

THE ENCHANTED CLOSET



Physically, mentally,
and emotionally
outfitting Metro
Atlanta high school
girls from low-income
families.

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PRESS RELEASE



ATLANTA - April 12, 2017 - PRLog -- Created by Enchanted Closet GIRL\$ for girls. Real VS Reality offers a lively and thought-provoking discussion with girls and adults who have worked in front of and behind the camera in the television, entertainment, and media industries.

Visual images form impressions and impressions influence beliefs and behavior. Have you wondered how the youth are impacted by reality shows and other media images? Can they distinguish real versus reality? Do they compare themselves to television stars? These questions and more will be answered during the program on

Guest speaker William Leecan stated, "as a graphic designer, I've worked with images in print and online media for more than twenty-five years. I understand the power of media and how it can shape and form ideas about beauty, trends and social constructs. I'm excited about the upcoming opportunity to share my thoughts and advice, along with a panel of industry professionals, at Real VS Reality."

The invited speakers include Leah Bostic, Jamel Latimore, William Leecan, Georgia Me, Jennifer Montgomery, Kimanni Thompson, and Nakeisha Turk. They have been involved with a variety of shows and movies including the Real Housewives of Atlanta, Project Runway Threads, Empire, Precious, The Monique Show, Madea Goes to Jail, Def Poetry, The Hunger Games, Kicking and Screaming, Survivor's Remorse, and Family Feud. They will provide different perspectives as some are actors, directors, writers, and producers. One panelist was the makeup artist on a top reality show and two panelists have competed on reality shows. Additionally, one panelist is a casting agent, and another is an Emmy, Tony, Peabody, Kuumba, and Bafta Award winner.

"This is an incredible opportunity for girls to learn the "real" from industry experts. In addition, girls will have the opportunity to network, create and pitch their own reality show, stated Bonita C. Johnson, President & CEO of the Enchanted Closet. During the adolescent years, girls are impressionable and susceptible to outside influences and feelings of low self-esteem. The Enchanted Closet strives to equip them with the tools necessary to gain enhanced self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-sufficiency. We want them to be empowered, to believe in and be their best authentic selves."

Who: Girls 12-19 years old and industry professionals

When: Saturday, April 15, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Where: Yomi Studio, 645 Shelton Ave. Atlanta, GA 30310 (West End and Adair Park area)

Cost: Free

Registration required at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/realvsreality>

(Breakfast items and lunch will be provided)

GIRL\$
Program



About the *Enchanted Closet*



The Enchanted Closet began in 2003 as a community service project to provide prom dresses to underprivileged GIRL\$ in metro Atlanta. The working philosophy was that no high school girl should miss this rite of passage because she could not afford a dress. This was a simple principle that resonated in the Atlanta community and sparked an outpouring of support. Enchanted Closet received donations of hundreds of formal dresses and other social and professional clothing during a three-month collection drive. To date, more than 4,000 young women have received formal dresses for their special occasions through the Enchanted Closet Annual Prom Dress Giveaway.

The founders of Enchanted Closet realized that they were in a unique position to make a positive difference in the lives of young GIRL\$. They viewed the connection between clothing and self-esteem as an opportunity to empower young GIRL\$. During the Fall of 2003, Enchanted Closet volunteers formally organized and secured 501 c (3) status. The Enchanted Closet's mission is to physically, mentally and emotionally outfit metro Atlanta high school GIRL\$ from low-income families.

In addition, the Enchanted Closet offers programs to help cultivate self-awareness, self-esteem and self-sufficiency. The GIRL\$ Service Learning Program combines monthly classroom instruction with community service. This program also encourages self-sufficiency with sessions such as social skills, entrepreneurship and financial management. More than 400 GIRL\$ have benefitted from the GIRL\$ program.

At a Glance:

400

Girls benefited from the
GIRL\$ Program

14

Years of Service in
Atlanta, Ga.

4,000+

Girls received formal wear
from our Dress Giveaways



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Programs

“The mission of the Enchanted Closet is to physically, mentally, and emotionally outfit Metro Atlanta high school girls from low-income families.”

GIRL\$ Service Learning Program

GIRL\$ began as a pilot program to prepare at-risk high school GIRL\$ for personal and professional success. This program combines monthly classroom instruction with community service, and provides tools for self-sufficiency through economic and social entrepreneurship. GIRL\$ participants attend workshops that focus on topics such as personal budgeting, using credit cards responsibly, job etiquette, and choosing a career. In 2011, the Enchanted Closet introduced the Artists and Entrepreneurs series, GIRL\$ MOVE! and GIRL\$ READ programs as part of the monthly curriculum. More than 400 girls have benefitted from the life skills workshops provided by the organization since 2004.

