



ABOUT CHATTANOOGA GOODWILL INDUSTRIES

History

In 1902, Rev. Edgar Helms started Goodwill in the South End of Boston. At the time, this area of Boston was home to immigrant ethnic groups and many people living in poverty. The people who lived in the South End faced various barriers to employment and achieving their dreams. In an effort to help these people thrive and overcome their difficulties, Rev. Helms initiated a revolutionary idea. He collected used household items and clothing in wealthier parts of Boston and then trained and hired the people of the South End to mend and repair the used goods. The goods were then resold or given to needy people in the community.

Since 1902, Goodwill has evolved into 215 member organizations throughout the U.S., Canada and 24 countries around the world. Chattanooga Goodwill Industries, the first Goodwill in Tennessee, was founded in 1923.

Goodwill Today

Today Goodwill continues Rev. Helms's mission by helping people with disabilities and other disadvantages get the training and assistance they need to find competitive employment in our community. Goodwill believes employment is a crucial element in people's lives, helping them gain the independence and self-worth that come with earning a paycheck.

Chattanooga Goodwill Industries serves thousands of people in 23 counties with the funds generated by the sale of donated merchandise in its retail stores. The funds generated by the 11 Goodwill retail stores in Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia stay in this area to provide job training, medical equipment and other programs and services for people with disabilities and other disadvantages.

People can also shop Goodwill online 24 hours a day, seven days a week at www.shopgoodwill.com, the first Internet auction site operated by a nonprofit. In its first five years of operation, www.shopgoodwill.com earned more than \$15 million for Goodwill Industries International.

More than 84 percent of Goodwill's total revenues are channeled directly into client programs and services. In 2007, more than 2,500 people in 23 counties were served free of charge as a result of the generosity of Goodwill shoppers and donors. On an international level, Goodwill places someone into a good job every 53 seconds of every business day.

Goodwill Programs and Services

Despite the success of our retail business, Goodwill is far more than just thrift stores. Goodwill serves and empowers people with disabilities and other disadvantages through a variety of programs that provide the job training and skills development needed to compete in the world of work.

There are a number of barriers that people face when looking for a job. Some are minor, but other obstacles, such as a history of unemployment or a physical, mental or emotional disability, can be

difficult to overcome. Goodwill's programs offer support and encouragement to its clients throughout the process of training for and looking for a job.

Goodwill's programs include vocational evaluations, employee development services and job readiness training.

Sometimes all a person needs to be able to get a job is a piece of medical equipment – a wheelchair, a walker or a pair of crutches that provides the mobility necessary for someone to work. Goodwill's Health Equipment Link Program (HELPS) collects, cleans and refurbishes donated medical equipment before linking it to someone in need in the community. All equipment provided through Goodwill HELPS is free, and the program is designed to assist people of all walks of life who are unable to purchase the equipment they need to live their fullest life.

Many people with disabilities could benefit from having an assistance dog to aid them in a variety of ways, including opening and closing doors, pulling wheelchairs, summoning help and providing companionship. However, so few are available that only one percent of people across the country who need assistance dogs currently have them. Chattanooga Goodwill Industries and McKamey Animal Care and Adoption Center have formed a groundbreaking partnership to address this need. The Goodwill Assistance Dog Academy will provide assistance dogs free of charge to residents of Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia who have physical disabilities. Goodwill will use rescued animals provided by McKamey, offering both the dogs and their companions a newfound sense of purpose.

Goodwill believes in giving people a chance, not charity, so our programs are geared toward helping people become self-sufficient through the power of work. But sometimes people need a little extra help, and Goodwill is happy to provide clothing (especially work clothing), medical equipment and other items to people in need.

More Information

More information can be found online at www.goodwillchatt.org or by calling (423)629-2501.

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