



Monthly News



August 2025

CEO's Message

Board President Message

We've Moved

**Welcome Joanie Bily,
DFSWW Interim CEO**

**Teacher Appreciation Event
Recap**

**Road to Success
Graduation**

**PWG Attendees Wowed by
Rep. Debra Tendrich**



**CEO's
Corner**



Hello Supporters & Friends:

This is the anatomy of a donation...a super generous donation...the unexpected angel kind.

It began about a year ago when Judith Garson and her husband Steven Rappaport arrived for a Thursday clothing donation appointment at our Palm Springs boutique. One of our Inventory/Merchandising Team volunteers greeted them in the parking lot to collect the items and, as is often the case, a lively conversation ensued about Dress for Success, our programs, operations, impact, and value. They were inquisitive and engaging, and our volunteer instinctively invited the couple up to see the boutique firsthand and learn more about the organization. It gave me the opportunity to personally meet them as well.

I learned that they are two of the trustees of the Neil S. Hirsch Foundation which is on the lookout for organizations worthy of the fund's beneficence. So, I prepared and submitted a proposal to them and added them to our data base and on my personal radar screen, occasionally keeping in touch.

Meanwhile, they did their homework and dug deeply to find out how Dress for Success delivers on its promise to empower women and help prepare them for a life of stability and economic independence. They discovered how we measure up to our credo to be "More Than the Dress." They noted that Charity Navigator, the most respected watchdog of nonprofits, gave DFSPB one of the highest ratings – 96% which is 4-star. It's an assurance that we're accountable for every dollar spent, with contributions and funding largely going directly to the programs we provide, while administrative and operational costs are carefully contained.

Here we are, nearly a year after first meeting, and the couple just sent a note on behalf of the foundation with a check for \$50,000! Needless to say, we are blown away by this extreme generosity. Moreover, what astounds me is the randomness of this gift...how it originated with a clothing donation in our parking lot and how it was determined we receive such a significant amount. Hopefully we'll be able to build upon the relationship that has emerged from this chance beginning and be considered for future funding.

Half of the Hirsch donation is designated for the creation of our new Lobby Area. (You'll soon see a plaque there acknowledging the Neil S. Hirsch Foundation gift.) The other half is to be apportioned to Road to Success. Timing for receipt of this awesome gift could not be better as we have just moved to our new location and we are embarking upon a new six-week term of Road to Success in October.

It's angels with deep-pocket resources like the Neil S. Hirsch Foundation – as well as Christine Quinn, Ellen Gorringer, Karen Masciarella, Gadsby Foundation, to name a few – who, year after year, overwhelm us with their sincere commitment and singular philanthropy for which we are hugely grateful. Together with what you, dear reader, also contribute, it adds up to the monetary needs that keep DFSPB up and running.

Thank you, all.

Joe Ann Fletcher



**A Message from
our Board President**

Tammera Atkins



Dear Friends & Supporters,

A recent sailing excursion had me realizing that even the gentlest wave can spark a powerful tide. Here at Dress for Success Palm Beaches, your support has created ripples that continue to uplift, inspire, and transform lives. From career coaching and suiting sessions to scholarships and new beginnings, the first half of 2025 has been rich with growth and gratitude.

Let's celebrate the waves we've made together and look forward to even more to come.

- **Client Support:** Through the end of July we have served a total of 681 clients. A little relocation was not stopping us.
- **Relocation Progress:** In moving to our new home, the generosity you've shown has helped lay the foundation for the future of our mission. Once settled, we will communicate opportunities for you to celebrate our grand opening.
- **Scholarships Awarded:** This season, we awarded 20 women with educational scholarships. Their talent and drive were overwhelming; their determination is our shared victory.

Whether you've given your time, treasure, or voice, we feel your impact. Volunteers, donors, and partners are the current behind our waves. So, let's keep the current strong. Summer giving may slow, but the need does not. Consider a midyear gift to help us finish strong and start the fall with full sails.

Together, we're more than a movement—we're a rising tide. Thank you for being part of our wave.

Warmest regards,

Tammera Atkins



DRESS FOR SUCCESS[®]
PALM BEACHES

We've Moved!



**6836 FOREST HILL BLVD.,
GREENACRES, FL 33413**

We're excited to announce that Dress for Success Palm Beaches has moved to our new boutique in Greenacres!

Naming Opportunities Still Available!

Support the future of Dress for Success Palm Beaches and make a meaningful, visible impact in our expanded space. To learn more, contact CEO Joe Ann Fletcher at (561) 249-3898 or jfletcher@dressforsuccesspb.org.

