

Fashion Is For Everyone At RUNWAY: THE REAL WAY

By *Pattie Davidson*

Now in its fifth year, this highly-anticipated event that benefits the programs and services of JFCS offers a new theme, according to event creator and producer Wendy Manasse Wiese. "This year professional models wearing fall fashions from Macy's Los Cerritos will show how the looks that walked the New York and international runways can be worn 'the real way', said Manasse Wiese. "Like the past two years, we anticipate another sold-out event!" she added.

RUNWAY begins at 5:30 p.m. with wine, a signature cocktail, and a variety of fresh, delicious salads and breads. The program begins at 7:00 p.m. The evening will conclude with the drawing of two lucky winners for the New York Experience. Each winner and the guest of his/her choice will fly to New York for two nights, and visit one of Hearst Magazines' premiere fashion titles—Harper's Bazaar, Elle, or Marie Claire. The winners will see the production floor and will also visit the fashion closet. Lunch in Café 57, the exclusive employee cafeteria and a visit to the Good Housekeeping Institute's research center, also located in Hearst Tower, are included. Opportunity drawing tickets are \$100 each, and only 200 tickets will be sold.

General admission tickets are \$50 each (\$70 at the door if available) and VIP tickets, which includes a preferred seating area, a trend-setting bag, and a copy of one of Hearst Magazines' fall fashion titles, are \$90. Sponsorships,



Nina Garcia, editor in chief at Elle and Project Runway Judge, takes time to pose with Shayna, granddaughter of last year's lucky New York Experience winner Linda Haley during their visit to Hearst Magazines.

begin at \$250 and include at least one reserved seat and marketing exposure in addition to all the benefits of the VIP tickets. In addition, all sponsors are invited to an exclusive pre-RUNWAY fashion event on Thursday evening, September 20. "We introduced the sponsor pre-RUNWAY event last year to encourage attendees to give more generously to JFCS, and it drew rave reviews from all who

attended. I'm super-excited about this year's event", said Wiese.

"Wendy and her husband David pay 100% of the costs of this event, which means that all proceeds from event tickets, sponsorships, and the opportunity drawing come to JFCS to help us help so many in our area who need the vital counseling and social services we provide. We are

Toward an Understanding of Suicide

By **Debbie Freeman, MFT, JFCS Director of Clinical Services**



Earlier this summer, news of the suicide deaths of two famous celebrities—Kate Spade and Anthony Bourdain—came across our screens or into our awareness. People felt a combination of shock, sadness, loss and even anger. These are the common reactions and to the extent to which we feel as though we “know” these people, we react with grief. Many people are asking themselves and each other, “Why?”. Why would someone who, seemingly, has so much of what we know as “success,” end their own life? There seems to be no rational answer and it leaves us numb and bewildered.

At the same time, there are those around us who are suffering from depression, either as something that is biochemical (inherited) or situational (from circumstances). The common thought about depression is that someone can “do” something to “snap” themselves out of it or just take an antidepressant to avoid feeling this way. Though with either form of depression, proper medication can be extremely helpful, finding someone to talk with about what you are feeling is also vital.

Because so many of us grow up without having someone with whom we

can share our inner most feelings of fear, sadness, anger or loneliness, we are lost as adults when a crisis hits us. Our ability to cope with these deep feelings seems inadequate and, sometimes, it overcomes us. We entertain feelings of giving up. This can take many forms but the thought of suicide is one of them. Suicidal ideation and depression don't discriminate—and may not always be obvious. Depression doesn't care if you're rich or famous, poor or homeless. It doesn't care if you're ordinary or superlatively gifted. When famous or wealthy people die by suicide, it's common to feel as if they had everything going for them, but it's critical to remember that success does not protect anyone from struggle.

What helps people through their most difficult times has been having a sense that you are valued, loved and a part of something bigger than yourself. What grounds people in their times of need has been, and still is, having a supportive “community” around them, whether that is religious, social or familial.

We may not be able to relate to the experience of being rich and famous, but we can certainly relate to being human. And the truth is, being human can be hard—especially if we feel we must bear the weight of that difficulty on our own, and even more so when we believe it will never get easier. Celebrity suicides are a stark reminder that when the inner world is in anguish, the material world stops mattering. Fame and wealth, our culture's crowning achievements, can't possibly be the panacea to all our worldly problems if people who attain them still choose to leave this world.

