



Training and employing
people with disabilities
and special needs

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF NORTH FLORIDA MORE THAN THRIFT STORE;
ORGANIZATION IS CHANGING LIVES ONE JOB AT A TIME**

JACKSONVILLE, FL (May 2013) – While many North Floridians know Goodwill of North Florida from either browsing the racks of the retail thrift stores or dropping off sacks of donated items, there is one group for whom Goodwill’s role in their lives goes beyond that.

Just last year alone, Goodwill changed the lives of 52,748 in North Florida, with 11,533 of those placed in employment.

Goodwill is the largest private provider of training and employment services for people with disabilities and special needs.

“Goodwill utilizes a very unique model in that we use the revenue from donations and retail store sales to fund our job training programs, employment placement services and many other community-based programs for people with disabilities or who have other challenges to finding employment,” said Robert Thayer, CEO of Goodwill Industries of North Florida. “We believe that work has the power to transform lives by building self-confidence, independence, creativity, trust and friendships.”

Through their Donate Movement, Goodwill continues to educate consumers about the impact their donation can have. “There are so many positive outcomes from donating to Goodwill, not the least of which is the recycling aspect and keeping items out of our landfills,” said Karen Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer of Goodwill of North Florida. “We want our donors to know exactly how they are helping. For example, one DVD provides a person with one hour of on-the-job training while six shirts and two pairs of jeans provides one hour of a job search class.”

Goodwill of North Florida’s services and community events include:

Job Junctions. The Goodwill of North Florida Job Junction is a valuable community service. These walk-in Career Centers provide a positive and supportive environment; where anyone looking for work may access resources and learn skills to conduct an independent job search at no charge. Goodwill Job Junctions are located conveniently throughout Jacksonville, with additional centers located in St. Augustine, Gainesville, Lake City, Palm Coast and Palatka.

Bluetique. Bluetique opened in Ponte Vedra Beach in 2011. Bluetique is a blend of high end donated designer clothes and accessories and new merchandise purchased at “Off Lot Retail” Shows in Las Vegas. This store looks and feels like a boutique, and differs from Goodwill retail stores in that clothing is organized by size, steam cleaned and merchandised in the manner of a retail boutique. Like all the stores, proceeds will still support Goodwill of North Florida’s efforts to provide job training and placement services.

Striving to Succeed. Goodwill of North Florida celebrates individuals whose lives have been transformed through Goodwill’s programs at the annual Strive to Succeed luncheon. This event also features the highly-anticipated celebrity fashion show, where local celebs walk the catwalk outfitted head-to-toe in clothes and accessories exclusively from Bluetique and Goodwill retail stores.

Bag it Up. Each year, thousands of pint-sized philanthropists from St. Johns County schools clean out their closets and donate items to Goodwill. Children from grades K-5 learn about giving back and recycling as they bring in outgrown and gently used clothes, books and toys to donate to Goodwill.

Goodwill Industries is currently accepting donations of gently used clothing, shoes, toys, books, household items, furniture and linens. Goodwill accepts almost any items with exception of large household appliances, mattresses & box springs, paint and tires.

About Goodwill of North Florida

Goodwill of North Florida is the area’s largest not-for-profit specializing in job training placement services for people with barriers to employment. Goodwill’s six community- based Job Junctions provide accessible resources at no charge to any individual seeking employment. In 2012, Goodwill of North Florida served over 52,748 people and placed 11,533 into employment. None of these services would be possible if not for the hundreds of thousands of donors who contribute their gently used clothing, furniture and household items to Goodwill. Revenues generated by the sale of donated items fund our services. For more information, visit www.goodwilljax.org.

