



**For more information:** Angela Smith, APR  
angela.smith@goodwillchatt.org  
(423)659-2501, ext. 222

## **Goodwill Helps Area Students Discover the Power of Work**

**CHATTANOOGA, Tenn.** – This summer, LaShonda Black spent time at the Chattanooga Zoo, the Tennessee Aquarium and Crabtree Farms. When she heads back to school this fall, however, she won't just have lots of photos and fun memories from her vacation. LaShonda will also have learned the power of work.

As one of 19 participants in Goodwill's summer youth job training program, LaShonda did more than just smell the flowers at Crabtree Farms – she also helped plant them, as well as harvest blackberries for the local research and educational farm that promotes sustainable agriculture.

At the Chattanooga Zoo, the students prepared literature packets, dug new sidewalks and landscaped around exhibits. They also spent one day each week serving meals at the Chattanooga Community Kitchen, and they often helped Goodwill employees sort donations of clothing, housewares and furniture that are sold in Goodwill's 11 area stores to fund programs like the one in which they participated.

“Despite the fact that these students have a variety of disabilities and other disadvantages, they are all capable of giving back to their communities and learning to be self-sufficient,” said Cyndee Sims, Vice President of Mission Services for Chattanooga Goodwill Industries. “This summer program gives them the opportunity to learn how to be productive members of the workforce and to experience a variety of jobs in a variety of settings.”

The students, who range in age from 16 to 21, chronicled their summer through journals and photos that were displayed at their graduation ceremony July 27 at Peavine Baptist Church in Rock Spring, Ga.

Austin Johnson said he enjoyed his experience in this year's program. “I love getting out of the house and meeting new people, and I like getting to go to different places,” he said.

Founded in 1902, Goodwill Industries International is a network of 207 community-based organizations that funds its mission by collecting donated clothing and household goods to sell in its retail stores and on [www.shopgoodwill.com](http://www.shopgoodwill.com) and by providing contract labor services to business and government.

Chattanooga Goodwill Industries serves people with disabilities and other disadvantages in 23 counties in Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia by providing free job training, medical equipment and other resources. More information is available at [www.goodwillchatt.org](http://www.goodwillchatt.org).

###