Another Dress for Success "Move"



Joanie Bily, newly named CEO of Dress for Success Worldwide, and Joe Ann Fletcher

Breaking news from Dress for Success WORLDWIDE: There's a transition in leadership with the departure of CEO Michele Meyer-Shipp after nearly 4 years at the helm. Named interim CEO is an amazing woman who's right in our own backyard.

Fort Lauderdale-based Joanie Bily has stepped in as Interim CEO and Strategic Advisor. She's a renowned expert in workforce solutions and talent strategy with experience that spans three decades, including most recently as a division president for Employbridge, the largest industrial staffing firm in the U.S. We had the opportunity to meet with her ahead of her official introduction to DFS Worldwide's community of supporters. That's happening in September in NYC at the "Women Who Inspire Luncheon" and then in October at the affiliates' leadership conference in Toronto.

Joanie met with us at the Palm Springs boutique and then we gave her a sneak peek at the new River Bridge location. She is genuinely warm, caring, intelligent and has wasted no time in taking the reins with a clear vision of a future path for the organization. She was very impressed with the direction our Palm Beaches affiliate is headed in and will make every effort to join us for the grand opening of our new space. (Date TBA.)

An A+ for our 5th Annual Teacher Appreciation Program

In a matter of less than 2 full weeks, we served just over 300 teachers with back-to-school outfits and an uplifting experience with our volunteer stylists. This was the fifth year DFSPB has hosted a Teacher Appreciation initiative, and it's come at a time when Florida teachers are gravely underpaid yet, at their own expense, going the distance to personally help furnish their classrooms with learning essentials. Our modest treats for these deserving women included some supplies as well as personal goodies thanks to event partners: BJ's, Chick-fil-A, Clinique, Guardians Credit Union, Healthy MD, PDQ Chicken, PNC Mobile Unit, Sam's Club, Sprouts, TLC4Teachers, TRIO Educational Opportunity Centers, and Whole Foods. Watch the news report on the initiative filed by reporter Angela Rozier on WPBF-TV Ch. 25.

<https://www.wpbf.com/article/florida-teachers-back-to-school-students-outfit/65502562>



Nikola White, who teaches at Glade View Elementary, was assisted in choosing her free top and slacks outfit by Alexandra Shatara, manager of the DFSPB Belle Glade boutique.



Volunteer Rhonda Russell helped Rodemitch Linot, a teacher at Belle Glade Elementary, find a back-to-school dress.

Road to Success Summer Session Capped

For the first time since offering our intensive career readiness and mentoring program in 2013, we crowned graduates with official mortar boards, and 22 women proudly wore the caps signifying completion of our 6-week Road to Success summer session. Succeeding at securing employment: 12 participants! To be sure, there will be more to come. The next session begins October 8, and if you're in search of a fulfilling volunteer opportunity personally interacting with a client and having a meaningful impact on her life, please learn more about becoming an RTS mentor. Contact Nina Jakubowski, njakubowski@dressforsuccesspb.org.



RTS Graduate Paulina Lau with Joe Ann Fletcher, CEO and Anne Geier, her RTS mentor.



RTS '25 Summer Session Grads

PWG Attendees Wowed by Florida State Rep. Debra Tendrich

Throughout her successful run last year to be elected State Representative for District 89 (covering a large swath of Palm Beach County), Debra Tendrich courageously retold her story of being a domestic abuse survivor, crediting Dress for Success Palm Beaches for helping to start a new life for herself and young daughter.

Debra headlined our August PWG meeting and shared the details of her remarkable reinvention with the nearly two dozen guests in attendance. No surprise that she's currently working on drafting legislation that will be more responsive to women who are victims of domestic abuse. And, when she's not working on this and other bills in Tallahassee, she's constantly advocating for her constituents in so many other ways, with a focus on education, affordable housing and healthcare.

Debra is founder and CEO of Eat Better Live Better, a nonprofit that for the past 10 years has provided access to healthy groceries and nutrition education to our local communities. She is genuinely an inspiration and wowed the PWG crowd.



Additional Ways to

SUPPORT US



Help Ensure Our Future by Becoming a Member of the Circle of Impact

Our Circle of Impact is a select group of current and former business leaders who have pledged an annual minimum donation of \$1,000. Members are acknowledged for their generosity, their names appearing on a distinctive plaque at our headquarters, plus they enjoy several exclusive perks throughout the year. View our flyer [here](#) for more information or to donate, please visit our [website](#).



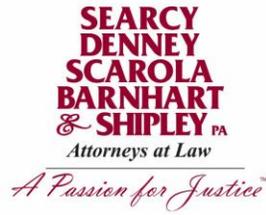
Company Matching Grants

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

Donate

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