

SUMMER 2015

# NEWS to SUIT YOU

A newsletter from Dress for Success Houston

Dear Friends,

We are reaching new heights at Dress for Success Houston (DFSH)! This year, we are serving more women than ever, and the **percentage of women landing jobs** is a staggering **44%**! We have **increased attendance** in the Professional Women's Group (PWG), our educational enrichment program, by **25%**. We also are pleased to have expanded the number of **veterans** assisted in 2015 by **55%** (pg 4).

Through programs such as the **PWG** and strategic partnerships with other **nonprofits** and **businesses**, we are **broadening the scope of services** offered and growing the financial support essential for ensuring the long-term **success of our clients**.

I want to thank the **Houston Marathon Committee** for organizing the **Run for a Reason** program. I also want to recognize **Team DFSHouston** for raising **\$101,000**, as well as the supporters, people like you, who voted DFSH "**Chevron's Favorite Charity**" for an additional **\$50,000**. New this year is the opportunity to join us and participate in the **ABB 5K** (pg 5).

There is something to **suit everyone** who wants to be part of the **DFSH community** and help the women we serve achieve **self-sufficiency in work and life**, so don't wait! Visit our website: **dfshouston.org** to learn more and mark **October 17** on your calendar for our annual fundraising celebration, **Cuisine for a Cause**—a night under the stars you won't want to miss!

With **gratitude for your generosity** and **wishing you and your family a relaxing summer!**

*Nancy S. Levicki*

Nancy Levicki  
President & Co-Founder



ABOVE: **Pacific Dental Services Serve Foundation** hosted PWG's first ever mobile dental health clinic. Volunteer clinicians and dental care teams provided more than \$42,000 of free dental care to 80 PWG members. Services included exams, x-rays, cleanings, extractions, fillings and same-day crowns. The day was such an overwhelming success that plans are already in the works to host a second Dental Dream Day with services extended to the children of PWG members.

BELOW: **Linda Lorelle** moderated a discussion with **Mayor Annise Parker** at the Corporate Guild Power Breakfast hosted by the **Four Seasons Hotel Houston**. **Nancy Levicki** and **Kasey Dunn** of **PwC** welcomed the group and highlighted the newest members.

LOWER LEFT: Dress for Success Houston Board members **Eric Blumrosen** of **Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP**, **Niloufar Molavi** of **PwC** and **Morris Clark** of **Marathon Oil Corporation** at Models of Success.

LOWER RIGHT: **Maria Lindenberg** of **Chevron**, **Tim Fischer** of **Marathon Oil Corporation**, **Cheryl Reed** of **United Airlines** and **Wendy Daboval** of **Chevron** after receiving Clean Sweeps Awards at Models of Success.



# Professional Women's Group (PWG)

## 2014 END OF YEAR SURVEY

104 respondents | completed Dec. 2014

93% Currently Employed

74% Employed Full-Time

20% Employed Part-Time

6% Temporary

In the last 12 months:

27% Promoted

35% Received a raise

Overall:

72% Satisfied with life

88% Feel worthwhile

72% Feel healthy

82% Can cope with the unexpected

52% of first year PWG members reported that "it can be a stretch to afford regular meals" for them and their families. By the time these women become alumna members, the percentage drops to only 11%.

Just 4% of alumna members still receive any kind of public assistance.

PWG Member Feedback

*"PWG has helped me to change the way I think, to be a more professional woman. And the scholarship has been a dream come true!"*



ABOVE: Mentor and mentee pairs meeting for their first conversation at the Spring W2W kick-off event. This nine-month commitment often results in life-long friendships.

## WOMEN2WOMEN Mentoring Program

**Become a mentor this fall!** We are seeking professional women with an ability to listen and an interest in helping a woman succeed in her work and life. The **Women2Women Mentoring Program** continues to be one of our most popular PWG programs – both with the mentors and PWG members. If you are interested in learning how to become a mentor, contact [monica@dfshouston.org](mailto:monica@dfshouston.org).

