Community Volunteer Leaders Recognized by Goodwill of Mississippi

In accompaniment with the largest class of youth volunteers in the history of the Salute Volunteer Awards, nine community volunteer leaders were recognized at the 29th Annual Goodwill Salute Dinner. This annual community recognition event is presented by Goodwill Industries Volunteer Services (GIVS), a group of dedicated volunteers who further the mission of Goodwill Industries of Mississippi.

More than 350 attended the event at the Country Club of Jackson on August 20th. A record number of youth were nominated – five – including Morgan Alexander, Krishna Desai, Mary Dixon, Thomas Kirby and Isabelle Moseley. Adult honorees included Patricia Evans, Bob Farr, Haley Fisackerly, Holly Lange, Julie Moore, Lori Newcomb, Kim Griffing Porter, Johnny Ray, and Sarah Young.

Goodwill Employee of the Year Kevin Lofton was also recognized, as were Achievers of the Year Stearlone Dennis, Terry Davis and Spirit Award winner Deonte Young.

The Goodwill Salute Dinner is organized and presented by GIVS (Goodwill Industries Volunteer Services), an all-volunteer auxiliary that supports the mission of Goodwill. They are devoted friends of Goodwill employees and truly reflect our mission of helping those with disabilities or other barriers. They do this in so many ways: providing employee birthday celebrations, home-cooked Thanksgiving and Christmas lunches, volunteer devotional meeting time, and the annual Goodwill Art Show for persons with disabilities. They are an inspiration to our employees, our staff and our Board of Directors.

Corporate Mississippi was integral in the success of this year’s Salute Volunteer Awards Dinner. Each of these companies generously supported the Goodwill’s signature community event: Gertrude C. Ford Foundation, Ergon, WAPT-16; GodwinGroup, BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi, C Spire, Trustmark, St. Dominic’s, Horne CPAs & Business Advisors, Mississippi Christian Living, BankPlus, Entergy, EastGroup Properties, Paula and Randy James, The Wiggers Family.

Goodwill Industries of Mississippi assists people with disabilities and other barriers to obtain employment.
Donations

Donations are the lifeblood of Goodwill.

Our mission at Goodwill is to assist people with disabilities and other barriers to obtain employment. Those job opportunities begin with donations. The donations are received, sorted, processed and then sold at our retail stores located in Metro Jackson and Hattiesburg. Each of these steps create jobs for fellow Mississippian with a disability or a barrier to overcome. So every donation helps change lives for people here in Mississippi.

Goodwill of Mississippi is fortunate to have the support of such a giving community. In 2014, more than 91,000 donations were made by our charitable customers. Donations are accepted at each of our retail stores – 4 in Metro Jackson and 1 in Hattiesburg, along with our central warehouse. For certain donations, home pick-up can be pre-arranged by calling Dispatch at (601) 853-8110 and asking if home pick-up is an option.

One of our customers refers to her Goodwill shopping trips as “the thrill of Goodwill.”

And just a sampling of recent donations, show she is pretty accurate:

- Goodwill received several authentic Burberry luxury brand scarfs and shirts.
- A framed collage of photos of Brett Favre, autographed by the Mississippi football star came to one of our stores.
- A 325-piece set of wares, manufactured in Occupied Japan in 1945.
- And a host of high quality brands such as Ralph Lauren, Miss Me Jeans, Brooks Brothers, Michael Kors and Coach are dropped off with regularity.

Both donations and shopping create this “thrill of Goodwill” -- and most importantly, they change lives of Mississippian with disabilities or other barriers to employment.

Promotions

May

Kim Edwards was promoted to Centre Street Store Manager

Stearlon Dennis was promoted to Warehouse Asst. Manager

July

Dave Hollingsworth was promoted to President and CEO Elect

August

Crystal Emery was promoted to Assistant Store Manager

Patricia Majoria was promoted to Hattiesburg Store Manager
Employee Night at the Mississippi Braves

Goodwill Employee Night at the Braves game was held on July 16th. It is always one of the employees’ favorite family activities. We had a great turnout and set a record by serving 117 ice cream cones!

Sale Days

The hot days of July in Mississippi have led to some hot sales at Goodwill stores.

Christmas in July is a much anticipated special sales week for Goodwill shoppers. “Most customers love this event,” says Metro Facility Manager, Charlotte Miller. “We give them the date and they love coming in to shop and just to look and get ideas for the upcoming season. It pulls in July customers which I feel we would not normally get at this time of the year.”

The Christmas in July sale ran from July 20th through July 25th.

That sale was followed up with a Dollar Days Sale on Labor Day weekend, Sept 4-5. All summer clothing was discounted to $1 per item. The result of the two-day sales promotion was much higher store traffic at all stores and one of the top sales days of the year.

Look for more sales days coming to Goodwill stores in the future.
Kieffer Krichbaum

Kieffer Krichbaum is one of our newest employees and the Grapevine spent time meeting with him and his mother, Adele.

Kieffer, an Autistic special needs client, came to Goodwill through Vocational Rehabilitation. With the help of a job coach, he worked three days in the wiper department at the Goodwill Metro store. He grasped his job really quickly, worked hard and as a result was hired as an employee in September.

Adele gushes about the positive changes in her son. “I noticed he is much more spontaneous in his speaking and initiates more conversations. When I pick him up after work, he is bubbly and very excited. He makes sure I don’t forget to get him up at 6:00 in the morning so he won’t miss work. When he gets his paycheck, he shows it to me and loves to take it to the bank. His working has allowed us to take an upcoming vacation to Orange Beach,” notes Adele.

Kieffer says, “I learned from Mr. Tommy (Goodwill Program Manager, Tommy Martin). My job is a wiper cutter. I like Eric (Wiper manager Eric Fisher) and Tim (employee Tim Pickett). Tim is my best friend. I am really excited about my permanent job.

“(Working at Goodwill) has changed my boy into a man,” asserts Adele. “He has come out of himself. Working here is better than attending speech therapy. He has developed friends – it means so much to him. He loves his friends and he loves working here.”

Kieffer, 24, is originally from Fairfield, California. He moved to Mississippi when he was 1. “I like to watch “The Price is Right” and “Catch 21” and NASCAR racing,” says Kieffer. His favorite racer? “Jeff Gordon, Number 24.” He looks forward to reading his Sports Illustrated. And with Halloween approaching, he likes his candy corn, along with Snickers and Kit Kat candy bars.

Congratulations on becoming an employee at Goodwill, Kieffer! We are delighted you are now among the Goodwill family.