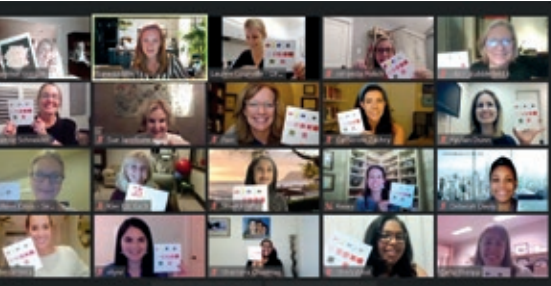


News to Suit You

WINTER

A NEWSLETTER FROM DRESS FOR SUCCESS HOUSTON

2020



“DFSH adds to my hopes and dreams of moving forward.”

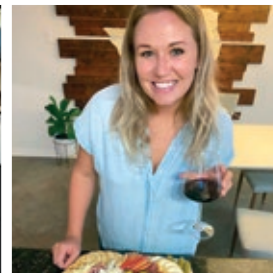


“My life has been enriched with lasting knowledge.”



Dear Friends,

We have all faced difficult challenges this year, especially the women DFSH serves, who have felt a significant weight from the pandemic in their lives, both personally and professionally. As an agency built on resiliency, we know the critical need to provide immediate support and resources to women and families who are rebuilding and recovering. Our team has worked diligently to ensure the women stay on their self-defined path to success by employing various sustainability efforts such as meal kits and pantry essentials, mentoring (more on page 3), school supplies, Amazon gift cards and masks. Because of your continued generosity, we are fortunate to make a financial impact for our clients that need it most. Your support will mean a woman can continue courses to get her graduate degree, a PWG member is able to pay her mortgage and a woman veteran is able to provide food for her family while continuing to find a job as roughly 70% of the women we serve have lost their jobs, been furloughed or have had their hours decreased. Thank you for the incredible kindness and passion you have showed for DFSH’s mission and the women we serve.



On page 5, you will see further details regarding the impact of the pandemic on our women, and DFSH’s response. We are pleased that participation is up 13% in our Women’s Veteran Program and an astounding 54% for our Professional Women’s Group. Even though, our programs have transitioned virtually, we can still see the powerful transformative effect on the women who dedicate their time and energy into participating.

It is a privilege to work with my team, the more than 250 volunteers and our generous supporters as we lift up thousands of Houston-area women. Since 1998,

we have empowered more than 45,000 women, impacted 60,000 children and since launching our Women’s Veteran Program in 2014, we have had the honor of serving more than 1,400 women veterans. This has all been possible thanks to the individuals, foundations and corporations beginning on page six - we are extremely grateful. Wishing you a blessed holiday season!

With heartfelt thanks,

Lauren Levicki Courville

LAUREN LEVICKI COURVILLE
PRESIDENT



CHAIRS
DFSH Board of Directors

MARKETPLACE CHAIRS
Susie Cunningham,
Kelli Kickerillo &
Monica Richards



Mentoring

This summer DFSH launched a virtual edition of our Women2Women mentoring program where 22 volunteer mentors and 41 mentees participated. Because of the many challenges our women are facing this year, we wanted to offer a mentoring program but knew it needed to look different than previous years. The program combined elements of traditional

mentoring and Job Search Teams to provide women with a small group to connect with and to be accountable to. Two to three mentors were paired with each group to give different perspectives for the women. The groups were also designated into categories like job searching, job skills development and leadership development based on where each woman was in her journey. The mentees created SMART goals and used

the WOOP method as a foundation for their groups. By the end of the summer program, the women shared they gained confidence, learned to navigate technology more, take time for themselves and be more patient and open-minded. One mentee said of her experience, "I have thoroughly enjoyed the discussions with my mentors and group members. I gained useful information and recommendations that are helping me in my job search."



Thank you to all our wonderful sponsors who made the event such a success!

WE APPRECIATE THE EFFORTS OF
A Fare Extraordinaire
Arnaldo Richards' Picos
Hungry's
Nothing Bundt Cakes
Total Wine & More

\$460,000 RAISED TO SUPPORT DFSH PROGRAMS

160 GUESTS ATTENDED DRIVE-THRU CELEBRATION

22 YEARS OF EMPOWERING HOUSTON'S WOMEN

Success Story

SARAI EMBAYE, HRIS SPECIALIST, MCDERMOTT

After becoming a teenage mother and leaving the foster care system, Sarai felt like people expected her to fail. Instead, she earned a degree from Michigan State University and landed a job at IBM. Five years later after experiencing a layoff, Sarai was referred to Dress for Success Houston (DFSH). Undeterred by the

misfortune, she landed a Human Resources Information Systems Specialist position at McDermott soon after.

