



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Carey London, Marketing Manager  
(631) 329-4398 ext. 124

## **The Retreat Hosts Empowering Career-Styling Workshop for Clients at Bridgehampton Thrift Store**

EAST HAMPTON, NY (May 15, 2025) – The Retreat recently held its third **Career-Styling Workshop** for eight Retreat clients at The Retreat Boutique, its vibrant thrift store located in the Bridgehampton Commons. This uplifting event provided clients with expert guidance on professional styling and career empowerment, helping them dress for success as they rebuild their lives. All of the women were provided store gift cards to shop with.

The inspiring initiative was co-created by **Lauren Fedorko**, director of *Take Charge*, The Retreat’s financial education and career advancement program, and **Laurie Sykes**, a dedicated boutique volunteer and seasoned professional stylist.

Take Charge provides group workshops to shelter clients and nonresidential clients on safe credit, budgeting, resumes, interviewing and job searches. At the store, one of her clients shared with Ms. Fedorko, because of this program, “I started getting education and taking better care of myself, and now I just can’t stop!” This client is working towards her fifth healthcare degree and now making a substantial salary. “I’m proud of them,” said Ms. Fedorko.

Ms. Sykes invited each participant to browse the boutique freely and select pieces that caught their eye. She then offered personalized styling support, helping to complete each look with coordinating tops, bottoms, and accessories as needed. Throughout the workshop, she offered expert guidance on wardrobe essentials, timeless styles, and creative ways to repurpose outfits through thoughtful accessorizing.

The women started off hesitant, but by the end, they were chatting with one another, offering advice on styles, and laughing. “That was made for you!” Laurie told a client who came out in a dress. “Thank you!” she replied, beaming.

“It was wonderful to watch them find the right outfits for work or job interviews,” said Gitana Albinson, Store Manager.

Earlier this year, Ms. Fedorko hosted another career empowerment workshop at the Children's Museum of the East End (CMEE), held during a time when the museum was closed to the public. Titled “*Starting a Small*



*Business: Positives and Pitfalls,*” the workshop featured Denise Marzano-Doty, Director of the Small Business Legal Assistance Clinic at Touro Law Center. Ms. Marzano-Doty provided valuable guidance and answered questions for clients of The Retreat, while CMEE staff ensured their children could play safely throughout the museum.

**Cate Carbonaro**, Executive Director of The Retreat, emphasized the broader impact of these initiatives: *"These workshops represent the heart of our mission—restoring dignity, confidence, and independence to survivors. It's about showing each person their worth and potential and helping them take powerful steps toward a new chapter in life."*

**Caption:** Gitana Albinson, Retreat Boutique Store Manager; Lauren Fedorko, director of Take Charge, a financial and career empowerment program; Rachel Green, Residential Shelter Advocate, and Laurie Sykes, Retreat volunteer and professional stylist. Ms. Fedorko and Ms. Sykes, hosted a career-styling workshop for survivors of abuse at The Retreat Boutique thrift store in the Bridgehampton Commons.

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**About the Retreat:** The Retreat is a safe haven for families in crisis across Suffolk County. The community-based, not-for-profit agency provides comprehensive domestic violence services for children and adults, support for survivors, and violence prevention community education. If you or someone you know needs help, call The Retreat's 24-hour hotline at (631)329-2200. For more information visit [allagainstabuse.org](http://allagainstabuse.org) or follow [@allagainstabuse](https://www.instagram.com/allagainstabuse).