News to Suit You

WINTER

A NEWSLETTER FROM DRESS FOR SUCCESS HOUSTON

2024



"I came to DFS
Houston for a
suit and found
the support I had
been missing."











"DFS Houston
surpassed my
expectations.
They've empowered
and guided me on
my path to success."



Dear Friends,

As we enter our 26th year of empowering the women and families we serve, I am proud of all we accomplished in 2023, serving 2,500 women through more than 15,00 units of service. We continue adapting and evolving to uplift and inspire our

community. Thank you all for being voices in the community to ensure that more of Houston knows all we do beyond the suit.

You will be inspired by the program success stories on pages two through five and the impact of our hybrid approach. The blend of in-person and virtual access allows us to connect with more women in the Houston area. Our Learning Management System (LMS) provides the Professional Women's Group members with ongoing connectivity and access to workshops beyond the realtime presentations. The LMS platform is an online school and networking platform. It allows members to further enhance their professional and personal development beyond the walls of DFS Houston education at no cost, creating continued transformational change.

This year marks a monumental milestone for our Women Veterans Program. Over the past ten years of this program, we have had the honor of engaging over 1,700 Veterans. Because of your support, we





offer a holistic program, providing stability and resources during a vulnerable time for women veterans feeling isolated when transitioning from military to civilian life. They become a part of a community again here at DFS Houston and are recognized for their service to our Nation. Learn more about the impact on page four.

Our 25th-anniversary celebration - Rendezvous with DFS Houston - was a success, raising more than \$850,000! Thanks to our incredible event chairs, Ellie Francisco and Trinidad Mendenhall; auction chairs Susie Cunningham, Kate Dearing Fowler, Monica Richards, and Katherine Ross; generous sponsors; and talented chefs. See page six to support those who support DFS Houston!

Join us during Women's Empowerment Month in March to support DFS Houston's annual Her Path Forward giving campaign. On this 26th anniversary of empowering women in our community, we ask for your support in this giving campaign. This year,









double your impact with generous matches up to \$20,000! Contributions impact a woman's career development, job search skills, veteran resources, and more. See page eight to be a part of the change.

We are working effectively and passionately to uplift more than 2,800 women in 2024 – each of you ensures we will achieve this goal. I am pleased to share that we have empowered more than 48,000 women and their families since 1998. Thank you!

With heartfelt gratitude,

LAUREN LEVICKI COURVILLE
DES HOUSTON PRESIDENT

26 YEARS

OF ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF MORE THAN 47,000 WOMEN AND CREATING SYSTEMIC CHANGE IN THEIR LIVES, THEIR FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITY ALL BECAUSE OF SUPPORTERS LIKE YOU.

1,822 WOMEN SUITED

GAINED EMPLOYMENT

IN 2023,

WOMEN

WERE IMPACTED BY

UNITS OF SERVICE

SUCH AS PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE, CAREER EDUCATION, PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND VETERANS PROGRAMS.

463 CURRENT MEMBERS

THE PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S GROUP ONGOING CAREER EDUCATION & NETWORK OF SUPPORT

> HAVE IMPROVED **SELF-CONFIDENCE**

86%

ARE MORE **SELF-SUFFICIENT**

WERE MOTIVATED TO TAKE ACTION AFTER **PWG MEETINGS**



SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

IN SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS **SINCE 2012**

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS



VETERANS SERVED

SINCE 2014

VETERANS SAID

"PROGRAM PROVIDED A SAFE AND UPLIFTING ENVIRONMENT."

VETERAN WORKSHOPS IN 2023

359 VOLUNTEERS DONATED

7,672 HOURS IN 2023



H-E-B GIFT CARDS TO VETERANS



THE PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S GROUP SPONSORED BY JERRY C. DEARING FOUNDATION

450+ CURRENT MEMBERS

PWG promotes job retention and career advancement by providing valuable information, tools, and resources while creating a safe environment for members to network with other professionals. In 2023, members of the PWG had access to presenters and programs from Accenture, Verizon, Mia Gradney, Sharron Melton, MFAH, TUTS, the Houston Symphony, Houston Astros, and Bel Inizio. These programs and others ensure the personal and professional growth of the PWG members.



