

Help Clark students dress for success



Clark staff members help sort ties during the 2013 Career Clothing Closet, an annual event that provides Clark students with free professional attire.

Clark College Career Services is seeking clothing and cash donations for its 11th Annual Career Clothing Closet, which provides professional and/or interview clothing to Clark College students at no cost.

The Closet will be held April 23 and 24 in advance of Clark College Career Days, the college's annual career fair that precedes spring graduation.

While students have access to lots of career-preparation support while at Clark—from resume clinics to industry-specific certification programs—many lack the resources to

purchase new outfits appropriate to their chosen careers as they prepare to enter the job market after graduation. As Career Services Director Edie Blakley explains, "The Career Clothing Closet helps our students put their best selves forward in an interview or as they begin their careers. Beginning a new career can be scary, and the right clothing can help students feel confident."

The Closet is accepting new or gently used professional, workplace-appropriate clothing for both men and women. New this year, the Closet is also accepting industry-specific clothing (including scrubs, steel-toed work boots, baking uniforms, welding and construction-specific clothing) as well as cash donations. All clothing donations should be in excellent condition, laundered or dry-cleaned prior to donation. Undergarments and torn or stained clothing will not be accepted. Cash donations will be used to purchase clothing in underrepresented sizes.

Donations may be dropped off by April 10 at Clark College Career Services, located in room PUB 002 on ground level of the Penguin Union Building, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver WA 98663. Hours of operation: Monday-Thursday 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. All donations are tax deductible; receipts will be provided. Driving directions and parking maps are available at www.clark.edu/maps. Questions may be directed to Sharon Orr at sorr@clark.edu.

While donations will be accepted through April 10, organizers are hoping to motivate donors to give now. "We know that this is a time of year when many people are getting new clothes for the holidays and purging their closets, and also when people are looking for end-of-the-year tax deductions," explains Blakley. "Also, the more donations we gather, the more students we can help, so collecting for the Career Clothing Closet really is a year-round process for us."

Last year, the Closet provided professional clothing to more

than 200 Clark students.

Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley