

**BOTTOMLESS  
CLOSET**

connecting  
**women and  
work**

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2012

# A Night to Remember



*A ballroom in the Hotel Pennsylvania* packed with proud, high-spirited women, celebrating personal achievement and savoring the good will that comes from shared aspirations—that's what you get when you combine Bottomless Closet's Client Graduation ceremony with a holiday party.

Thirty-seven clients completed the Bottomless Closet Professional Development and/or Financial Management Series for 2011. An additional 100 Bottomless Closet clients cheered the graduates as they received certificates.

One of the most touching moments came when Alla C. accepted her Financial Management Certificate. The crowd broke into the loudest applause of the night, and many of the volunteers and staff wiped away tears because of Alla's touching story. A Russian immigrant, she came to the United States looking for a better life and opportunity. Ten years ago she was struggling on public assistance, today, she is working as a computer programmer and has purchased her own home in Brooklyn. She credits years of hard work and the help of Bottomless Closet.

"I grew up in a different country, a different culture. Tami and Bottomless Closet have helped me understand a lot," Alla said. Tami Peter, Bottomless Closet Board Member, conducts the popular and life-changing Financial Management Series.

For instance, Alla did not understand the relationship between credit cards and a credit score. She opened and closed accounts quickly, not realizing that one affected the other. "I really appreciate the help and good suggestions," she said, "I'm happy. It was a long road and I'm really happy."

*"I really appreciate the help and good suggestions."*

Alla was among 18 graduates of the Financial Management Series. Graduates completed three core workshops, two elective courses and prepared a personal budget. The 19 graduates of the Professional Development Series completed six core workshops, three elective courses and prepared an updated resume. Eight women completed both series.

The graduates move forward with the confidence and skills to make more informed choices in their professional and financial lives. 2012 promises to be a good year for our clients and Bottomless Closet.

"Never give up," reminds Alla, "Work, work, work!" She's proof that dreams come true.

*"I'm happy. It was a long road and I'm really happy."*



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## A letter from the President

Photo: Lucia Engstrom

Sara T. Slocum,  
Board President

This year marks Bottomless Closet's 13th year assisting New York City women. In 2012 we will support 3,000 clients, forging deep and lasting connections with women on their way to self-sufficiency. More than 300 volunteers will give clients 40,000 pieces of clothing; spend thousands of hours reviewing resumes and preparing clients for interviews; and hold valuable workshops that focus on critical job skills.

This is an especially exciting year for me as I begin my term as President of the Board. I may be new to the role, but I'm no stranger to Bottomless Closet. My connection began in 2005 when my oldest daughter was one year old. I decided to focus my career differently, choosing not to return to market research and consulting, but instead spend more time helping others. My dilemma was not knowing where to start.

A call from Katie Watkin, a close friend, changed everything. She told me about Bottomless Closet, explained its mission of connecting women and work, and outlined the variety of volunteer opportunities available. She was sure that this was the organization for me. I visited the next week and discovered just how right Katie was. I found that I could have a hands-on role working with clients, sharing the same skills that had helped me in my career. I also found volunteers, board members and staff who were engaged, smart, generous and kind. They welcomed me warmly, and I became a regular.

Over the years, I've gotten more involved: starting as a daytime volunteer, becoming a workshop leader, then a member of the Young Leadership Council, then co-chair of the fall benefit, Art Under the Stars. In 2009, I was thrilled to be asked to join the Board and co-chaired the Communications Committee. Today, as President, I follow in the able footsteps of Diane Kenney, whose service and leadership over the past three years have been inspirational.

I hope you'll join me as we continue our vital work of preparing New York's women for work. I'm grateful and thrilled to be a part of the effort.

### *She's new, young, and she's a whiz. Bottomless Generosity*



Jasmine Rivera

After graduating high school in 2010 and moving to New York, I entered Per Scholas, a technology training program. After I passed my technician's exam, my counselor referred me to Bottomless Closet for clothing and interview coaching. My first inter-

action with Bottomless Closet was beyond amazing: I had never owned a suit or any form of business clothing. I received two great outfits, got coaching on my resume and a boost of self-esteem at the same time.

I was introduced to Gineyda Diaz, Bottomless Closet's Operations Director, and learned that there was a need for an intern with a technology background. I worked as an intern during the summer of 2011 and was subsequently offered a position as the Administrative Associate. I am very excited to join the Bottomless Closet team. I can proudly say I have been on a great journey, but know there's so much more to come.

