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University of Missouri

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Around the Columns

Suits on sale

When talking to parents of business majors at Summer Welcome, Amanda Wooden is pretty blunt. She explains why their students should attend workshops through the [College of Business Career Center](#).

“I tell them this is where students learn not to wear white socks with black pants, not to wear mini skirts and not to overdo the perfume,” says Wooden, an MU career specialist. “They ask me, ‘Does my student need to have a suit for the freshman year?’ The answer is definitely, especially if they’ll be applying for professional organizations or internships.”

Several parents typically approach Wooden with concerns about being able to afford business attire. Those conversations sparked the idea for a used-suits sale.

For the first sale, held Feb. 9, 2011, Wooden and the career center staff collected about 700 donated items from various businesses and individuals. From 10 a.m.–2 p.m., students could buy ties, dress shirts, blazers, pants and full suits for men and women — with no suit priced more than \$40. Remaining items were sold for half-price from 2–2:30 p.m. and were given away from 2:30–3 p.m. The sale netted more than \$3,700, which was donated to [Central and Northeast Missouri Food Bank’s Buddy Pack Program](#).



A used suit is better than no suit.
Photo from istockphoto.com

Shelby Jasper, a sophomore marketing major from Stockton, Mo., says the sale attracted many students who, like her, assumed they wouldn't need business wear until after graduation.

“When I went suit shopping my freshman year, I had sticker shock,” says Jasper, who helped organize the February sale. “I had no idea you could pay more than \$400 for a suit. As a college student, you probably don't have \$400, but the need for a suit is still there.”

Wooden is already collecting donations for the next sale, which will be held Sept. 7 — in time for students to purchase attire for the College of Business' fall career fairs.

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