Financial Literacy sponsored by Christian Brothers automotive foundation

Congratulations to the PWG 13week Financial Literacy Program graduates! These 15 women worked every Thursday evening in person, learning how to improve their financial literacy. Topics included budgeting, credit, and debt management, as well as emotions that surround spending habits. These women are on their way

to financial independence! Thank you, Christian Brothers Automotive, and long-time volunteer Shannon Abel, for providing these women the opportunity to gain invaluable financial knowledge.



I wholeheartedly recommend the PWG financial literacy program. It's been a transformative experience for me. The program's comprehensive curriculum provides invaluable

insights into budgeting, investing, and managing debt. Expert instructors demystify complex financial concepts, making them accessible to all while ensuring a real-world application. The supportive PWG community offers a safe space for learning and networking, fostering long-lasting financial confidence. This program is a game-changer, empowering you to take control of your financial future. —NICOLE



Run for a Reason

SPONSORED BY CHRISTIAN BROTHERS AUTOMOTIVE FOUNDATION

Thank you to all the generous individuals and team sponsors, Christian Brothers Automotive, Bank of Texas and Sunnova, who contributed to DFS Houston's Run for a Reason team. This is our 11th year hosting a team as part of the Chevron Houston Marathon. We are the largest charity team with over 140 team members including 35 PWG members who crossed the finish line. Your support has made an indelible impact on the lives of countless women, allowing us to extend the mission of empowerment through health and wellness. Through your generosity, Dress for Success Houston can continue its vital work, providing women with the tools and resources they need to succeed in their professional journeys.



The Women Veterans Program at DFS Houston goes beyond the conventional scope of professional development, recognizing the unique needs of women who have served in the military. In 2023, the program was a beacon of support, prioritizing mental wellness and self-care through tailored workshops acknowledging the distinct challenges that women veterans face. These workshops provide a safe space for participants to explore strategies

Women Veterans Program

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

OVER 1,700 VETERANS SERVED SINCE 2014

SPONSORED BY HALLIBURTON

for coping with stress, fostering resilience and overall well-being. Additionally, the program placed a significant emphasis on cultivating a sense of camaraderie and creating a community where shared experiences and mutual understanding thrive. By addressing the holistic needs of women veterans, we not only facilitate their professional growth but also nurture a supportive environment that acknowledges and honors their unique journeys.

Thank you to our community partners, such as Halliburton and H-E-B, for supporting this program and ensuring our women feel whole from the inside out. In 2023, more than \$18,850 worth of H-E-B groceries, helping over 160 women veterans and their families, were distributed.



The DFS Houston Women Veterans program workshops have made a huge impact on my personal and professional life. I have implemented many of the strategies and routines taught to us in my life for a better quality of life for myself and those connected to me.

—SHAVONNE, U.S. ARMY VETERAN

Job Search

SPONSORED BY CHEVRON

"This program helped me feel hopeful and confident in my ability to find a job when I was feeling defeated."

—LISETTE, ABA THERAPIST IN EDUCATIONAL THERAPY

The Job Search Program at Dress for Success Houston stands as a comprehensive and impactful resource for women seeking to navigate the competitive job market. By offering a diverse array of services, from resume workshops to digital literacy classes, the program has become an invaluable support system for countless women. With over 1,200 hours of programming dedicated to job search strategies, participants are equipped with the essential tools needed to secure meaningful employment. Through this program, we not only address the immediate needs of job seekers but also foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptability. In 2023, the Job Search Program served 340 women. The Career Center offers workshops, one-on-one sessions, and an open computer lab at the agency.



SUCCESS STORY

"The Job Search Program helped me find community, especially within the Teams sessions. I felt supported throughout my three-month job search over the summer. I also felt very prepared for my interview after getting suited. Suiting was such a fun experience with my consultants, and the interview prep was so vital to my success in landing the job!"

Catherine landed a job as a Sales and Event Manager in the hospitality industry.

