

NEWS RELEASE
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**WARDROBE FOR OPPORTUNITY PARTNERS WITH OPTIC TO DRESS
TRAINEES**

20 clients to get complete makeovers over two day period

OAKLAND, Calif., May 23, 2006 – Wardrobe for Opportunity, the nonprofit organization that provides professional clothing and career support to low-income Bay Area jobseekers, is partnering with Contra Costa nonprofit OPTIC, Opportunities for Technology Information Careers, to dress 15 OPTIC clients at the Wardrobe for Opportunity Contra Costa location on May 27th and June 3rd.

OPTIC runs a full-time, intensive job training that prepares clients for administrative careers with opportunities for advancement. The clients who will be receiving the wardrobe makeovers are participants in this program, which combines computer training, life skills, Career Club, paid work experience, case management, onsite psychological services, and long-term follow up.

During those two days, Wardrobe for Opportunity will be dressing 20 OPTIC clients so that they may have the business wardrobe they need to participate in the OPTIC training program and to move into the workforce once their training completes. “An integral component of our training is acclimatizing participants to all of the spoken and unspoken expectations of the corporate work world,” explained Alissa Friedman, OPTIC Executive Director. “A professional wardrobe is key to this goal and also reinforces the seriousness of participants’ undertaking and commitment.”

“It made me feel a lot better, knowing that I had work clothes for the whole week,” recalls Esperanza Cruz, an OPTIC intern who participated in a similar partnership in January. “I didn’t want to have to wear the same outfit every day of the week, but I didn’t have a real business wardrobe when I started the OPTIC program. The Wardrobe volunteers were very helpful and very patient.”

“This is a terrific partnership,” said Nicole Levine, Executive Director of Wardrobe for Opportunity. “Not having the skills or proper business attire can mean the

difference between getting a job or not. Both of our organizations are working towards the same goal -- to help low-income jobseekers secure employment and become economically self-sufficient.”

“We had been having difficulty enforcing our dress code with new participants,” Friedman notes, “because we specifically serve low-income clients who do not usually have the resources to purchase appropriate attire. By making special arrangements to dress our participants as part of our first week’s orientation activities, Wardrobe for Opportunity is both serving our clients’ best interests and helping OPTIC as an organization maintain the integrity of our job training program.”

The dressing of the OPTIC 20th job training and placement group will take place at 3496 Buskirk Avenue, Suite 100 in Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 at the Wardrobe for Opportunity Contra Costa location. OPTIC trainees will be provided with two complete sets of business clothing and will receive personalized image counseling by a Wardrobe for Opportunity volunteer personal shopper. The participants will not only receive business clothing, but accessories like shoes, belts, and handbags.

For more information on how your business can support OPTIC or Wardrobe for Opportunity, please contact Alissa Friedman, executive director of OPTIC at (925) 776-1133 or alissa@optic-cc.org or Nicole Levine, executive director of Wardrobe for Opportunity at (510) 463-4100 ext. 10 or nlevine@wardrobe.org.

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About Wardrobe for Opportunity

Wardrobe for Opportunity is a volunteer-based, nonprofit organization that provides professional clothing and career support to low-income jobseekers in the Bay Area. Our services provide jobseekers with the self-confidence, self-esteem, and skills to find employment and advance their careers. Working in partnership with over 100 community agencies, hundreds of clothing donors and 200 active volunteers, we are helping individuals build fulfilling and self-sufficient lives with unlimited possibilities for themselves and their families. To find out more about how you can get involved, contact Wardrobe for Opportunity at (510) 463-4100 or visit www.wardrobe.org.

About Opportunities for Technology Information Careers

OPTIC is a non-profit organization opened in 2000 to provide low-income Contra Costa residents with the technology, literacy and life skills that will enable them to become economically self-sufficient. OPTIC’s full-time daytime Job Training and Placement

Program and evening adult education program (the Delta Community Technology Center) help hundreds of Contra Costa residents each year gain the skills they need to move toward true self-sufficiency. To find out more about how you can help, contact OPTIC at (925) 776-1133 or visit www.optic-cc.org.

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