



Monthly News



DRESS FOR SUCCESS®
PALM BEACHES

September 2025

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Hello Supporters & Friends:

We have moved, and I think you'll be moved to see the dramatic scale of our growth.

Here's the "Before & After" of our relocation.

BEFORE: Great location in Palm Springs. (Tickled to think that a Florida town shares the name with California's tony desert destination.) On a well-traveled thoroughfare and bus route, and not too far from I95. We were tucked into the second floor of a small office building that adequately answered our needs back in 2019, with some offices easily converted into "shoe room," "jewelry & accessories room", etc. It wasn't long into our 6-year stay that the elevator began having breakdowns, and Thursday donation days were especially treacherous when volunteers had to schlepp the clothing racks and accessories loads upstairs. Yours truly was scarily stuck on a few occasions. It became a concern.

AFTER: Improved location in Greenacres. (Tickled that it reminds me of the '60s comedy show of the same name starring Eddie Albert and Eva Gabor as NYC transplants to farm country.) Now we're at a PB County east-west/north-south crossroad, Forest Hill Boulevard and Jog Road. Highly accessible via two bus routes (a bus stop is right outside our door) and in a bustling shopping plaza where you'll find a UPS Store, Ross, Ace Hardware, fiveBELOW, Crunch Fitness, and Publix (our new landlord). Free standing businesses on the property include several banks: Chase, Truist, and Wells Fargo. And, we're surrounded by a ton of restaurants: Duffy's, Applebee's, iHop, KFC, Pizza Hut, Chipotle, Chick-fil-A, Pete's Place and Bowled – something for everyone! What's particularly exciting is that our Dress for Success brand has exposure in a high-traffic area. It will stimulate interest and curiosity and build greater awareness about who we are and what we do. And we expect that will lead to more participants in our programs and women who we can help.

BEFORE: A ready-made conference room comfortably accommodated about 24, and this was a huge selling point in leasing the space. It enabled us to bring our job readiness training sessions and Board meetings in-house versus having to go off-site.

Over time, though, we outgrew it, with participants in Road to Success, PWG and Volunteer Events spilling out into the reception area because we were so squeezed for space.

AFTER: With a gut renovation of the new space, we were able to double the capacity of the Training Room. We consider this space our jewel in the crown. And, we're extraordinarily fortunate that a nearby residential community, The Pointe at Palm Beach Grove, donated all the furnishings which formerly were in their WeWork-like clubhouse.

I could go on and on – because the 6,032 square-foot space certainly does. We have 6 dressing rooms worthy of a high-end boutique; a jewelry and accessories corner that's absolutely dazzling with display furnishings donated by Saks Fifth Avenue from their former Worth Avenue store; 4 cheery restrooms all ADA compliant; a kitchen-break-respite room for volunteers; a private room for individual coaching sessions; 4 private workspace offices for staff. And thanks to back-door drop-off access and parking at the rear of the plaza, we've set up there to accept, sort and process clothing donations and then store whatever merchandise will be featured in our occasional "Shop for Success" Pop-Up Sales. It's an entirely separate operation from the boutique and client services.

We are deeply grateful to those who so generously made all of this possible. The Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation helped get the ball rolling with a \$125,000 grant. And among others who stepped up are Karen & Ray Masciarella and the W Bradford Ingalls Foundation; The Neil S. Hirsch Foundation; Lost Tree Foundation; The Quinn Family Foundation; plus individual donors including Ellen Gorringer; JoAnne Greiser; Dee & Tommy Hilfiger; and Susan Levine. Finally, a round of applause and thanks for a hard-working crew of dedicated volunteers who helped to design and set up our impressive new digs.

I invite you to come see for yourself. I do think you'll be moved by it all.

Forever grateful,

Joe Ann Fletcher





A Message from Our Board Chair

Bernadette O'Grady

A new chapter begins for us. Hello, everyone. I'm Bernadette O'Grady and while some of you may not have met me, I was elected to the Board of Directors of Dress for Success Palm Beaches on November 7, 2011. I had the privilege of serving as Board Chair from 2013-2017.

