

# San Francisco Chronicle

## Style

### Dress for Success helps women find their strong suit

By Carolyn Zinko | June 11, 2015

If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, then women gazing in the mirror at **Dress for Success** have come to consider their new and improved reflections as not only attractive, but beautifully powerful, to boot.

The national nonprofit has served more than 850,000 women worldwide since its founding New York in 1996. By year's end, meanwhile, the San Francisco chapter, founded in 2005, will have served 10,000 Bay Area women.

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A year ago, Kaviyakoen, now 27, was a single mother living in her Mini Cooper with her baby — her relationship with her parents so strained over career and values that she couldn't live at home. She found shelter. Dress for Success changed her mind-set.

At the Sutter Street location, she found mentorship in a two-room, 1,400-square-foot space.

A stylist held up a black and white print dress for a job interview, something Kaviyakoen, whose self-esteem was floundering, would never have considered.

"Other people would tell me they saw a smart, confident, educated woman in me, but I didn't feel that inside," said Kaviyakoen. "I trusted them — and when I put it on, I saw a whole different woman."



**DRESS FOR SUCCESS®**  
SAN FRANCISCO



Photo: Amy Osborne, The Chronicle

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A photographer, makeup artist, and two hairstylists all contribute their time for the Dress for Success 10th Annual Fashion Gala photo shoot

"Said Renee Surcouf, executive director of the San Francisco chapter, "All women who've come to us have been on a journey, but we don't want them to look back — we want them to look forward. When they put on the suit, that's just the beginning."



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