**Simmons Speech [EZ Speech No. 16266]**

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Remarks by Ms. Patricia Simmons kicking of the first annual “*Bags In Bloom*” auction sponsored by the Tulsa Chapter of Dress for Success.

hello, ladies . . . ! welcome, welcome, welcome to the first annual *“bags in bloom”* fundraising event for dress-for-success/tulsa. well, now . . . i know it’s a little cheeky to say first annual *anything*, but we’re truly hoping this event — and maybe a separate one for men down the road — will become [one of] our main fund-raising event[s].

so i’m hoping it’s safe to assume that all of you sitting here this evening share two things in common: First, you support and value the work dress-for-success does on behalf of tulsa’s working women; and second, you’re quite prepared to have your own purses picked by means of a donation this evening that’ll help us raise money to continue our work. so if you thought this was the annual meeting of the national hummel figurine collectors society, that’s down the hall, in the [name] ballroom.

now don’t get me wrong: the purses and bags you’ll be bidding on at the auction here this evening aren’t exactly what you’d call chopped liver. [pick out a series of purses from a pile you’ve put close to hand] i mean, look at this . . . [brand name] . . . and here’s a gorgeous [brand name] . . . and [point to one lady in the audience at random] wouldn’t *you* just love to have this lovely [brand name]? not too shabby, eh . . . ? So unless you already own a bag or purse to match every pair of shoes you wear, i’ll expect you to be bidding furiously on this terrific collection.

our mission is to help women in the workplace, or just ready to enter the workplace, navigate the workaday world of employment courageously and successfully. in short, we’re all about “helping women bloom,” and that’s what the little seed packets we’ve given you are meant to reprsent. you’ll hear a little more specifi-cally about the programs and services we offer in just minute. but before i introduce [name of that board member/friend], i’d like to give a warm texas shout-out to [full name], whose mother [name] is president of the national dress-for-success organization, and who’s with us today. [lead the audience in applause] thank you *so* much, [first name], for being here! It means the world to us.

i’d also like to acknowledge the terrific work our board members have to done to make this event a reality, with very special credit going to the “*bags-in-bloom*” committee. won’t you all stand up, ladies, as i introduce you to our supporters here, and we’ll give you all one great big happy round of applause at the end. So let me introduce [read names and titles/ positions; then lead audience in applause] thank you, ladies, thank you: there’s no way we could’ve pulled this together without your unbelievable efforts!

now let me introduce you once again to [name], who’ll give you a brief backgrounder on the work of dress-for-success/tulsa. [Name]

[after the backgrounder]

and now it’s time for some auction fun! and to get things rolling, let me introduce to you the greatest, the most persuasive, the most charming, and the most lovable real-life auctioneer who’s ever worked this side of the rockies: my wonderful husband, [name]!

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