Artists and Entrepreneurs Series

The Artists and Entrepreneurs Series introduces girls to local artists that have leveraged the love of their craft into a business venture. Past speakers for the Artists & Entrepreneurs Series include Rhavyn Drummer, Casting Director for Tyler Perry Studios; Jeron Ward, Grammy-nominated producer, Stankonia Studios; Charlton “CP The Artist” Palmer— Visual artist, photographer, Chloe and Halle Bailey, winners of Disney’s Next Big Thing, and others.

GIRL\$ MOVE! Program

Inspired by First Lady Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” initiative to reduce childhood obesity, the GIRL\$ MOVE!





Programs Cont'd

GIRL\$ READ Program

The GIRL\$ READ Book Club, sponsored by Kimani Tru – an imprint of Harlequin, encourages the readership among teen GIRL\$ with active reading and discussions.

Student Ambassador Program

The GIRL\$ program expanded into the Enchanted Closet Ambassadors Program. GIRL\$, beginning in the 10th grade, participate in community service activities, experience teamwork, and develop their communication and leadership skills. Ambassadors attend leadership and etiquette classes, promote Enchanted Closet programs to their peers, volunteer at events, and receive a stipend. Student Ambassadors also advise the Board of Directors and Youth Empowerment Council on the relevancy of activities of teens.

Prom Dress Giveaway

Realizing the connection between clothing and self-esteem, the Enchanted Closet strives to boost the confidence and self-esteem of GIRL\$ by making sure they look and feel good. More than 4,000 GIRL\$ have received dresses through Prom Dress Giveaway.

Enchanted Closet Boutique

The Enchanted Closet boutique officially opened on June 26, 2010. Located in Sandy Springs, the boutique offers designer dresses perfect for ladies attending dinner and holiday parties at up to 90% off the retail price. Additionally, girls are outfitted throughout the year for prom, homecoming, and other special events. GIRL\$ program participants and select supporters are able to showcase and sell their arts and crafts at the boutique.

Proceeds from sales at the Enchanted Closet boutique directly benefit the GIRL\$ Service Learning Program and operational expenses.

Thrift Store Without Walls

Periodically, the Enchanted Closet will sell donated merchandise that cannot be used in its clothing project. Proceeds from sales revenue will subsidize our programs and operation. Our "Thrift Store Without Walls" travels to local flea markets and neighborhood yard sales.

Honors and Awards

2013 Giving is Good Award, Black Celebrity Giving; 2012 Top Nonprofits Designation, 2011 Designated, Certifying Organization for the Presidential Service Awards; 2010 Lighthouse Award for Outstanding, Service in the Community; 2009 Seal of Excellence from Local Independent Charities of America; 2008, Georgia State University President's Outstanding Community Partner Award; 2007 Featured Nationally by Turner Broadcasting System, Movie & a Makeover; 2006 Atlanta Falcons Community Quarterback Award





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Leadership



Bonita C. Johnson, President and CEO

Bonita Johnson is a Microbiologist employed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Atlanta, Georgia with notable accomplishments such as service on the Gulf Coast in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, where she coordinated mobile laboratories at two locations which tested drinking and recreational water for bacteria, and being one of 10 EPA employees selected nationwide for the first EPA

Science and Policy, Regional Research Partnership Program. This experience availed Bonita the opportunity to conduct DNA research to identify species of bacteria in the environment and yielded her national recognition in her field.

Bonita is proud of her academic preparation at Tuskegee University, where she majored in Biology with concentration in Microbiology and minored in Chemistry, and Auburn University where she studied in Environmental Science.

It was during her sophomore year at Tuskegee that she made a lifelong commitment to serve all mankind and joined Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She has led numerous community service activities within the sorority, while serving on the leadership council and boards of several organizations with a mission to uplift the disadvantaged and abused and to provide fair treatment to all. Amongst these organizations, Bonita is most passionate about are: the Georgia Center for Child Advocacy, Southern Poverty Law Center, and the Innocence Project.

Bonita is also a graduate of the United Way V.I.P. and the Atlanta Federal Executive Board Leadership Government. She is a former Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Fund Development and currently holds membership in the American Society for Microbiology, Atlanta-Tuskegee Alumni Association, United Way VIP Alumni, National Association of Women Owned Small Businesses, Inc., National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. and National Council of Negro Women, Inc. Bonita has received several awards of service and recognition from diverse entities, including the Award, Atlanta-Tuskegee Alumni Club; 2012 Legend in Social Justice, Chi Tau Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; 2012 Service Award, DeKalb County Juvenile Court; 2012 Community 2013 Pioneer Trailblazer, JABY, Inc.; EPA, Federal Women's Program 2011 Salute to Women Award; 2010 Holiday Hero Award, Atlanta Journal & Constitution and B98.5 Radio Station; 2010 Most Outstanding in Community Service Award, Lambda Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.; Atlanta Federal Executive Board 2009 Employee of the Year and Thomas Liederbach Award for Outstanding Volunteerism; 2009 Lucretia Payton Stewart Guiding Torch Award and the 2008 Deloris H. Oliver Service to Mankind Award, South Atlantic Regional Conference, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.



