
THE HEART & THE HANGER



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THE RELIEF BOUTIQUE, INC.

Winter 2012

Hello 2012!

What a year we had in 2011! Last year, The Relief Boutique began operations and some of our accomplishments included partnering with several community organizations, assisting more than 125 women, appearing in news articles and on the local news and hosting events and clothing drives.

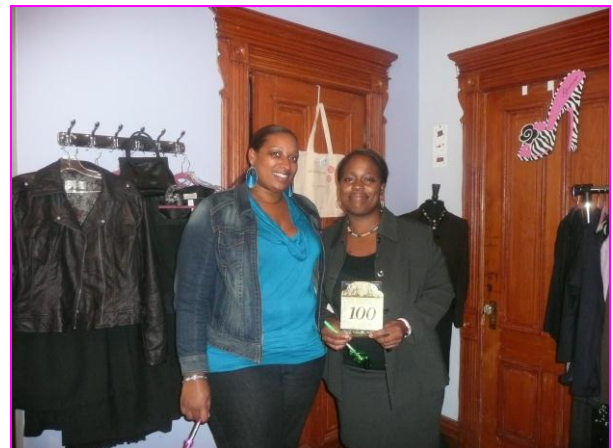
well and sent positive energy our way. We also thank our dedicated and tireless volunteers, including, among others, Monique Barney, Ethan Pearce and Ajee Joyner.



Getting our grant! Left to right: Wallace Chin (Sprint), Debby Ballard (Sprint), and Ben Pearce (Photo: Sprint)

We closed out the year by celebrating our first anniversary on December 3, 2011 and receiving our first foundation grant at an event at the Queens Central Library on December 16, 2011. At this event, the Sprint Foundation presented us with a \$5,000 check in recognition of Robyn Young's efforts in founding The Relief Boutique and its contributions to society.

We sincerely thank everyone who supported The Relief Boutique in 2011 by making a donation of clothing, accessories and financial support, as well as everyone who attended our events, everyone who spread the word and everyone who wished us



Our 100th client! Takia (right) with her referral partner Jacqui from The First Step Program



NYI Reporter Rebecca Spitz (center) with Carolyn Young and Vickie Townes-Griffith

2011 was a great year for The Relief Boutique. In just 10 months, we were able to help over 125

women prepare for success, not only with the proper clothing, but also with the proper attitude and level of self-confidence. In 2012, we look forward to seeing more clients, making more partners, holding and attending more events, and providing even more *clothing and caring* to women in need.



Sleek and professional (and get a load of her shoe options!)



Confident and prepared



Our high school volunteers bring great energy to The Relief Boutique

So Far In 2012...

In under two months, The Relief Boutique has given more than **85** outfits, **40** pairs of shoes and **30** handbags and other accessories to **40** clients preparing for interviews at places such as the NYC Department of Education, NYC Transit, Cablevision, SoHo Grand Hotel and other positions in customer service, security and hospitality. There are several ways you can support The Relief Boutique's ongoing efforts to provide women in need with professional clothing and accessories:

✓ **Donate** – Please visit the Donate page on our website (www.reliefboutique.org/donate.html) for guidelines on clothing donations and ways to make a financial contribution. The Relief Boutique is a 501(c)(3) organization and your contributions are tax deductible.

✓ **Volunteer** – Please contact us if you would like to volunteer to work one-on-one with clients in the boutique. We also have additional administrative and organizational volunteer opportunities.

✓ **Spread the Word** – We are always interested in learning more about organizations in New York City that provide job readiness and placement services for women. Please let us know if you have contacts that you think we should meet.

Thank you for your support!

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars!



On Saturday, March 10, 2012, we will present a *Fashion Tag Sale*. Women's Casual and Professional Clothing Items will be for sale.

Also, look out for details on our upcoming *Spring Happy Hour*.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT:

Francisca Garcia, Case Manager Assistant at Harlem Children's Zone

The Relief Boutique is proud of the work we do, and nothing makes us happier than when our clients circle back and share their successes with us. Below is Francisca Garcia's story, currently a case manager assistance for Harlem Children's Zone.

Francisca Garcia originally discovered The Relief Boutique through SoBRO, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation. SoBRO seeks to improve life in the South Bronx by providing direct services to community residents and rebuilding the infrastructure in which they live. At the time, Francisca was looking for a job and needed some professional clothing for her interviews, so SoBRO referred her to The Relief Boutique.



Francisca (left) with another client during her Summer 2011 appointment

"The Relief Boutique was very welcoming, very friendly," said Francisca. "It was a great experience. Two personal stylists spent an hour and a half with me picking out the perfect interview clothing. I left The Relief Boutique with two outfits, and a new found confidence that I was able to take into the interview room."

After a few interviews, she secured her current position as a case manager assistant at Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ). She really likes her job,

and has gone above and beyond, spearheading a partnership between HCZ and The Relief Boutique.

"At HCZ we have an Employment and Technology Center that focuses on teaching computer and job-related skills to teens and adults. The sixth session of the series focuses on interviewing and proper attire. It seemed like a perfect opportunity to bring in The Relief Boutique who helped me prepare for my interview with HCZ."

Currently Francisca serves as the point person in charge of the partnership between HCZ and The Relief Boutique, and she can't wait to begin referring clients.

"It's been really easy to work with The Relief Boutique, not only as a client but also as a partnership manager. The Relief Boutique is always willing to collaborate with other organizations to ensure that the community gets what it needs. The Relief Boutique is great - they do what they do just because they want to help."

As for parting words of advice, Francisca says: "You never know what tomorrow brings and you should always strive for more and for better."

Our Clients' Words:

The Relief Boutique provides each client with the opportunity to give anonymous feedback on her experience with us. Below are a few words that demonstrate the spirit of care, assistance and support that is a part of each of our appointments.

"I am very pleased with my visit to The Relief Boutique. I walked out with a better view of myself."

"My experience with The Relief Boutique was wonderful. I felt comfortable asking questions regarding style options for interviews."

"Now my confidence level is very high. I'm very excited to go to my interview totally prepared. Thank you, ladies!"

Community Investments in The Relief Boutique

On December 3, 2011 we celebrated our one year anniversary in style with our second annual fundraising event. The highlight of the evening was a fashion show featuring our clients in their professional clothing.



Board members having fun

We are so grateful to have had the involvement of community members in planning and executing the event. We especially thank....

Boel Ben (boelben.hubbard4@gmail.com), who donated his time and expertise in planning, preparing and serving a wonderful dinner to our guests. Chef Ben is the founder and chief executive of Timekey, a company dedicated to healthy cooking and eating.

Monique Barney, our volunteer Office Coordinator and Stylist, who secured a donation of delicious warm rolls from the Tom Cat Bakery to add to Chef Ben's dinner.

Adam Piorkowski, who donated an entire collection of his original framed photographs, formerly on display at Contesta Rock Hair, for our silent auction.

Hosea Johnson, of Hosea Johnson Photography (www.hoseajohnson.com), who donated an original framed photograph for our silent auction.

Gail Quarles, a professional runway model, image specialist and President of American Model Group (www.americanmodelgroup.com). Gail made our

special fashion show possible by selecting outfits, coaching the models on how to work the runway and emceeing the show.



Lights, Camera, Fashion

The event was a wonderful opportunity to bring together our clients, our volunteers and our friends and supporters for some good food, good fun and good cheer. *Thank you to all who attended!*

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