And now as our growing organization has moved into an amazing new location, I have been elected again to serve as Board Chair. I am honored to do so, filling a vacancy left by Tamera Atkins, who resigned last month. In her 14-month tenure as Chair, she accomplished an enormous number of feats, not least of which was helping us start-to-finish on the 2-year relocation project. And her commitment to DFSPB since joining as a volunteer in 2022 included service on nearly every committee as well as several terms as a Road to Success volunteer. We are enormously grateful to Tamera for all that she contributed.

As a volunteer who has seen all four locations of our chapter, I am astounded and proud to see how far we have come from a well-worn storefront in Lake Worth to the most incredibly professional new space in Greenacres. I hope you all get a chance to visit our new home that will allow us to serve even more women. And that is the one constant that has been our guiding star through all of our years and locations. From Lake Worth, Lantana, Palm Springs and now Greenacres – our expansion and growth have always been driven by our commitment to match the needs of the women in our community and provide them with the highest level of services. Our work-readiness programs are reaching more participants, and we are reaching out to different populations that can benefit from our services – such as offering teachers a chance to be suited for their return to the classroom.

We have all seen first-hand the measurable difference we can make in the lives of women; now even more will benefit. It is a real testament to our current CEO – Joe Ann Fletcher – and her predecessors, affiliate founder Diane Wilde followed by Mary Hart, that they fearlessly found ways to grow the organization in the directions that fulfilled the evolving needs of our communities.

So, we take a deep breath and walk into a beautiful, new home knowing it will serve so many deserving women in need. And the new space surrounds them and all of us with professional confidence and an amazing future.

Joining us in that future are two new board members, both stalwart DFSPB volunteers. Aquanette Thomas, Vice-President Small Business Banker for Valley Bank, often speaks to our Road to Success participants regarding financial accountability. And Virginia (Ginger) Marchetti, who has a long career as a Human Resources Business Partner for both Merrill Lynch and UBS, has been a Road to Success Mentor and Career Coach. Ginger is Co-Chair of the 2026 Style for Hope Fundraising Luncheon. We welcome these additions as our Board, which currently numbers 14, recently voted to have a membership of 17.

As I said, it's a new chapter.

Warm regards,

Bernadette O'Grady

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT



Road to Success graduate Kimberly Ritchie (l.) wrote her mentor Rhonda Russell (r.) the most expressive letter of thanks about her experience in the June term. It's been edited for length and clarity.

"I will be eternally grateful for the Dress for Success Road to Success Program! My journey began with knowing I needed to get better, overcome depression, and find a job. I knew I would need clothes ... had heard of Dress for Success for decades then saw the Road to Success program on the website. I didn't really know what to expect, signed up, and It ended up being the best decision I have made for myself in a very long time! One of the first statements in the program that resonated with me: If I do the work and invest in myself for the next five weeks, my life could change.

Before the program even officially started, I had a Zoom meeting with volunteer Tirzah [Gabourel] who taught me about ChatGPT. By taking the time to explain this new AI world to me, it profoundly helped me research and find a future career for myself.

Shirelle [Francis], who volunteered her time to help me with my resume and interview questions, recommended I apply at Rayus Radiology. That was life-changing; I started my job there in IV Therapy on September 9.

There also were a few helpful guest speakers over the weeks, such as a banking expert who helped me open a secured credit card that I will now use to just pay my cell phone bill each month and build my credit again. The Clinique speaker suggested a skin care routine two times a day that I've been following. I also loved the Professional Makeup & Photography session we were treated to. At 50 years old, I had never had my makeup done before. It made me feel special, important and pretty... some things I have not felt for a very long time.

From the very first day, program facilitator Dr. Nethel Stephens, with raw honesty, shared her own life journey. It made me feel not so alone and not like such a loser. Her real talk and speeches empowered me.

