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North Jersey Woman Expo Draws a Huge Crowd



By JACKIE GOLDMAN-SCHATELL

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WEST ORANGE, NJ - The first-ever North Jersey Woman Expo was held on Nov. 10, at Mayfair Farms, in West Orange, for women of all ages and lifestyles.

Nearly 1,000 people attended the event, where they spent time browsing, networking and shopping among a host of about 90 vendors in the beauty, health, finance and restaurant fields that were offering products and services tailored to the unique needs of women. Attendees also whet their palates with samples from some of the areas' top food establishments, sweet shops and bakeries. Guests also experienced mini-treatments and demonstrations and won prizes and giveaways, chatted with professionals and purchased specialty products.

But most importantly—guests attended the event in support of the [Jersey Battered Woman's Shelter](#), a local domestic violence and domestic abuse prevention agency that helps thousands of women escape violence and gain the support they need to move forward with their lives. A portion of the monies will benefit this charitable agency.

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Publisher of *North Jersey Woman Magazine* Cathy Black, which hosted the event, said, "We are overwhelmed by the positive response from attendees, exhibitors and our charity, Jersey Battered Women Service, who we were able to raise money for and introduce them to new supporters and volunteers. On all accounts, the first North Jersey Woman Expo was such a huge success that we are already planning an Expo for the spring of 2016."

However, JBWS was not only the recipient of monies raised, the charity also had a table at the event, where attendees learned first-hand how they could support the women in need or be supported themselves.

"Jersey Battered Women's Service Inc. was thrilled to be the featured charitable cause for such a wonderful and powerful event," said JBWS executive director Patricia Sly. "We got such a positive response from the people we met. Some were looking for volunteer opportunities, others wanted to help financially, and a few were in need of our services."

She added, "The proceeds from the event will be used to support the various JBWS services including the safe house, counseling, children's services, helpline, transitional living, vocational counseling, batterers' intervention and more."

In addition, attendees had the chance to see what's in style at the event's Fashion Show, which was put on by Expo sponsor Dolce Viso of Millburn, in collaboration with downtown Millburn businesses. The clothes were provided by Dressed by Laurie and shoes were provided by Footnotes Online. And, Angela Fischer, the previous owner of RBA Salon, which recently merged with Dolce Viso, was at the event and said, "We have merged with Dolce Viso to become Milburn's Takeover."

Kelly Deserio of Dolce Viso Salon and Spa said, "We really wanted to just channel the northern New Jersey women. They are part of our clientele list, so that's who we reach out to, and they are who support us."

The show's makeup was done by Fab Faces on the Go and Sara Jean Makeup Artistry, while the models' hair was done by Dolce Viso.

"We wanted to showcase modern everyday current looks that are wearable for women," said Deserio.

Deserio brought in Stylist to the Stars, George Brescia, to host the fashion show. He is a well-known stylist on television who does fashion segments for NBC, FOX and ABC. He also has a web series called, "Dress Up," which just won Best Reality Webseries at Vancouver Webfest, and writes a column in *Playbill* on the best dressed of every Broadway show. He also dresses all kinds of women and has authored a book called, "Change Your Clothes, Change Your Life Because You Can't Go Naked," which is about conscious dressing. He was signing copies of his book at the event. *(Note: Below is the trailer for Brescia's show)*

"I always say that your clothes speak before you do, so you might as well have them say to the world what you want to say," said Brescia. "In my book, I talk about having a closet full of perfect 10s so when you open your closet, you say, 'Yes, I feel great.' And then you go in there and use your closet as a toolbox to put on clothes that make you feel incredible."

He added, "I want your clothing to empower you. And that's my big message. I feel that women should be empowered by their clothes not defeated by their clothes."

When guests weren't admiring wares on tables, learning from vendors like Footprint ID and Estelle Finkel Learning Center, they were dining on food from West Orange's Deli Guy Café and Suzy Q's Barbeque, or watching the fashion show—they were spending time with strolling magician Peter Samelson and watching a live video shoot.

"We loved being part of the North Jersey Woman's Expo," said Livingston resident, Beth Tofel, president, [Footprint ID](#), a company providing a personal portable health record that helps users quickly access information via a secure web portal and mobile app. "Our booth was bustling all afternoon with many women excited to learn about FootprintID and how it can benefit their families."

Amanda Patrick, owner of Livingston's [Estelle Finkel Learning Center](#) said, "It was a great event. There were a lot of diverse businesses represented—mostly local. I really enjoyed networking and meeting a lot of the different business owners. It was a great place to make connections."

"What an amazing event," said Jenny Du, the new owner of the recently refurbished Deli Guy Café in West Orange, who shared samples of some of the newest offerings at the café with attendees. She said she was very excited to have been part of the Expo and hopes to soon be welcoming some of the new faces she met at the event to the Deli Guy Café, which is located at 490 Pleasant Valley Way in West Orange.

Event [sponsors](#) included the following: TAPinto.net, Suburban Essex Magazine, Vincinity Magazine, North Jersey Woman Magazine, Swap the Biz, Aciem Studios, Barnabas Health, BCB, Culligan, The Silverstrom Group, Dolce Viso, Kearney Bank, New Jersey Plastic Surgery, Montclair Radiology, Lash House and Rand, Feuer and Klein, Inc. Click [here](#) for a sample list of vendors.