

PRESS RELEASE



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Shoes for the Homeless Honors West LA College President & Wife For Campus Wardrobe



President of West Los Angeles College, Dr. James M. Limbaugh and his wife Trish Limbaugh were honored at a fundraising event for Shoes for the Homeless, Inc. held last week at Culver City's Wende Museum of the Cold War. The pair were recognized for their leadership in launching a campus wardrobe which provides free gently used and new professional attire to West students to help them put their best feet forward in interviews and on the job.

"West Wardrobe and our food pantry are efforts to expand wraparound services so that students have less to worry about outside the classroom that can get in the way of succeeding inside the classroom," said Dr. Limbaugh.

Shoes for the Homeless began its association with West when the charity needed a new location for its large shoe storage container and Dr. Limbaugh graciously said the college would find a space, explained Dr. Ira Diamond, the charity's founder. Shoes for the Homeless has also provided professional footwear for the new wardrobe.

"We love interacting with West Wardrobe," said Dr. Diamond. "They're a fantastic recipient organization. She [Trish Limbaugh] has tremendous enthusiasm and passion for helping the homeless and those in need. Her enthusiasm is infectious."

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West LA College Wardrobe...continued

Thanks to the talents of West's Plant Facilities; volunteers and donations from faculty and staff, the Renew Church, the Culver City Exchange Club, the community as well as Shoes for the Homeless; a college space was transformed into a small boutique with attractive donated chrome display racks and even a play nook to occupy kids while their parents "shop."

An estimated 20 percent of the campus student-body struggle with home insecurity. Many more are low-income. "For some students," Ms. Limbaugh explained, "West Wardrobe gives them their first consumer experience...Something they see every day but don't usually get to do - shop."

The Wardrobe was right on time for the latest graduates from the Year Up program at West. Year Up is a national program that has distinguished itself by successfully providing young adults with a 12-month experience that includes intensive professional mentoring, college courses, hands-on computer and business skills training, and paid internships in Fortune 500 companies. Upon graduating, many students had invitations to interview and offers for long-term positions. A shopping spree at the Wardrobe will help insure that their appearance will be as polished as their newly acquired skills.

From the podium, Dr. Diamond recalled a recent interaction while visiting the Wardrobe. "I met a young woman who told me she would be graduating from West this year. She needed a job but had no shoes. Trish worked with her and found her a perfect pair...last I heard, she has a job at Bank of America." When Ms. Limbaugh took the stage, she added that same young woman is also entertaining a job offer from another company as well.

"The whole experience has been so moving," said Ms. Limbaugh, "from the many donations we've received from West employees and the community to the hundreds of students we've outfitted in just two months."

The Wardrobe and the Pantry plan to establish a regular schedule of clothes and food drive events. Until then, clothing, food and cash donations are welcome throughout the Spring and can be made by dropping off items at the campus. Email WestWardrobe@wla.edu to arrange a drop-off time. Donations are tax deductible.

West Los Angeles College is located at 9000 Overland Avenue, Culver City, CA 90230. The college is an ACCJC-accredited community college providing full-time, part-time and online paths to university transfer and career preparation.