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Press Room

“The Enchanted Closet does more than just give girls the dresses of their dreams. It gives young women without the means to afford their own prom dress the chance to experience this rite of passage and outfits them with all they need to make their prom a night they will never forget.” —**The Huffington Post**”

Image Library | Pamphlet | Videos & Media

Media Coverage

The Enchanted Closet has received coverage in the following media: The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Atlanta Interfaith Broadcasters, Atlanta Calendar Live, Atlanta on the Cheap blog, Black Celebrity Giving blog, Brown Girl Next Door blog, Creative Loafing Atlanta, Cascade Patch, Damzel in Distress, Dryer Buzz, East Atlanta Patch, Findery.com, Goddess Girl Radio, Good.is, Green Going Forward, Huffington Post, Living Education eMagazine, On Common Ground Newspaper, Neighbor Newspapers, Pitch Engine, PR Log, Sandy Springs Patch, Skylife Media, Stylosophy, Tamarron Apartments blog, The 3178 Agency, V- Creative Loafing, Neighbor Newspapers, On Common Ground News, Mundo Hispanico, Atlanta Daybook, Atlanta Magazine, B98.5FM, The National Examiner, The Style House Chronicles, Fashionas Musings, Crunk Magazine, dBusiness News, Community Radar, and EcoPono, WXIA-TV 11, WAGA-Fox 5.





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Press Room Cont'd

"The programs developed by Bonita have facilitated the breaking of adverse generational cycles, and have motivated girls to move beyond their current situations with hope for an enchanting life. —Today's Honoree"





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You Can Help Us

Here's how.



The Enchanted Closet is a volunteer-run nonprofit organization. We rely on the generosity of individuals and businesses to sponsor our programs. We welcome volunteers, in-kind and financial donations. Below are some of the ways you can help:

Volunteering

To receive updates on volunteer opportunities:

- Join our Friends of Enchanted Closet email
- Email to volunteering@enchantedcloset.org In-kind Donations Dresses and Accessories
- The Enchanted Closet requests new and gently worn formal dresses no more than three years old, jewelry, handbags, shawls and shoes.
- Dress drop-off available by appointment only at Enchanted Closet, 6309-2F Roswell Road, Sandy Springs, GA 30328. Call (404) 221-3498 to schedule an appointment.
- You can help by donating items and services from our wish list.



Financial Contributions

- We gratefully accept credit card tax-exempt contributions online. You may also choose to mail a contribution to us by way of a check.



Giving Campaigns: You may donate to the Enchanted Closet through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) and United Way Giving Campaigns. Our CFC Giving Code is 74270 and our EIN# is 06-1703633.

Snail Mail: Please make checks payable to Enchanted Closet and mail to: Enchanted Closet, Inc. 6309 Roswell Road, Suite 2F Atlanta, GA 30328

Online: You can make a donation through GiveDirect™, a service provided by the Local Independent Charities of America and Georgia Gives Day. Making a donation is fast and easy, and when we receive your donation, we will send you an acknowledgement in the mail for tax purposes.



IMPORTANT: The online payment service is provided by a third party for a secure transaction. Your credit card



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Funding

Enchanting Lives Campaign Funding

In 2011, The Enchanted Closet launched a fund-raising campaign, Enchanting Lives Campaign, to build an endowment for the organization and raise operating funds GIRL\$ programs. These funds will increase financial stability for the organization and ensure continued operation of Enchanted Closet boutique where young entrepreneurs can showcase and sell the products they created in our GIRL\$ program. In addition, having these additional funds will allow the Enchanted Closet to expand the amount of girls currently served to include middle school students.

How we are funded

The Enchanted Closet is funded by individual donations, some corporate donations, and the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The CFC is an employee-focused, cost-efficient program that provides Federal employees with a unique and efficient way to donate to charities.

Why donate

Your donation allows underprivileged girls in Metro Atlanta to have access to opportunities they might now otherwise experience. The Enchanted Closet programming builds their self-esteem and self-awareness, which gives them the confidence to become self-sufficient.

What your donation does

- \$10 Allows one teen girl to participate in one GIRL\$ Service Learning Program activity
- \$25 Outfits one teen girl with a dry-cleaned formal dress, purse and other accessories
- \$50 Purchases one plus-size, formal dress for a girl whose family is experiencing financial





Get In Touch

Donating formalwear and accessories: promdresses@enchantedcloset.org

Getting a dress for a special occasion or participating in the GIRL\$ Program:
outreach@enchantedcloset.org

Volunteering: volunteering@enchantedcloset.org

Partnership, sponsorship and media inquiries: info@enchantedcloset.org

Media inquiries: pr@enchantedcloset.org

Mailing Address:

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Phone Numbers:

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(404) 252-6222 Boutique

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