FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Annual Fashion Show for All Abilities Marks Its 11th Year

The past couple years have seen a surge in models of all abilities represented in fashion, advertising, and media. We are proud to note that the Waisman Center Fashion Show for All Abilities was one of the first of its kind in the country. Since 2007, people from all over Wisconsin, including those with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, have been able to experience a taste of our founder’s dream of becoming a fashion model.

The Fashion Show began as a community awareness event: To promote accessibility and respect for all persons, including people with intellectual and physical differences, in a retail setting. The scope of this Fashion Show has grown by leaps and bounds since then. With this event, we hope to change attitudes, promote inclusion, and grow self-esteem and confidence in the models themselves.

Background
The idea behind the Fashion Show for All Abilities came from a woman named Chantel Brown who had wanted to be a model from a young age. Early on, Chantel developed portfolios to showcase her talent and abilities. Several years ago, she suffered an anoxic brain injury. She now relies on a wheelchair to get around – and she didn’t let this stop her from pursuing her dream. In 2007, Chantel rallied help from her friends, loved ones, and the Waisman Center to organize the first ever Fashion Show for All Abilities in Madison.

Impact
The event, now in its 11th year, has given 375 individuals the chance to participate in the Fashion Show, along with over 75 businesses (retailers, stylists, salons, photographers, media, and others), hundreds of community members, and volunteers. In 2010, three models were profiled in a documentary filmed by the Wisconsin Film School. 75 models of all ages and abilities will showcase the latest fashions from 35 local retailers to about 500 audience members this year.

Event Information
This year’s event will be held on Friday, April 21, 2016 from 6:00-8:00 PM at the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison. The event is open to the public. Tickets are $5 and may be purchased at the door. Seating is limited. The event is hosted by Jonathan Suttin, of Triple M Radio, and Rachel Friedman.

For more information, visit the website: cow.waisman.wisc.edu/fashionshow or Facebook https://www.facebook.com/fashionshowforallabilities/

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If you’d like more information about this topic, photos from previous shows, or to schedule an interview, please call Rachel Weingarten at 608-890-0777, or email Rachel at weingarten@waisman.wisc.edu