

Local personality

Peggy Parks: One Image at a Time

by Vanessa Burke

"It takes between three and 30 seconds for someone to put a value judgment on you just by the way you dress. It's not fair, but that's just the way it is, and that's why I'm here," says image consultant Peggy Parks. Imagine a group of people who know how to dress for any occasion, formal or informal; who can communicate effectively both verbally and nonverbally; and whose total image seems tailored just for them. Add to each person a certain *je ne sais quoi* and *savoir faire*, and you have just entered a world created by *The Parks Image Group*.

"Every person you meet is either a prospective client or a prospective employer," says Parks, owner of The Parks Image Group and certified by the internationally known London Image Institute of Atlanta. Her business provides individual consultations, including color and body analysis; wardrobe planning and shopping; and career consultations, which include business and international etiquette among other things. The international flare is by nature, as Peggy hails from France and spent her formative years in Venezuela before coming to the United States.

Says Parks, "My mother instilled in us that we had to always look nice and make a good first impression," a motto Parks lives by daily. "Also my grandmother was a very well known seamstress in France, and she made all of my clothes, always making sure things fit well and were comfortable." Such image values from her French upbringing helped Parks become a runway model in her 20s while living in Florida. However, Parks says she never had the courage to go to New York City to try and make it as a model, so she went into the corporate world. Fluent in English, Spanish and French, Parks has always worked for international companies in various areas, including human resources, financial planning, management and language interpretation.

After being laid off for the fifth time in her life, Parks took the opportunity to do something different. "I sat down and thought of all my attributes, what I love to do, what I don't like to do. I knew I had a way of dealing with people, coaching and mentoring friends and coworkers," says Parks. "I realized that I really had been an image consultant most of my life. My friends would say, 'you always look so well put together.'" In short, the mixture of her international background, corporate experience, coaching abilities, and sense of style

fashioned The Parks Image Group.

Says Jodine Dorce of Right Management Consultants, "Peggy Parks has done an excellent job at teaching our candidates about their professional image. You leave her workshops feeling empowered about your image and your self-esteem." Parks has also lent her expertise to the American School of Protocol in Atlanta, and she is featured in the book, "Over-40 Job Search Guide," by Gail Geary, to be published this fall.

"My goal is to bring business dress in Atlanta to a higher standard, one company at a time, and to be instrumental in changing [the dress acumen] of people in Atlanta," says Parks. She notes that Atlanta is becoming a fashion city. Parks says that just as cities like New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Los Angeles have their own style signature, so should Atlanta.

Parks mentions that one segment of the population in Atlanta dresses immaculately: athletes and musicians. "Have you noticed football players or baseball players coming out of a bus or from the airport? They are gorgeous and well dressed," says Parks. "Why? Yes, they can afford it, but they also know that [dressing well] makes them feel good and that they project a professional image." Parks says to look good you don't need to have a lot of money. "What you need to do is to have taste. And to have a little edge."

Parks has been in Atlanta for 16 years. She and her husband Bernie Moskow have been married for 20 years and currently reside in Buckhead with their two little westies, Lillie and Oliver. Says Parks, "The way you look needs to be consistent with your values, professionalism, education and spirituality." What makes The Parks Image Group stand out from all the other image consultants in Atlanta? "My boldness. I'm fun. And passionate. I saw a client about two months ago, and I said, 'Oh my gosh! What happened? You look 10 years younger.' And she answered, 'Peggy, since you've been my friend, I am so much more aware of the way I look.'" Parks receives such comments on a regular basis. Says Parks, "This is my calling, giving back, helping and having fun at it. I can make you look thinner, taller, younger, richer and sexier." Where do I sign up?

The Parks Image Group can be reached by calling (404) 266-3858 or visit www.theparksimagegroup.com.

Image Consultant Peggy Parks



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