

# YWCA's Red Dress Fashion Show and Silent Auction



by Ashley  
Bendiksen

On February 26th, the YWCA of Southeastern Massachusetts will celebrate its 10th Annual Red Dress Fashion Show and Silent Auction. While numerous events highlight the 'red dress' in the month of February, the YWCA has a legacy for hosting a night to remember. Pair a great cause, food, entertainment, a silent auction and a fashion show with models picked right from the community, and you've got a once-a-year event that can't be missed. You can check out photos from last year's event on the YWCA Facebook page.

This year, over 20 women will model in the fashion show. In the past nine years, over 181 women have modeled. These women are selected from throughout the community and as a special treat, in honor of its 10th year, many former models will return to walk the catwalk once again. The featured dresses are donated by local clothing stores and spotlight some of today's top designers. In addition to the models, a number of 'men in uniform' will escort the ladies on the runway. Also from the community, escorts have been asked to wear their uniforms from military service to law enforcement and public safety professions.



To date, the event has raised \$72,370 for the YWCA's HEARTplus program. These funds have and will continue to support the YWCA Health and Wellness Outreach and Education Program, an effort which uses YWCA Community Health Workers and trained Peer Educators to educate women in the community about heart disease awareness and prevention. Workshops are offered in English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

While the funds raised remain close to home, the YWCA is also a longtime active participant in the National Heart Truth Red Dress Project, which features women modeling a collection of dresses from America's top designers. The dresses serve to spread the message that "Heart disease does not care what you wear." In fact, a startling one in every three American women dies of heart disease.

"Many people still believe that heart disease is a man's disease, when in fact, it is the number one killer of American women," says Gail Fortes, Executive Director of the YWCA. "Many risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and family history also contribute to a woman's risk of developing heart disease. It is very important that women are aware of the steps that they can take to reduce their risk of developing heart disease."

Tickets are selling out fast and may or may not be available at the door. For ticket information, visit their website.