Pictured: co-hosts Heidi Reavis and Celia Paul at an October reception to benefit Bottomless Closet. The event, held at law firm Reavis, Lehrer Parent LLP, drew 60 attendees, who emptied their closets and filled the firm's conference room with huge clothing donations for Bottomless Closet.



Photo: Stephen Rosen

## Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!



Bottomless Closet co-founder Reva Wurtzburger was once again the gracious host of the Volunteer Appreciation Party on January 25, the annual salute to the volunteers for their hard work, commitment and dedication.

Director of Volunteerism and Partnerships, Jessica Land, praised the caring and professional level of services that volunteers provide, noting that their work is at the heart of Bottomless Closet's mission. She highlighted the work of those volunteers who went "above and beyond" in 2011.



Executive Director, Kendall Farrell cited dramatic statistics for 2011. There was an impressive 75 percent increase in women returning for post-hire appointments—up from 245 in 2010 to 430 in 2011. The redesigned Steps to Finding a Job guide was

implemented, and the more focused workshop offerings saw higher levels of attendance.

The most resonating praise came from grateful clients. President, Sara Slocum shared results of client surveys, quoting one client who wrote "This has been the most wonderful experience [at] the hardest time of my life." Another wrote:



*"I came in feeling like a ONE but I'm leaving feeling like a TEN."*




"I am a better person for my visit... thank you for boosting my confidence level, I came in feeling like a ONE but I'm leaving feeling like a TEN."

Volunteerism brings its own results...and rewards.



## BUZZworthy

 New York City residents, please check your electric bills!! Bottomless Closet will be featured in Con Edison's March 3 newsletter that is distributed to over 3 million customers.



The saying goes if you can make it here you can make it ANYWHERE—Bottomless Closet has hit the neon lights and was featured on a *Times Square jumbotron!*

The 15-second clip aired once every hour during the year's most heavily trafficked time, from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve. Check out the clip now on [www.bottomless-closetnyc.org](http://www.bottomless-closetnyc.org)!

**HUFFPOST STYLE** Bottomless Closet was featured in The Huffington Post Style Section. Catherine Moellering's "Gift Guide: Purposeful Purchases" listed the

Satin Hands Pampering Set from Mary Kay. The innovative program held over the holidays allowed individuals to send products to disadvantaged women served by Bottomless Closet. The article stated "the program proves that nothing is more beautiful than helping women feel self-confident and empowered."



Bottomless Closet's Executive Director, Kendall Farrell was nominated for Smart and Sexy's Woman of the Year! Kendall was in good company with many fellow Executive Directors of like-minded organizations, including the winner, Shaun Robinson. Shaun is an Emmy Award-winning journalist, the weekend co-anchor for *Access Hollywood* and author of "Exactly As I Am." Thanks to everyone who cast votes for Kendall and Bottomless Closet!

## Fit to print.

Bottomless Closet's Steps to Finding a Job, a guide for volunteers and clients used in pre-interview coaching sessions has been refined. Kudos to the Program and Evaluation Committee, who under the leadership of Priscilla Bijur, have made the guide more user-friendly and reflective of the needs of our clients. Although few changes were made to content, major revisions were made to packaging and sequence of topics. The new edition is polished, bound on high quality paper and in line with Bottomless Closet's logo and branding. The booklet form is intended to be a lasting resource so that a client leaves the first appointment with this up-to-date, comprehensive reference for her job search.



Can't get enough of Bottomless Closet? Sign up for weekly emails with all the latest news. Email Jessica Land at [jland@bottomlessclosetnyc.org](mailto:jland@bottomlessclosetnyc.org) to register. Check out our website [www.bottomlessclosetnyc.org](http://www.bottomlessclosetnyc.org) and visit us on Facebook 



## Mark Your Calendar!

Bottomless Closet's annual fashion show, "Real Women on the Runway" will hit the stage on **Thursday, June 14, 2012**. Raise your glass to our clients as they model fabulous spring fashions. We look forward to seeing you there!

The mission of Bottomless Closet is to help disadvantaged New York City women become self-sufficient through a comprehensive program that begins with business attire and interview preparation and continues with professional development, financial management and personal enrichment. Using the model of women helping women and our network of dedicated volunteers, Bottomless Closet enhances our clients' self-esteem and self-confidence in order for them to enter and succeed in the workforce and improve the quality of their lives.

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