Digital Literacy

Dress for Success Houston has recognized the pivotal role that digital literacy plays in empowering women on their career journeys. In response to the evolving landscape of job searches and professional development, the organization has implemented programs to help women gain proficiency in digital skills. Partnering with Harris County Public Library, we ensure that women not only navigate

the complexities of the job search effectively but also harness the full potential of technology throughout their careers. This strategic focus on digital literacy enables participants to confidently navigate online job platforms, create a strong online professional presence, and leverage the tools technology has to offer in advancing their careers. In a rapidly digitizing world, our commitment to enhancing digital literacy underscores its dedication to equipping women with the skills needed to thrive in the contemporary job market and beyond.





Learning Management System

SPONSORED BY PWC

The Learning Management System (LMS) implemented for the Professional Women's Group is a transformative tool designed to empower and support our members. This platform serves as a central hub, providing seamless access to a wealth of resources and recordings of past meetings. The LMS offers a structured and userfriendly environment where members can enhance their professional skills, and access valuable insights from previous workshops. Whether it's recorded workshops, expert presentations, or curated resources, the LMS ensures that members have the flexibility to learn at their own pace and revisit crucial information at any time. This technological advancement not only fosters a culture of continuous learning within the organization

but also strengthens the sense of community among its members, enabling them to thrive in their respective careers. Through the Learning Management System, Dress for Success Houston is not just providing education; it is cultivating a supportive ecosystem for

the professional growth and success of its empowered women.



Altman-Goldstein Scholarships

SPONSORED BY THE ALTMAN GOLDSTEIN FOUNDATION AND CENTERPOINT ENERGY

Since its inception in 2012, the Altman-Goldstein Scholarship program has awarded over \$1,000,000 in scholarship funds to nearly 300 engaged PWG women. This financial support goes beyond the traditional boundaries of career development, making a substantial positive impact on the

lives and aspirations of recipients. The Altman-Goldstein Scholarships serve as a beacon of opportunity, breaking down financial barriers and enabling women to pursue higher education, advance their careers, and achieve their professional goals. This remarkable initiative not only reflects our dedication to empowering assistance provided.

women holistically but also highlights the organization's role as a catalyst for positive change in the lives of those it serves. The scholarships represent an investment in the potential and success of women, creating a ripple effect of positive transformation that extends far beyond the financial





Support the empowerment of women through Dress for Success Houston by contributing to Her Path Forward throughout March! This initiative is deeply rooted in the belief that equipping women with education and employment resources

Her Path Forward

SPONSORED BY CHEVRON

not only transforms individual lives but also has a cascading effect, enhancing communities, strengthening organizations, and bolstering business outcomes and economies. We recognize that professional attire is a key driver of confidence and success for women entering the workforce. The generosity of donations during this campaign provides a much-

needed influx of clothing and funds, ensuring that Dress for Success Houston can continue its mission of providing support and resources for the women of Houston. "Her Path Forward" embodies a collective effort to pave the way for women to overcome barriers, achieve their professional goals, and contribute significantly to the fabric of their communities.

SPONSORS AS OF JANUARY 2024

















This year, your donations can have double the impact, with generous matches available, reaching up to \$20,000! Thank you to the Board members and Advisory Council members Sydney and Jeff Shellebarger. Your support will directly influence a woman's career development, job search skills, veteran resources, and more. For information about sponsorship opportunities, reach out to Director of Development Kelly Moneyhan at Kelly@dfshouston.org.



Legacy Giving

Dress for Success Houston ensures future programming to support the empowerment of women in our community. Thank you to the 60 founding members of our Legacy Giving Society. The commitment they began has grown to nearly \$3 million to ensure future generations of women will be impacted by DFS Houston's life changing programs. If you wish to learn more about being a part of the Legacy Giving Society, please contact Nancy Levicki, Founding Director of Legacy Giving, at nancy@dfshouston.org.







Volunteer at DFS Houston

a brighter, more empowered future for women in our community.

Volunteers are undeniably the heartbeat of Dress for Success Houston, bringing passion, dedication, and a commitment to positive change. The success of our programming is a testament to the invaluable contributions of the hundreds of volunteers who generously give their time and talent each year. From conducting workshops to providing one-on-one mentorship, our volunteers play a pivotal role in empowering women on their professional journeys. Their selfless efforts create a supportive ecosystem where women can thrive and succeed. If you share our vision of empowering women, consider joining us in this fulfilling endeavor. Your expertise and skills can make a profound impact, helping us continue our mission of providing essential resources and support to women in Houston. Together, as a community of volunteers, we inspire and uplift, fostering positive change and creating















Women of Wardrobe

Women of Wardrobe (WOW) is a vibrant community of female professionals committed to making a positive impact through volunteerism, fundraising, and social events. Our members actively support DFS Houston and contribute to achieving the organization's mission. Whether volunteering, organizing fundraisers, or building a network of like-minded individuals, WOW members play a crucial role in advancing Dress for Success Houston's goals. We invite those who share our commitment to join us on this rewarding journey.

