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Governor



JAMES M. Le BLANC
Secretary

State of Louisiana

Department of Public Safety and Corrections

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Corrections, Faith-Based Non-Profit and Men's Wearhouse Team Up for 2nd Annual National Suit Drive

*Suit Drive Aims to Provide Work-Appropriate Wardrobes to those Looking
to Re-enter the Workforce*

(Baton Rouge) Concerned that thousands of men are unable to secure employment because they lack the initial, yet vital step of looking presentable for a job interview, the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DPS&C), Refined by Fire Ministries and the Men's Wearhouse are working together to collect thousands of pieces of professional clothing as part of the 2nd Annual National Suit Drive from September 1-30, 2009.

The partnership aims to empower unemployed men by providing the necessary work attire that will build their self-esteem and help make a lasting impression during job interviews.

"We are very excited to work again this year with Men's Wearhouse and Refined by Fire Ministries on the National Suit Drive campaign," said DPS&C Secretary James M. Le Blanc. "Many offenders releasing from prison don't have the financial means to purchase interview-appropriate clothing, yet finding dependable employment is one of the main factors in keeping them from returning to prison."

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Last year, the inaugural suit drive garnered more than 125,000 professional items nationally. In Louisiana, more than 125 suits were donated in addition to hundreds of other items, including dress shirts, ties, slacks, jackets and shoes. This enabled the Department to save thousands of dollars because it did not have to provide clothing items to individuals upon release. All partners hope to exceed last year's numbers while simultaneously raising awareness about the importance of such donations for releasing offenders as they work to overcome barriers to gainful employment.

Each year, approximately 4,000 DOC offenders are released from state correctional facilities, with another 11,000 released from parish jails. Reentry Benefiting Families, an initiative of Refined by Fire Ministries, is focused on supplementing DPS&C's reentry efforts in reducing recidivism by partnering in this project.

"This partnership is a win/win/win for all involved, especially the recipients of the clothing items. I urge the public in communities across the state to clean out their closets and donate those 'gently worn' professional items that will help ensure these men will have every opportunity to make a great first impression during job interviews," said Elain Ellerbe, Refined by Fire Ministries President and CEO.

"It became apparent many years ago that there was a long-standing need to help men who are striving for self-sufficiency," said George Zimmer, CEO and Chairman of Men's Wearhouse. "We started a Merchandise Donation program to provide professional clothing to nonprofit organizations serving these men. However, our program could not meet the demand, so we implemented the National Suit Drive to assist us in our efforts to help less fortunate men by giving them a renewed sense of dignity and respect. Philanthropy is a major part of our corporate fabric and given the economic climate, this year's National Suit Drive is more important than ever."

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To demonstrate its commitment, Men's Wearhouse will add a new tie to help complete the outfit for every suit donated. The company will also give a 10% discount to donors toward a future purchase.

Nineteen Men's Wearhouse & Tux locations across Louisiana will serve as drop-off sites for gently used suits, dress shirts, sports coats, slacks, ties, belts and shoes that will be used to benefit men in need of these items to transition into the workforce. Men's Wearhouse will accept donations for DPS&C and Refined by Fire Ministries, which in turn will distribute them to individuals releasing from prison.

In addition to the 10% discount, donors will get a receipt for tax purposes. Below is a "donation value guide" by the Salvation Army.

MEN'S CLOTHING	low range	high range
Jackets	9.00	30.00
Suits	18.00	72.00
Slacks	6.00	14.40
Shirts	3.00	14.40
Shoes	4.20	30.00
belts – ties	3.60	9.60

Attached are Men's Wearhouse drop-off locations in Louisiana.

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Participating Men's Wearhouse and Men's Wearhouse Tux Locations

REGION	PLAZA	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE
New Orleans	CAUSEWAY	3033 N. CAUSEWAY BLVD.	METAIRIE	LA
	HARVEY, LA	1629 WESTBANK EXPWY, SPACE C	HARVEY	LA
	ELMWOOD VILLAGE PLAZA	1130 SOUTH CLEARVIEW PKWY #E	HARAHAN	LA
	THE ESPLANADE	1401 WEST ESPLANADE AVE. #808	KENNER	LA
	OAKWOOD CENTER	197 WEST BANK EXPRESSWAY #1145	GRETNA	LA
	LAKESIDE SHOPPING CTR	3301 VETERANS MEMORIAL #132	METAIRIE	LA
Baton Rouge	BATON ROUGE	5915 BLUEBONNET BLVD. C-2	BATON ROUGE	LA
	MALL AT CORTANA	9385 CORTANA PLACE	BATON ROUGE	LA
	MALL OF LOUISIANA	6401 BLUEBONNET BLVD. #2088	BATON ROUGE	LA
Shreveport	KINGS CROSSING S.C.	7151 YOUREE DRIVE., SUITE 100	SHREVEPORT	LA
	BOSSIER CITY, LA	2930 MEADOW CREEK DR.	BOSSIER CITY	LA
Lake Charles	LAKE CHARLES, LA	630 WEST PRIEN LAKE ROAD	LAKE CHARLES	LA
Alexandria	ALEXANDRIA STATION	2385 S. MACARTHUR DR. #102	ALEXANDRIA	LA
Lafayette	ACADIANA MALL	5725 JOHNSTON STREET	LAFAYETTE	LA
	AMBASSADOR ROW SC	3521 AMBASSADOR CAFFERY #E	LAFAYETTE	LA
Monroe	MONROE, LA	4756 PECANLAND MALL RD.	MONROE	LA
	PECANLAND COMMONS	4301 PECANLAND MALL DRIVE	MONROE	LA
Covington	STIRLING SLIDELL SC	61123 AIRPORT ROAD #5	SLIDELL	LA
	STIRLING COVINGTON CTR	69284 HIGHWAY 21 SUITE 500	COVINGTON	LA