



Fitted for Work

Connecting Women with Work

Fitted for Work is committed to helping long-term unemployed and disadvantaged women obtain work, maintain employment and ultimately achieve financial independence. We offer business clothing, presentation and interview skills, and resume advice, building self-confidence and assisting women on the path to self-sufficiency.

Summer 2006/07 Volume 2 Number 3

GIVING SOMEONE ELSE A CHANCE **Profile of Sally Pollard: Fitted for Work** **volunteer**

There's no typical Fitted for Work volunteer. Volunteers come with a huge variety of life



experiences and from very diverse backgrounds. So Sally Pollard isn't typical. But nevertheless there are qualities she shares with most of the women who work in the Fitted for Work boutique.

Like Sally, all our volunteers value being part of a process of transformation. "I absolutely love it," she says. "I get a huge amount of pleasure watching them grow. A woman walks into the boutique and, even though she's only there for an hour, she goes out changed, different."

Sally identifies the first job of the volunteer as putting the client at ease. She understands how hard it is for women to walk through that door, coming into an intimate situation, and having to admit they can't afford to go to Myers or Sportsgirl and buy an interview outfit. And things don't

always go smoothly after women have crossed the threshold.

"To be a large size and not to be able to find anything to wear is terrible," says Sally. "I'm not a small person myself so I know that big girls are even more intimidated and nervous about coming to Fitted for Work. So I go through the stock in advance and pull out everything we've got in the larger sizes."

"One very shy young woman who was extremely large came in on a day we didn't have much in the boutique that was big. We hunted and hunted but nothing fitted or looked good. She was actually shrinking. I could see her body and face saying 'I know I'm not going to get anything.'

Finally out the back I found a skirt with a black overshirt. Not something I would have worn myself. But I took it out anyway and she looked stunning. She just blossomed, really loved it and looked great. Both of us were thrilled."

Coincidentally there was meeting with the Job Network agencies that evening so Sally asked about the timid client she was worried about. "And I heard she had a job! After going through the roller coaster in the room with us that afternoon she went to an interview and got the job. What a day for her."

Sally was born in Collingwood and grew up in Broadmeadows. Straight from school she went to work in the Human Resources Department of Cadbury-Schweppes. "I had absolutely no experience," she says, "but that man gave me a chance and made my life." Now at Fitted for Work Sally gives others the chance to take that first step on the road to self-sufficiency.

If you would like to volunteer at Fitted for Work, contact Nicole Douglas on 9655-1132, or email info@fittedforwork.org.

INSIDE: GETTING READY FOR THE OUTSIDE

Fitted for Work at Dame Phyllis Frost women's prison

It's hard enough going onto the job market but imagine how tough it is when you've been in prison. In August Fitted for Work took part in the first of a series of workshops organised by Melbourne City Mission for women about to be released from Dame Phyllis Frost women's prison.

Twelve volunteers from various companies provided industry specific advice and the chance for women to practise their interview skills. Fitted for Work volunteers brought along a number of outfits and talked about the best way for women to present themselves for interview. We showed them how to put outfits together that would be most suitable for the sorts of interviews they hope to attend. They were also provided with lists of helpful hints to think about before attending interviews and contacts for other support services.

It's amazing how unifying a connection is quickly established through talking about clothes, fabrics, and what to wear. Prison and Melbourne City Mission staff were delighted by how the women engaged with the Fitted for Work volunteers in ways not seen before.

Since the presentation, Fitted for Work volunteers at our City boutique have provided outfits and assistance with presentation skills to a number of women who have now been released.

Next year Fitted for Work is looking forward to participating in further workshops building on the success of this one.

FINE WEATHER, GREAT FUN AND A GOOD CAUSE

Fitted for Work at the Camberwell Market



Make sure that many more women benefit from Fitted for Work in 2007

Thanks to our donors we've come a long way in the short life of Fitted for Work. So far we have helped over 600 women and in 2007 we want to assist an additional 1000.

To achieve this we need your financial help. Those of you who haven't already pledged an annual sum to Fitted for Work will have received a letter and pledge form in the past week. Be generous! Complete and send in your pledge form and support Fitted for Work as it connects disadvantaged women with work.

Maria Diamond and her team showed just what you can do with the right combination of good fun, fine weather and a good cause. On 5 November the sun was shining and the crowds came out at Camberwell Market. A much needed \$2790 was raised for Fitted for Work thanks to the many willing workers who helped with sorting the clothes that are not work-suitable, and with collecting, transporting and selling.

And thanks especially to Maria and Jack Diamond for donating all the costs involved. As Maria says, "Many hands do make light work, and being able to have fun while doing it is a big bonus!"

MERYL STREEP FOR FITTED FOR WORK

240 people packed out the Nova cinema in late September to see The Devil Wore Prada and support Fitted for Work.

In a witty and light-hearted way, the film's message resonates with Fitted for Work's mission. Although the fashion world is certainly the extreme when it comes to being judged by how you look and what you wear, to a lesser extent the way you present yourself makes a difference wherever you work, and wherever you're looking for work.

Prizes were generously donated by Ann Lesch of "Sirocco" and Gabby La Rose from "Village Beauty" of Toorak. Heartfelt thanks to Viv Braun, all her helpers, and to Natalie Miller of Nova Cinemas. We raised \$3600 and got to enjoy Meryl Streep's brilliantly biting performance.

Fitted for Work's stall at the Camberwell Market

POSTER CAMPAIGN

Many women who would benefit from Fitted for Work's service have not heard of it.



Our eye catching new poster, featuring volunteer extraordinaire Bettie Kornhauser (left), is designed to be put up on notice boards, doors, walls - anywhere disadvantaged job seekers might see it. We're hoping it will encourage more women to ask their case workers to make an appointment for them at Fitted for Work.

FITTED FOR WORK AT 101 COLLINS STREET

For the second year the Fashion, Wine & Art event held at Gallery 101 in late August supported Fitted for Work.



Over 150 women were treated to a parade of new season's fashions from Story Boutique on Collins Street, sipped award

winning Baddaginnie Run wines, and viewed paintings by Anita Mertzlin.

After Helen Imber spoke about our work, the enthusiastic women present took out annual pledges to Fitted for Work, bought film tickets, donated clothing and requested information about how to become involved as volunteers.

Thanks especially to Markela Peck and Sally Pollard for being on hand to load and transport the donated outfits.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY

As well as the lightly-used outfits donated to Fitted for Work by thousands of women from all over Melbourne, we have been very lucky to receive brand new clothing from the following supportive companies:

- o Ashleigh Fogel
- o Coronet
- o GloWeave
- o Pacific Brands
- o Tiffany Treloar
- o Yakka

Thank you to everyone who has given so that women, who have no access to professional clothing, leave the Fitted for Work boutique looking and feeling good enough to get a job.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Everyone at Fitted for Work wishes you and your loved ones a joyous and peaceful festive season. We look forward to working together to connect more women with work in 2007.

And finally, thanks once again to our foundation and trust supporters whose assistance is helping Fitted for Work grow



THE MYER
FOUNDATION

Estate of the late Edward Wilson



BR BADDAGINNIE RUN



In partnership - creating living, learning & working options

Fitted for Work, a project of DEAC, Level 8,
56 Swanston Street, Melbourne 3000. For
more information, please contact Nicole
Douglas at nicole.douglas@deac.org.au