Spring Fling
Join us April 20!





DFS HOUSTON SUCCESS STORIES

Tiffany S.

PRACTICE COORDINATOR, NORTH AMERICAN PARTNERS IN ANESTHESIA, UNITED STATES ARMY VETERAN

"I was seeking connection and community when I was introduced to Dress for Success Houston at a Veteran's event. I learned of the extensive programming DFS Houston offers beyond the suit. DFS Houston provided me with classes and opportunities that have empowered me professionally and personally.

I participated in Veteran's workshops, mentoring, career development, financial literacy, and wellness classes. My daughter, Ti'Anna, received a scholarship through DFS Houston that helped her to earn a college degree. I'm looking forward to completing an advanced degree in data analysis and continuing my involvement with DFS Houston."





Feni P.

ASSOCIATE PROGRAM MANAGER, WORLDSTRIDES

"I was referred to Dress for Success Houston through a partnership with Rice University. I am striving professionally to contribute to improving aerospace technology and related fields. I would also like to enroll in a Ph.D. program within five years. Participating in the Professional Women's Group has made me feel confident in myself professionally and in my ability to try new things. I have expanded my understanding of self-care, an area I have struggled with.

My experience with DFS Houston has been fantastic. I appreciated the professional attire, which was helpful as a recent graduate. But the more I learned about PWG and the programs available, the more I realized that this was about empowering women in multiple ways: professionally, physically, financially, and mentally. My expectations have been exceeded. I am so grateful to be a part of this group. It feels like a new world where I can experiment and try new things without judgment."

Susy S.

PROGRAM ANALYST, INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

"After early marriage, divorce, and lacking family support, I postponed education for work and single parenthood. Job loss led me to DFS Houston, seeking a shift to education. Expecting attire support, I found not only that but also invaluable professional development, confidence, and encouragement. DFS Houston aided my job search, and joining PWG supported my early career and education return. With the assistance of The Altman-Goldstein Scholarship, I was able to earn my Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Houston-Downtown.

Today I work as a Program Analyst and Applicant Liaison with The Institute for International Education, I've gained new skills and received promotions and pay raises. My personal and professional growth is thanks to my connection with DFS Houston."





Aida S.

NURSE ASSISTANT, EVERGREEN PRIVATE CARE

"I connected with the DFS Houston Job Search Program in 2019, when I needed assistance. After three months of active participation, I secured a job in my field and became a PWG member. I'm a mother of three, working as a home health aide, and I'm on a journey to achieve my nursing degree. Through DFS Houston, The Altman-Goldstein Scholarship has allowed me to attend Houston Christian University, where I'm pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. I'm proud to have recently passed the English proficiency exam, a crucial step toward my nursing exams. DFS Houston surpassed my expectations. They've empowered and guided me on my path to success. I'm one step away from my dream and profoundly grateful for DFS Houston."

Thank You to Our Donors

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Your Aesthetic Edit

Zalla Massage

11



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AGENCY NEEDS

Professional shoes, handbags, business portfolios, and plus-sized clothing.

The Reliant donation circle is open Monday through Friday from 10 AM – 2 PM and one Saturday a month.



Tribute

KRISTI CHICKERING

On November 7, longtime supporter, Kristi Chickering lost her battle with cancer. Kristi was an incredible voice for the women of Dress for Success Houston. She was a leader as a past Board Member, Vice Chair, and Corporate Guild President.

We hold Kristi in our hearts and value the immense impact she made on all of us at Dress for Success Houston. Undeniably, Kristi touched many people's lives and left imprints on their hearts that will last a lifetime. Her legacy lives on through her husband, Chick, and their sons Cameron and Nash and the women she impacted at Dress for Success Houston.





