Our History

The first Dress for Success was established in 1996 by Nancy Lublin in the basement of a church in Manhattan. In 1998, Dress for Success Morris County (DFSMC) was formed. The initial mission was to collect interview acceptable clothing for women and in that first year, more than 200 suits were distributed. In 2017, DFSMC became Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties (DFSNNJ) due to an increase in the demand for the services being offered. The regional footprint grew as did the number of suits distributed in 2017, which was almost 1,500.

Until just a few years ago, one person managed the office, now the staff has grown to 3 full-time and 2 part-time positions, and the number of active volunteers has risen from a dozen in 1998 to over 300. There are 13 Board of Director members, as well as an advisory council numbering nine.

The founding organization in Manhattan has also grown into a worldwide network of 156 offices in 30 countries helping more than one million women to date. Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties has helped more than 20,000 women; many of who were single and head of households, to develop the critical skills they need to find employment.

Our Mission

The mission of Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties is to empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and the development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.

Our Vision

The vision of Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties is to be the leading provider of comprehensive job readiness and career support services in Northern NJ. We will do this in a safe and supportive environment that provides tools and promotes the confidence to allow women to enter and thrive in the workplace and in their lives.
Our Purpose

The purpose of Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties is to offer long-lasting solutions that enable women to break the cycle of poverty. Dress for Success is part of a global movement for change, empowering women to obtain better futures.

DFSNNJ provides each client with professional attire to secure employment, but it is about much more than simply a new outfit. Besides equipping the client with apparel and accessories, the programs furnish her with a confidence that she carries forever and the knowledge that she can actively define her life, the direction she takes, and what success means to her.

Our Beliefs

- Every woman deserves the opportunity to achieve economic independence & self-sufficiency through meaningful, sustainable employment.
- Every woman has the right to realize her full potential & achieve financial independence in a more egalitarian world. We believe that with proper education, tools and action, this world is possible.
- Addressing a woman’s needs is central to improving the quality of life for that woman, and her family, future generations, and her community.
- Achieving gender equality is imperative to developing sustainable & just world for all, which is possible by acknowledging the crucial role that women play in the global economy.

Career Center Services:

Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties offers invaluable classes that will help improve women’s lives and provide concrete skills to achieve rewarding employment.

Current offerings are as follows:

- **Professional Women’s Group**: Employed clients attend our monthly networking meetings with expert speakers on topics relating to professional and personal growth.

- **Bridge2Success**: A bi-monthly job search intensive meet-up designed to engage and empower unemployed women as they actively search for their next job opportunity and career advancement.
**Steps2Success:** A facilitated counseling and coaching job readiness boot camp for the unemployed and underemployed. Empower women to develop diverse strategies and solutions to their job search.

**Road2Success:** Condensed version of the Steps 2 Success program, offering 4 core sessions during a 4-5 week interval. Classes are held off-site at partnering agency locations (bilingual available).

**Foundations of Success Workshops:** Interactive workshops, incorporating experiential exercises that facilitate development of employability skills in two categories: personal management and employment maintenance.

All the services help to guide women down a professional path that will improve their lives, as well as those of their families and their communities.

**2019: Celebrating 20+ Years of Working to Get Women Working**

In 2017, Dress for Success Morris County became Dress for Success Northern NJ- 10 Counties, in recognition of the expanded role it has assumed over the years, of helping more than 20,000 women throughout New Jersey find meaningful employment, breaking the poverty cycle.

We now provide services to women in the following NJ counties:

- Bergen
- Essex
- Hunterdon
- Middlesex
- Morris
- Passaic
- Somerset
- Sussex
- Union
- Warren

DFSNNJ works throughout these 10 counties to make sure all women who want help have access. In 2011, a **Mobile Program** was started that has allowed women who cannot travel to the Madison office to receive suits, services and support right in their neighborhoods. To date, more than 4,000 women have been able to take advantage of this unique service.
How to Get Involved:

Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties receives no government funding. DFSNNJ’s client services are valued at $1000 for an entire year of support, and every type of involvement is necessary for the continued success of DFSNNJ. All of the moral and financial support from others who are passionate about improving the lives of women everywhere is greatly appreciated.

- Donate Money: online at northernnj.dressforsuccess.org
- Donate Clothes: only professional business attire accepted
- Volunteer: including stylist, working in our career center and more!
- Events: help host or run upcoming events
- Host a Donation Drive
- Be a Corporate Partner
- Be a Referral Agency

Referral Agencies:

Dress for Success Northern NJ-10 Counties gets referrals from over 100 social service agencies across the state including Homeless Solutions, Jersey Battered Women’s Service, and One-Stop Career Centers.

Social Media – Follow for Updates:

- Facebook: Dress for Success Northern NJ- 10 Counties
- Instagram: @dfsnorthernnj
- Twitter: @DFSNorthernNJ
- LinkedIn: Dress for Success Northern NJ- 10 Counties