PWG Member Feedback

*"I take pride in who I am now and am using my talents to move forward. I'll never look back!"*

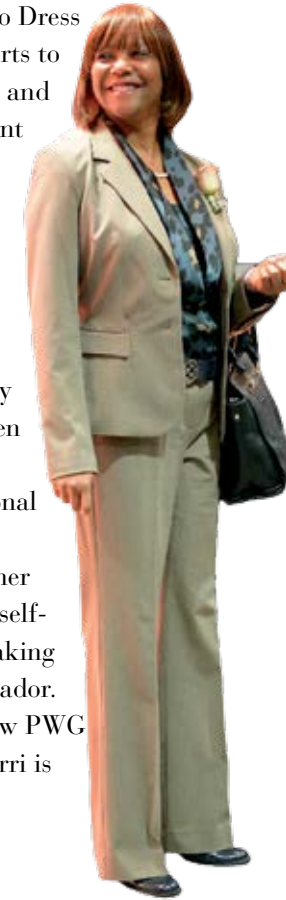
## Financial Literacy Program

Dress for Success Houston partnered with **BBVA Compass** volunteers on March 28 to host PWG's **Spring Financial Literacy Boot Camp**. Eighteen PWG members attended the all-day event which empowers women with the basic knowledge and tools to make more informed financial decisions for themselves and their families. Currently, 22 PWG members are enrolled in the 13-week course focusing on long-range financial matters such as retirement, investments and home ownership.



## CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

When Memorial Assistance Ministries referred Terri to Dress for Success Houston in 2013, her unsuccessful efforts to find work had taken a toll—she felt exhausted, powerless and alone. Terri quickly took advantage of our pre-employment classes where she found a network of support that helped her stay encouraged and focused during an often overwhelming job search. When Terri finally landed a job as an employment specialist with Goodwill Industries of Houston, she was excited to return to Dress for Success and join the Professional Women's Group. Since Terri's first PWG meeting last year, she has participated in nearly every program PWG has to offer, from the Women2Women mentoring program and the financial literacy program to computer classes in the Chevron Career Center and personal coaching sessions in PWG's new Dare to Dream program. Terri credits PWG with challenging her to reach beyond her fears and with helping her become a more confident and self-assured woman. She has overcome her fear of public speaking by facilitating PWG meetings and is now a PWG Ambassador. And by giving back to PWG, Terri is making sure that new PWG members feel as welcome as she did when she arrived. Terri is truly a model of success.



## ACTIVE & INVOLVED PWG AT A GLANCE

BELOW: Mother and daughter PWG members Melisa and Kayla (LEFT) and Kenya with her two children (RIGHT) at the annual **PWG Mother's Day Brunch**.



ABOVE: PWG members taking a tour of the Saturday morning **Urban Harvest Farmer's Market** as part of a Health and Wellness class.



ABOVE: PWG Ambassador Ronke with the staff of **Talbots** for the **Give Confidence S.O.S. Month** campaign.

## ALTMAN-GOLDSTEIN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Ana Arreola  
Houston Community College, Liberal Arts

Marisa Black  
Project Management Institute, Project Management Certificate

Blanca Cruz  
Houston Community College, Business

Erica Davis  
Houston Community College, Human Resources Management

Ronke Foresythe  
Champions School of Real Estate, Real Estate License

Stacey Guillory  
Houston Community College, Accounting

Zaida Hernandez  
University of Houston, Mechanical Engineering

Kolendra Jackson  
Champions School of Real Estate, Real Estate License

Joannell Jones-Wilson  
San Houston University, Graduates Program

Vera Love  
Lone Star College – Business Administration

Cloenthia Orphey  
Texas Teachers, Math 4-8 Generalist 4-8

Paige Owens  
Western Governors University, Health Information Management

Paulette Phillips  
Southern New Hampshire, Human Resources

Judy Pilgrim  
Houston Community College, Social Work

Dorothy Prejean  
Houston Community College, Business

Mindy Ramnanansingh  
Advancing the Business of Healthcare, Certified Professional Coder

Patricia Salinas  
Lone Star College, Mechanical Engineering

Susana Saravia  
Houston Community College, Education

Peggy Stephens  
San Jacinto College North, Mental Health Services/Substance Abuse

Caren Sullivan  
Horn Drafting and CAD Center, Auto CAD

Barbara Ware  
DeVry University, MBA Accounting



*“My personal shopper was just fabulous! Her beautiful spirit, smile and advice was exceptional. She made me feel like a confident, ambitious woman again. I needed that.”*

—Mauda, U.S. Air Force Veteran



## U.S. VETERANS SERVICE DAY—MARCH 2015

27 Veterans Served

12 Army

5 Navy

8 Air Force

2 Marines

Each quarter, our agency offers specialized veteran service days to female veterans transitioning to the civilian workforce. In March, 27 women were outfitted with professional attire and then met with HR professionals from **Chase**, **MD Anderson** and **Phillips 66**. The event also served as a networking opportunity, as the veterans were able to exchange contact information and share stories of their experience in the military as well as life beyond the uniform.