And lastly but not least, I would love to thank my mentor, Rhonda!!! Her constant and continuous encouragement meant and means the world to me!"



Luna is pursuing her Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services from Palm Beach State College and was drawn to our mission of empowering women. She is passionate about confidence, growth, and professionalism, and believes that style is a powerful tool for self-expression. Luna is motivated each day by her belief that success comes from combining kindness with consistency.



Jacqueline will graduate with her Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services from Palm Beach State College in December 2025. She has experience in the nonprofit sector supporting clients through case management and program coordination. Passionate about empowering individuals to succeed, Jacqueline plans to pursue a Masters in Social Work to further her impact in the community.



Circle of Impact (COI) is the leading initiative for individual giving, asking donors for a minimum \$1,000 pledge. It's a commitment that helps DFSPB deliver on its mission of empowering women to achieve financial independence and stability in their lives.

Formed in 2019, COI has grown from 40 charter members to more than 80, and their combined giving has significantly added to the foundation grants and funding raised by DFSPB supporting its workforce readiness programs and other services.

In a show of appreciation, COI members throughout the year are invited to exclusive experiential events, themed receptions, and networking opportunities, often at private residences or distinctive venues and occasionally featuring presentations from guest authors, experts, or talents.

Click on the link below, see the range of Membership Levels, and help change a woman's life today.

[Become a Member](#)

We are pleased to recognize the following Circle of Impact members who contributed \$2,500 or more at the following levels over the past year:

Diamond
Brittany Castillo
Chris Quinn

Pearl
Caren Rose Wishner
David Hochberg

Debra Kelly-Ennis
Dee & Tommy Hilfiger
Donna Kress
Elissa Greenberg
Ellen Bernstein
Steve Ehrhart
Ellen Gorringer
Esther Perman
JoAnne Greiser
Karen Masciarella
Kelly Merbler
Susan Levine
Sylvia Golden

Faith Meyer
Ilene Golembiovsky
Jana Hesser
Joannie Danielides
Lyn Houston
Bernadette O'Grady
Marci Schoenbach
Wendy Tannenbaum
Nancy Rizzuto
Patricia Dautch
Zelda Mason

Remember who believed in you?
NOW IT'S YOUR TURN.

BECOME A ROAD TO SUCCESS MENTOR.
YOUR WISDOM IS WORTH SHARING. HELP OTHER WOMEN
UNLOCK THEIR POTENTIAL, ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS, AND
TRANSFORM THEIR LIVES.

Our next Road to Success session:
Oct. 8 - Nov. 12

**READY TO MAKE AN
IMPACT?**
 Contact Nina Jakubowski
njakubowskiedressforsuccesspb.org



A Summer'25 RTS Session

PWG Adds to A.I. Toolbox

Our Professional Women's Group put the doubled capacity of our new Training Center to the test with 34 participants filling the room, fully engrossed in the September 13th session on A.I. presented by tech whiz Tirzah Gabourel. A familiar tech coach to many of the women who had graduated Road to Success, Tirzah delivered a dynamic session on Artificial Intelligence, showing real-time demonstrations of how A.I. can be used to research potential employers, strengthen LinkedIn profiles, and polish resumes. Attendees also had some creative fun experimenting with A.I.-generated photos, sparking plenty of laughs and curiosity. Unanimously, the group requested a Part 2 session on the subject, realizing the growing need to adopt usage of A.I. to level up their employment opportunities.



Additional Ways to

SUPPORT US



Company Matching Grants

Many organizations offer a company match program for donations made by their employees to nonprofit organizations, and some even offer volunteer grants. If your employer offers such programs, please consider requesting a donation to Dress for Success Palm Beaches.

Charitable Bequest

Leave a legacy! Please consider adding a charitable bequest to our organization to your will. **Be sure to designate our organization by our full name: Dress for Success Palm Beaches.**

**Business
Partners**





DRESS FOR SUCCESS®
PALM BEACHES

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