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- Mission:** Goodwill Industries of North Florida is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to assisting all individuals who face barriers to employment. We do this by providing innovative employment, training and placement services. Our ultimate goal is to enable such individuals to acquire employment and to develop careers.
- Headquarters:** 4527 Lenox Ave - Jacksonville, FL 32205
- Retail Stores:** There are 22 retail stores throughout North Florida, including Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Fernandina Beach and Gainesville.
- By the Numbers:** In 2012, Goodwill served 52,748 in North Florida, and placed 11,533 into employment.
- Services/Products:** **Job Junctions.** The Goodwill of North Florida Job Junction is a valuable community service. These walk-in Career Centers provide a positive and supportive environment; where anyone looking for work may access resources and learn skills to conduct an independent job search at no charge. Goodwill Job Junctions are located conveniently throughout Jacksonville, with additional centers located in St. Augustine, Gainesville, Lake City, Palm Coast and Palatka.
- Bluetique.** Bluetique opened in Ponte Vedra Beach in 2011. Bluetique is a blend of high end donated designer clothes and accessories and new merchandise purchased at “Off Lot Retail” Shows in Las Vegas. Like all the stores, proceeds will still support Goodwill of North Florida’s efforts to provide job training and placement services.
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Bag it Up. Each year, thousands of pint-sized philanthropists from St. Johns County elementary schools clean out their closets and donate items to Goodwill. Children from grades K-5 learn about giving back and recycling as they bring in outgrown and gently used clothes, books and toys to donate to Goodwill.

Donations: Goodwill is currently accepting donations of gently-used clothing, shoes, toys, books, household items, furniture and linens. Goodwill accepts almost any items with exception of large household appliances, mattresses & box springs, paint and tires.

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Story Ideas/Angles For Goodwill of North Florida

- Jan/Feb/March:** New Year’s Resolution to get organized once and for all? Goodwill offers tips and TV spokesperson to de-clutter and how to properly donate.
- Spring Cleaning – Goodwill offers tips and TV spokesperson to give tips on how not to get overwhelmed by spring cleaning, and how to properly donate items.
- April/May:** Tax Help – Goodwill offers free resources to qualified consumers through participation in MyFreeTaxes program.
- Earth Day – Donations to Goodwill emphasize recycling and keeping items out of landfills. Story angles could also include “upcycling” – reporter can go shopping with spokesperson to find items that can be upcycled i.e. refurbishing lamps, furnishings, etc.
- Bag it Up – every April and May, thousands of pint-sized philanthropists from St. Johns County schools clean out their closets and donate items to Goodwill. Children from grades K-5 learn about giving back and recycling as they bring in outgrown and gently used clothes, books and toys to donate to Goodwill. Great visuals available.
- June/July:** Summer Fun for Less with Goodwill of North Florida – summer fashion, summer entertaining and beach basics (like best sellers, beach totes, hats, etc) can all be found on a budget at Goodwill.
- August/September:** Back to School for Less with Goodwill of North Florida – families on a budget can find trendy clothing and accessories just in time for back to school. Goodwill can provide models for a TV segment.
- October:** Halloween Ideas at Goodwill – for consumers looking for self-styled Halloween costumes, Goodwill of North Florida can provide guidance and creative ideas.

November: Striving to Succeed – the first Thursday of the month, Goodwill of North Florida celebrates individuals whose lives have been transformed through Goodwill’s programs at the annual Striving to Succeed luncheon. This event also features the highly-anticipated celebrity fashion show, where local celebs walk the catwalk outfitted head-to-toe in clothes and accessories exclusively from Bluetique and Goodwill retail stores.

Holiday Entertaining for Less – Goodwill of North Florida is a great resource for finding entertaining pieces including plates, platters, utensils, glassware, tablecloths, linens and more. Goodwill can provide items for an article or TV segment where the entire table setting totals \$50 or less.

December: End-of-Year Giving – Goodwill of North Florida can help as a resource for stories about end-of-year giving and donations.

Evergreen: Goodwill Industries is the largest private provider of training and employment services for people with disabilities and special needs. In 2012, Goodwill of North Florida served 52,748 individuals and placed 11,533 into employment in the community.

Goodwill of North Florida provides job training to help homeless U.S. military vets achieve financial stability through the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program-part of a larger grant awarded to the City of Jacksonville. Goodwill Job Junctions provide employment training and case management for approximately 200 veterans as well as money for essential items like clothing and bus passes that help find and keep employment.

The Beyond Jobs Program for Women services underemployed and unemployed women by providing career assessments, job training, placement services and additional support to help them achieve economic security and advance their careers. This service is made possible through a Walmart Foundation grant.

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