If we care to, we can learn from these tragic deaths and transmute our grief into action. We can translate our sadness and confusion into a solid sense of commitment—to be a source of compassion and understanding for anyone who suffers, and to shift out of the distorted lines of thinking which convince us that external rewards yield internal peace and happiness. We can also remind ourselves to look up and connect with the people around us. We can create authentic connections and make our real-life relationships a priority. We can center ourselves in the understanding that suffering is universal, and that asking for support is a powerful act of strength through vulnerability.

The resources available to those experiencing suicidal thoughts are numerous—from lifelines and online chat rooms to making a safety plan. The most important thing is that people find a way to get help that is comfortable for them.

Everyone can find something that is acceptable to them, so there is no reason not to get help or connect with someone.

It is our hope at JFCS that you are aware that we are here and able to respond to your needs by offering either individual counseling or a support group.

Call us at (562) 427-7916 or send us an e-mail at jfcs@jfcslongbeach.org.

If you or someone you know is considering suicide, please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

RUNWAY continued



beyond grateful for what the Wiese family does for JFCS and the clients we serve.” said Executive Director Kathryn Miles.

Event tickets may be purchased online at www.jfcsrunway.com or by phone at (562) 427-7916.

Opportunity drawing tickets can be purchased at the JFCS office or by phone at (562) 427-7916.

For more information about sponsorship benefits and options, ask to speak with Pattie Davidson.



Spotlight

Gail Levy JFCS Board President

By *Pattie Davidson*

A retired educator and school administrator with an Ed. D. in Educational Leadership, Gail Levy has lived in Long Beach for 8 years, during which she has volunteered for Ronald McDonald House, tutored young patients at Miller's Children's Hospital and served as gala chair for

Long Beach Cancer League and the Jewish Federation Women's Visions dinner. She was a board member and officer for JFCS for 4 years before accepting the role of president.

Q How did you decide to accept the position of President of JFCS?

A As a high school Vice Principal, I developed a Peer Facilitation group where students helped students who were not being successful because of their family situations, emotional problems or lack of positive self image. Peers helping peers proved to be a turning point for the students who began to feel accepted on campus, appreciated for who they were as individuals and as result their grades improved, the disciplinary problems decreased and smiles appeared on their faces. Counseling worked! So when I retired from teaching and educational administration after 40 years, JFCS's mission of a community healed, one person, one family at a time fit comfortably with me.

Q What will the JFCS Board accomplish this year?

A Being President of the JFCS Board of Directors enables me to work with extremely talented and skilled individuals who work above and beyond the role of any board members that I have been associated with in the past. Our team works closely with the JFCS staff on fundraising events like RUNWAY and Race With a View as well as on projects such as Thanksgiving Dinner donations for our clients, Adopt-a-Family for holiday gifts and Café Europa for our holocaust survivors. Teamwork enables JFCS to reach out into our community in ways that benefit individuals in unexpected ways to bring pleasure to their lives.

Q What have you learned about JFCS during your presidency?

A Thus far in my term, my eyes have been opened to the variety of ways that JFCS embraces our diverse Long Beach community who are in need of assistance. Most of us know that JFCS offers mental health counseling, domestic violence support groups and case management for senior adults. Our school based counseling program in Los Alamitos and Downey is growing to support more and more students. We are hoping to expand this program. But did you know that we get phone calls on a daily basis asking for assistance with food, gas, rent, acquisition of legal documents and emergency assistance help for friends and family? Unfortunately, we cannot help everyone, but we work diligently to refer those we cannot help to organizations that can help them. JFCS is an organization where my leadership with the Board provides programs of support to individuals and families in our community.



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Classes and Support Groups

Active Parenting

A video and discussion program for parents of children ages 5 to 12
Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
JFCS Conference Room

Call (562) 427-7916 for information on these and other support groups currently being formed.

Caregiver Support Group

Share concerns, emotions, resources about caring for those who depend on us in a safe, non-judgmental environment.
2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

All groups meet at the Alpert JCC
3801 E. Willow St.
Long Beach CA 90815

Did you know?

JFCS' clinician team consists of both licensed Marriage and Family Therapists and Social Workers as well as post-graduate associates and interns who are earning hours of experience to qualify for licensure.



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