

# Helping Women . . . Helping the Economy

In January 2009, Hohokam RC&D partnered with the NRCS Federal Women's Program Manager to spearhead a Business Suit Drive for women seeking employment in the Greater Phoenix Valley. The project gained momentum, donations and other USDA agencies sponsors over the nine-week timeframe which culminated into a Women's History Month celebration in March.

"This project allowed for the RC&D to help women become employable during tough economic times," said Mel Rose, Hohokam RC&D Official. "Helping communities with economic stability is part of the RC&D's mission so it was a perfect fit and besides it was a "Green" project."

The collection of attire was given to the Arizona Women's Education and Employment (AWEE). "We truly appreciate the support shown through such a successful clothing drive. The professional clothing closet contributes to participant success not only by giving them career wear, but giving them something that builds self-esteem. When participants see themselves in the mirror wearing one of these suits, they stand up straighter, feeling more confident in their ability to interview successfully," said Sonia Singh, AWEE's Board Liaison.

Clothing donations worth \$7,461 served as the backdrop of the March Celebration featuring accomplished women in the workforce and those in our lives. Participants brought food to share with others in honor of their mother's or grandmother's heritage.



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## Donated Items

- ✓ **120 pants**
- ✓ **53 skirts**
- ✓ **7 vests**
- ✓ **12 scarves**
- ✓ **103 suits**
- ✓ **41 dresses**
- ✓ **52 jackets/blazers**
- ✓ **25 wallets and purses**
- ✓ **111 blouses (long-sleeved)**
- ✓ **71 blouses (short-sleeved)**
- ✓ **41 pairs of shoes**
- ✓ **13 belts**
- ✓ **3 packs of panty hose**
- ✓ **12 pieces of jewelry**



Project planners, sponsors, and speakers featured at the event.



Some of the 671 items collected in the Business Suit Drive.



Participants taste the delicacies celebrating other's heritage.



Kolaches pastries, along with a Grandmother's photo was shared.