As a result of completing the Data Analytics program at Rice University, thanks in part to the support of DFSH's Altman-Goldstein Scholarship, Sarai quickly assumed new responsibilities and values

her manager for believing in her newfound skills. She is grateful to DFSH and credits its programs for supporting her goals, paired with the continuous guidance and encouragement from the DFSH team and her fellow PWG members. Sarai hopes to inspire her own children and children in the foster care system like herself, giving them hope and showing them there are opportunities to achieve success and live a fulfilling life.



Women's Veteran Program

OVER 1,400 WOMEN VETERANS SERVED SINCE 2014



In our sixth year of serving women veterans, our program has expanded to a holistic approach by providing stability and resources during a vulnerable time for women veterans feeling loss of connection and isolation. Women veterans face tremendous challenges like sexual assault, racism and mental health struggles both during their time in the military as well as their transition to civilian life. Along with these challenges, women veterans are

facing economic uncertainty and further separation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Programming this fall focused heavily on stress-coping and mental health with workshops like Embracing Change, Self-Management for Stress and Calming Anxiety with Guided Imagery. DFSH was able to award 195 H-E-B gift cards to women veterans for their continued participation in our programs. Because of our generous

supporters in the Houston community, we know DFSH will remain a stable network of support for our women veterans, while exploring additional and innovative support methods.





PROVIDING HOPE BEYOND THE SUIT FOR 22 YEARS



“Virtual PWG meetings have been helping me adapt to our ‘new normal’ and learn new skills.”
—ANGELA



“This virtual meeting was the pick-me-up I needed. In light of the craziness in the world, I have lost my focus, but now I feel motivated to go back to school.”
—DANIELLE



“DFSH’s Veterans Program has provided many opportunities for us to grow as citizens and to start feeling part of society again. It helps us rediscover our value and potential through personal and professional development courses.”
—YECENIA, USAF VETERAN



“I enjoy meeting with like-minded women who want to learn and further themselves personally and professionally.”
—BRENDA

IMPACT REPORT OF THE PANDEMIC ON DFSH CLIENTS

18% HAVE BEEN UNEMPLOYED FOR **FIVE MONTHS** OR MORE

63% FINANCIAL INSECURITY

20% HEALTH CARE WORKERS

ESSENTIAL WORKERS
40%

63% JOBS IMPACTED

69% HIGHER STRESS LEVELS SINCE MARCH

46% FOOD INSECURITY



55% CARE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 18

“After receiving curbside suiting and attending a virtual First Impressions course, I am excited to remain connected to DFSH because there is incredible heart behind their mission. I am confident I will land my dream job.”
—MAHLIA



“I love that DFSH did not allow COVID-19 to negate our progress in succeeding.”
—ADRIENNE



“I cried tears of joy upon receiving our Thanksgiving meal kit because I did not know how I would provide a Thanksgiving meal for my grandson and me.”
—GWEN



DFSH RESPONSE

CURBSIDE SUITING

400+

WOMEN RECEIVING SUPPORT THROUGH

30+ VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

1,262 WOMEN SERVED

600+ LETTERS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

600 MEALS AND **400** PANTRY KITS DISTRIBUTED

800+ MASKS TO **400** WOMEN AND CHILDREN

300 WOMEN

MORE THAN **700** OUTREACH CALLS

Join the Conversation

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Dress for Success Houston (DFSH) was founded on the belief the socioeconomic inequalities that have plagued women in our society for centuries need to be confronted and overturned. Our mission for the past 22 years has been to empower and support all women, and we recognize together as a community we can do more.

In order to be better allies for the women we serve as well as each other,

the DFSH team participated in the Transformative Ally Framework Intensive Workshop Series conducted by Shantera Chatman of PowHER Consulting. As the agency continues our conversations on allyship, we will also launch an Ally Framework learning series for our volunteers. DFSH has always strived to recognize biases and barriers all women experience to create systemic change and empower women

to navigate systems that aren't inherently set up for their success.

In 2020, 89% of our clients represented women of color. Join the conversation by subscribing to our email list at www.dfsHouston.org and following our social media channels. DFSH will continue to educate our staff and volunteers, expand community partnerships and foster a safe place of open discussion amongst our clients.



THE WOMEN WE SERVE | AS OF NOVEMBER 2020

ETHNICITY
 ASIAN | 5%
 BLACK | 60%
 HISPANIC | 21%
 WHITE | 11%
 OTHER | 3%



AGES
 <19 | 2%
 20-29 | 21%
 30-39 | 27%
 40-49 | 23%
 50-59 | 19%
 60-69 | 7%
 >70 | 1%



Photos featuring unmasked individuals were taken following the CDC's guidelines of recommended social distancing or as a selfie in the privacy of the person's home.



Lauren Levicki Courville

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