This year 44% of the women we have served landed jobs in industries such as health care, financial services and oil and gas.

### PRE-EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Immediately following the initial interview suiting appointment, women attend First Impressions, an interview skills seminar to help set themselves apart in the job search process. Thanks to partnerships with local companies and foundations, we now are able to provide each woman a formal business portfolio including a legal pad and two stamped thank you cards to send after interviewing. Special thanks to: **Plantation Homes**—1,100 brand new portfolios; **Hines**—620 portfolios with notepads; **Junior League of Houston**—3,000 stamps; **Wood Mackenzie**—1,300 legal pads; and **Jita Printing**—2,000 thank you cards.

Job Search Feedback

*“The job search workshops helped me to market myself in a more efficient manner. I became more confident during interviews and was able to communicate my skills and worth more effectively. The speakers’ insight on their specific specialties were extremely helpful, as well. I’m very grateful to have had the opportunity to work with so many experts.”*



### RUN FOR A REASON: TEAM DFSHOUSTON

Thanks to all who voted, we are thrilled to announce that Team DFSHouston won “Chevron’s Favorite Charity” and an additional \$50,000 for our programs. The generosity of our team members and their supporters raising over \$101,000 resulted a second award—“3rd Place Overall Top Fundraising Charity.” Our 2015-2016 goals are set—150 full and half marathoners and 200 5K team members. Please join chairs **Lauren Hanks**, **Amanda Johansen**, **Leah Rudnicki** and **James Tompkins** to be a part of our winning teams.



ABOVE: Co-chairs **Lauren Hanks**—The Houstonian, **James Tompkins**—Morgan Stanley, **Amanda Johansen**—Shell, and **Leah Rudnicki**—Reed Smith, at the Team DFSHouston recruiting party.



ABOVE: **Volunteers and staff cheering** for Team DFSHouston on race day.

### SAVE THE DATE!

If you are interested in running, jogging or walking the full Chevron Marathon, Aramco Half Marathon or the ABB 5K, join us at our next **Team DFSHouston Recruiting Party** featuring Snap Kitchen on September 17 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at 3310 Eastside.

For more information, please contact **Nikki Rosenberg** at [R4R@dfshouston.org](mailto:R4R@dfshouston.org).



TOP: Natacha Buchanan, Genora Boykins, Gary Reaves, Faye Riggs and Erica Krennerich at Models of Success.

ABOVE: Mary and Ben Patton and Alicia Dixon and Leticia Lowe at Models of Success.

BELOW: Scott and Kirsti Clifford and Karishma and Vikram Asrani at The Houston Club.

LOWER: Lauren Levicki Courville, Paige Branam, Susan Oehl, Melissa Sugulas and Sharron Melton at WOW's Annual Spring Fling.



## CORPORATE GUILD

**MARCH** | During **Send One Suit Month**, Presenting Sponsor, **Chevron** and 15 other **Clean Sweep Sponsors** generously underwrote our largest suit drive effort which provides 65% of our annual inventory. The special event, **Models of Success**, highlights the overwhelming corporate support as well as client success stories. **Sharron Melton** emceed this moving evening which showcased the journeys of nine women impacted by the Professional Women's Group programs. Special thanks to **Vinson & Elkins L.L.P.** for sponsoring this gathering for the 12<sup>th</sup> year.

RIGHT: **Wendy Daboval, Joni Baird and Maria Lindenberg** of Chevron with **Nancy Levicki** at Models of Success. Chevron has been Presenting Sponsor of this effort for 10 years.

To join the Corporate Guild, contact Anne McAllister at [anne@dfshouston.org](mailto:anne@dfshouston.org).

