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Goodwill® HELPs Founders Honored with International Award

*Susie Thompson, Gigi Logan Win 2006 Watkins Award for
Mission Advancement from Goodwill Industries International*

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. — When physical therapists Gigi Logan and Susie Thompson approached Chattanooga Goodwill® Industries about a community medical equipment program six years ago, they said they never dreamed they would one day win an international award for their efforts.

Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Logan were recently selected to receive the 2006 Robert E. and Charlotte Watkins Award for Mission Advancement from Goodwill Industries International for Goodwill HELPs, the program that the two women instituted at Chattanooga Goodwill Industries in May 2000 and that they have continued to serve as volunteers ever since.

The award will be presented to them in June at the 2006 Goodwill Delegate Assembly in St. Louis, Mo., along with a \$1,000 check.

Dennis Brice, President and CEO of Chattanooga Goodwill Industries, received the good news in a letter from George Kessinger, President and CEO of Goodwill Industries International.

“The judging panel felt confident that Gigi Logan and Susie Thompson were exemplary winners,” wrote Mr. Kessinger. “Their example further enriches our movement and their community.”

Under the management of Kimberly Myers, Director of Community Services, Goodwill HELPs (Health Equipment Link Program) provides free durable medical equipment to people in 23 counties throughout Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia who can’t afford to buy it for themselves.

“Health equipment can be an expensive or impossible purchase for a growing number of people,” said Mrs. Thompson. “Goodwill HELPs goes a long way toward improving the quality of life for people in our community every day.”

Kenneth Lee, a HELPs client who received a free wheelchair from Goodwill last year, agrees. “If I didn’t have the wheelchair from Goodwill, I’d just be stuck in the bed all day, depending on other folks, and that’s not me,” he said. “I want to work and support myself, and this chair is a big help. I thank God that Goodwill was there for me. Otherwise, there’s no telling what I would’ve been doing.”

The majority of equipment supplied by Goodwill is donated to HELPs by individuals who no longer need it. Goodwill employees and clients clean and repair the equipment before passing it along to people in need. Other equipment and supplies are donated directly to Goodwill by manufacturing companies, medical equipment suppliers and healthcare providers.

While some items, like motorized wheelchairs, are in such high demand that waiting lists are several years long, many items such as crutches and walkers are kept in stock so that requests can be fulfilled in a matter of days.

Since the program’s inception, more than 5,000 people have received free equipment from Chattanooga Goodwill Industries.

“Our goal is to grow the program to 10,000 clients served each year by 2010,” said Bruce Carscaddon, Vice President of Mission Services. “With the community’s continued support, I know we can do that.”

For more information about Goodwill HELPs, to donate equipment to the program or to request equipment for yourself or a family member, visit goodwillchatt.org or call (423)629-2501, ext. 314.

Goodwill Industries International is a network of 207 community-based organizations that serves people with workplace disadvantages and disabilities by providing job training and employment services, as well as job placement opportunities and post-employment support.

To fund the mission, Goodwill collects donated clothing and household goods to sell in its retail stores and on shopgoodwill.com and provides contract labor services to business and government.

Chattanooga Goodwill Industries serves clients in 23 counties in Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia. More information about Chattanooga Goodwill Industries is available online at goodwillchatt.org.

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