



Goodwill Honors Achievements and Community Support in Recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month

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Roanoke, VA. Goodwill Industries of the Valleys honored personal achievement and community support at its 2007 awards banquet held on October 16th. The event, held annually in recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, honors individuals with disabilities and disadvantages who have made outstanding achievement in overcoming barriers to employment. Individuals, businesses, and other organizations from across the geographic regions Goodwill Industries of the Valleys serves in Virginia were also recognized for providing outstanding services or support. Nearly 200 business and community representatives as well as Goodwill employees and program participants attended.

The highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of the Achiever and Graduate of the Year awards, which honor participants in Goodwill's Workforce Development programs. David Shoemaker was the recipient of the Achiever of the Year Award, which honors a person with a disability or other disadvantaging condition who has shown great progress and accomplishment in overcoming barriers to employment, while still benefiting from the Goodwill work environment or receiving services to support employment in the community. David came to Goodwill in 2005 through a collaboration with Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center in Fishersville, for an unpaid work experience program as a cashier. It quickly became apparent that David was someone that would be an incredible asset to the Staunton Goodwill team, and he was hired in July of 2005.

"David has since become a full time employee of Goodwill and given up his disability benefits. He is a true example that barriers are only as strong as you let them be. David has conquered his barriers, achieved success, and is an inspiration to us all," stated Bruce Phipps, President and CEO as he presented the award.

Dawn Turner was the recipient of the Graduate of the Year Award, which honors a person who has completed a Goodwill career services program and is competitively employed by a non-Goodwill employer. The Graduate of the Year is selected for outstanding achievement in overcoming barriers to attaining and maintaining employment. Dawn came to the Goodwill work center after high school with little training or direction for the future. After entering the supported employment program Dawn was placed in food service at Red Oak Manor Assisted Living Facility in Rocky Mount. She made a connection with the residents and often performed tasks for them outside the realm of her job requirements. This experience led Dawn to take classes and become a Personal Care Attendant in October 2006. She then went on to receive her Medical Technician certificate in December. She now works full time for Team Nurse providing in home care to individuals with disabilities.

During the banquet the following awards were also presented:

- Dick Shoemaker, past Board Chair, was recipient of the Cornerstone Award, which is given by the Goodwill Board of Directors on a periodic basis to honor an individual, company, organization or institution for outstanding contribution to Goodwill.

- Ken Lanford, President of Lanford Brothers and Company, located in Roanoke, was recipient of the Award of Merit, which honors a company, organization or institution that has provided high profile support of Goodwill during the past year.
- Tetra Holding U.S. located in Blacksburg was the recipient of the Employer of the Year-Center Based Award, which honors a company, organization or institution that has made substantial collaborative contributions across one or more business lines to Goodwill, providing measurable outcomes in work opportunities for program participants.
- Martin's Food Markets in Waynesboro was the recipient of the Employer of the Year-Community Based Award, which honors a company, organization or institution that has exhibited the willingness to hire individuals with barriers to employment through Goodwill or has provided community-based work opportunities for Goodwill program participants, including the willingness to make special accommodations and provide advocacy and means of inclusiveness.
- Dot Alleyne, former Goodwill employee, was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. This award honored Dot for her 13 years of outstanding support for Goodwill services.
- Walt Johnson, Wage Rates Coordinator for Goodwill's Central Division, was the recipient of the Roger Matthews Lifetime Achievement Award (named for Goodwill's former President & CEO), which honors an individual who has had an active role in the development, growth and support of Goodwill for a period of five years or more.
- Sue Vail, a parent volunteer, was the recipient of the Volunteer Award. This award honors an individual who has demonstrated outstanding voluntary support for Goodwill during the past year.

Juliette Rizzo, Ms. Wheelchair America 2005, ended the evening with an inspiring call for everyone to be a part of the team that puts people with barriers to employment to work. Sharing personal experiences, as well as the stories of those she has met through her travels, Ms. Rizzo encouraged all in attendance to look beyond the disabilities or disadvantages to the people and the talents that each possess.

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, a United Way organization headquartered in Roanoke, serves 31 counties and 14 cities in the Shenandoah Valley, central and southwest Virginia. Its mission is to help people in our community achieve a better life through work and independence. Last year, Goodwill served over 4,000 individuals.

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