**MAY** | The **Four Seasons Hotel Houston** saw record breaking attendance as 140 corporate supporters gathered for the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Corporate Guild Power Breakfast. **Mayor Annise D. Parker** shared a candid account of her time as Mayor; advice for those seeking public office, saying people should "follow a passion for change;" and her dedication to the mission of Dress for Success Houston.



## Women of Wardrobe (WOW)

**FEB** | Couples gathered at **The Houston Club** to **Fall in Love with WOW** and sip cocktails provided by Brugal Rum.

**MARCH** | On Saturday afternoon, March 29, over 200 co-ed young professionals gathered at **Taps House of Beers** for WOW's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Fling presented by **B&D Contractors**. The afternoon was filled with fun games, amazing raffle packages (think a weekend at the Royal Sonesta, a custom David Peck dress, Paris Texas Apparel Co. and so much more) cold drinks and tasty bites from The Counter, Skeeters Mesquite Grill, Sprinkles Cupcakes, Tiff's Treats, Circulo Tequila and Skyy Vodka. Special thanks to our sponsors: **B&D Contractors, The Morgan Group, Gordon Arata McCollam Duplantis & Eagan, LLC, Jenkins & Kamin, Sullivan Group, Thiessen Law Firm, Asrani Partners, Corporate Retreats**

**International, River Oaks Doctors Group—Anu Davis, MD, and Sue and Gary Hanna.**

**APRIL** | WOW's inaugural **Spring Sort** on Saturday, April 18 was a fun success. After a full day sorting items received during S.O.S. Month, attendees were rewarded with Bonjour Creperie treats.



Upcoming Events  
**July 15:** Kendra Scott Launch Party  
**August:** Tootsies Sizzling Summer Soiree

For information about events or joining WOW, please contact Nikki Rosenberg at [wow@dfshouston.org](mailto:wow@dfshouston.org), 713.957.3785.

## DRESS FOR SUCCESS HOUSTON

would like to thank our 2015 Clean Sweep corporations and suit drive participants for their generous support of S.O.S. Month



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127 Companies  
254 Drop-off sites  
27,225 Items of clothing



## STAR Volunteer

**DEBBIE KLEMCKE**  
SPRING 2015, STAR VOLUNTEER

**WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF VOLUNTEERING?** Seeing the immediate transformation of the women we suit is so rewarding. The look on their faces when we find the perfect suit is what makes this all so worthwhile for me. Their whole posture changes when they step in front of the mirror in their interview suit, and you see the confidence they have because they now feel they can compete for that job.

**DESCRIBE A SPECIAL INTERACTION WITH A CLIENT:** I once suited a lady who left an abusive situation with her four children. When leaving, she thought she had grabbed the trash bag that held her clothes, but it ended up being a bag of the children's toys. So, she and the children were left without any clothes. I asked about her later, and she had landed the job, enrolled in school and become a lawyer. Wonderful lady, such an inspiration, and I was lucky to have been the one who suited her that day. I also love working with veterans on Veteran Service Days.

**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING NAMED STAR VOLUNTEER?** There are so many wonderful volunteers who make Dress for Success Houston the success it is, and I feel very honored to be chosen for this special award. It is a wonderful organization that is truly changing women's lives daily. I am so glad I found this organization and treasure my time here.

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The mission of Dress for Success Houston is to promote the economic independence of disadvantaged women by providing professional attire, a network of support and career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.

## OUR *Wish* LIST:

- **Pant suits / Skirt suits**
- **Blouses / Sleeveless Shells**
- **Handbags**
- **Closed-toe shoes**
- **New, unopened knee-highs**
- **New, unopened pantyhose**

All donations must be interview appropriate, clean, pressed and on hangers. While we accept items in all sizes, **there is a special need for suits and blouses sizes 0 to 4 and 14+** as well as **handbags and shoes sizes 10 and up.**

Clothing donations are accepted at our drop-off circle on the street side of our building, Monday through Friday, 9:30 A.M. to 4 P.M. and the first and second Saturday of each month, 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.

A local veteran's program, referred Janet to Dress for Success Houston earlier this year, and after Janet landed a job with a federal service agency, she joined PWG. She is amazed by the kind-hearted staff and volunteers who embraced her when she arrived and who continue to see her as a significant person.



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[www.dfsforhouston.org](http://www.dfsforhouston.org)

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