordings of all workshops and provides access to presentation materials. Currently, members can access ten key workshops from 2020–2022 and all programs from this year to date using the website or a convenient app. The LMS is the central location for members to sign-up for workshops, review prior activities, collaborate on program assignments, share information between meetings and have access to a community bulletin board.



. . . and Now

SUMMER EXPERIENCE 2023

Today, DFS Houston's PWG program is stronger than ever. What started with 20 members now has close to 400. In June, we celebrated with PWG members who were committed to continuing their professional development and had attended the PWG workshops since the beginning of the year. The Summer Experience event shifted the focus from professional development to personal development, and the women of PWG gathered to embrace their creativity, try new things, and make new friendships. Thank you to Chef J Mitch of JJ Sweets Delights for the hands-on culinary experience

"The Summer Experience event was amazing, from beginning to end! The relaxing painting, the dynamic hula hooping, and the delicious food. The staff, presenters, and volunteers really pampered us. They ensured we were engaged and enjoying ourselves. I took off for the day and it was well worth it! I'm strongly thinking about investing in a hula hoop. Chef J.J. not only had us eating great, but her personality shined too! I left smiling ear to ear."

with the cool and fun summer recipes, Maggi Cummings of Maggi Cummings Art for the creative inspirations on canvas, and Mad About Hoops for taking us all back to our childhood and reintroducing the hula hoop through exercise. Continuing the culture of support and achievement that started 23 years ago, our women had an incredible day of togetherness. Upon departure, all the women received a summer fun travel

bag donated by DSW Designer Shoe Warehouse full of summer fun. Thank you to our supporters for the beauty staples by Pleasing and CHI and insulated reusable water bottles by Simple Modern. Thank you to everyone who made this day so special for the women of DFS Houston!



I am so grateful for this organization and for all the support I have received over the years. Thank you Dress for Success Houston!

—SEANTE



**Of Empowering
Houston Women**
DRESS FOR SUCCESS HOUSTON

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PRESIDENT

Lauren Levicki Courville

AGENCY NEEDS



Our highest inventory needs are plus-sized professional attire, closed-toed shoes (low heels or flats), and professional handbags.

The Reliant donation drive is open Wednesday to Friday from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. and on one Saturday a month.

Get Involved

Are you passionate about impacting the community with strong, dedicated individuals by your side? **Volunteer** with us individually, with a corporate group, or join one of our auxiliary groups supporting our mission of helping women secure gainful employment.

Celebrating 20 years, our young professionals’ group, **Women of Wardrobe**, raises funds and awareness of DFS Houston through social events, volunteering, and fundraisers. They hosted a membership social at the end of June and will close the summer with their annual Tootsies Summer Soiree on August 30. We would love to see you there! You can join at any time.

The **Corporate Guild** is a unique networking association of professional, Houston-area women helping, supporting, and promoting each other as professionals while impacting DFS Houston’s 20+ programs and the women we serve. In 2023, the Corporate Guild is represented by 72 companies from various industries.

