The 26th Annual Goodwill Art Show Awards Ceremony, was held at a new venue this year - the Madison Square Center for the Arts, on Sunday, March 23rd. There was a record turnout for this year’s event.

The Goodwill Art Show celebrates the creative flair, diversity and expression of people with disabilities. Gail Collins, VA Patterson and GIVS members did a great job coordinating and showcasing the event.

“Goodwill has for over 50 years in Mississippi provided training and jobs for people with disabilities. The creative diversity exhibited by our friends is extraordinary,” said Gray Wiggers, Goodwill of Mississippi’s President and CEO.

Both professional and non-professional artists entered and it is evident by some of the entries shown here, that the Art Show attracted a very talented group of artists.
2013 was a very good year for Goodwill in central Mississippi. Because of a caring community, we continued to touch and change more lives through our mission of assisting people with disabilities and other barriers to obtain employment.

Our mission is fulfilled through programs such as job evaluation, education, job training and placement. Goodwill served 227 in 2013, an increase of 51 over the previous year. One hundred thirty people worked at Goodwill, and these are jobs that bring economic stability and build stronger family relationships. Additionally, through our long-standing partnership with the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services, 67 vocational training clients were served. Our ex-offenders program helped 30 workers with a 2nd chance in life.

Retail store sales fuel our mission and we were able to offer more jobs because total sales for the year were $3.8 million, up 13% over last year. Shopping visits by our customers grew 18% over 2012. We are blessed to have an extremely charitable community that impacts the lives of those most in need – Goodwill received 78,425 donations over the course of last year!

We conducted a number of surveys to understand our brand image within the community, the satisfaction of Goodwill employees with their employment, and the satisfaction of our customers with their shopping experience. The Goodwill brand was the 3rd most recognized brand among national charitable organizations locally, and the undisputed leader for donated goods.

Our employees feel they know what is expected of them, have the resources and opportunity to succeed and view Goodwill as a positive work experience. Our customers are very loyal, shop frequently and plan to continue to visit.

While the numbers and surveys tell part of the story, our mission is told best by the outcomes of those we serve:

- A manager who has been promoted several times, is working on her college degree with plans for an MBA.
- A past Vocational Rehabilitation client and ex-offender has overcome barriers to become a valuable Goodwill employee.
- A mother praises Goodwill for bringing her daughter out of her shell and changing her own attitude towards her daily job.

Our 3-year strategic plan (2014-2016) reflects a shared strategic vision among our Board, management and our employees. Several highlights thus far include a commitment to our employees’ personal and professional growth through Goodwill University, improving efficiencies of logistics and store operations, and initiating a sustainability plan to become more energy efficient and reduce our waste footprint. New store locations are planned within the 3-county Metro Jackson area and regionally.

We receive assistance from our Goodwill Industries Volunteer Services (GIVS) auxiliary, the United Way, and vocational training support from the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services.

In partnership with our dedicated GIVS auxiliary, the annual volunteer community leaders’ Salute Dinner was a great success. The event drew an audience
Christmas Party at Goodwill

Santa arrived with stocking stuffers and Don Simpson arrived with “special gifts” for each Goodwill employee as the exceptional ladies of our GIVS auxiliary prepared and served the Christmas luncheon. We wished Goodwill to All and celebrated the holiday season with good food and good fellowship.

The Goodwill Shopping Experience

ARG Consulting surveyed 600 Goodwill shoppers, visiting all 6 of our stores in November of 2013 and asking a number of survey questions to learn more about our customers. Here are some of the highlights from the survey:

- Goodwill shoppers are very loyal. 9 out of 10 had shopped at a Goodwill store before and over half shopped 3 or more times a month!
- Three out of 4 of the shoppers were female and they like to browse the stores. Most don’t have a specific item they are planning to buy when they arrive.
- They gave Goodwill employees high marks for being courteous and friendly.
- They told us ways we could improve, too. Having clean stores, laying out the floor space so merchandise is easy to shop, putting more merchandise on the floor and better prices were all suggestions.
- And importantly, an incredible 98% said they would return and shop at Goodwill again in the next three months!

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of almost 500 supporters and friends, which has grown to become one of the signature charitable giving events in the metro area. The creative talents of artists with disabilities were showcased at the Goodwill Art Show for the 26th year. We wish Goodwill to all and thank our stakeholders and the community for their generous support. We will diligently continue to maintain a disciplined approach to growing our operations, while remaining vigilant and committed to our Goodwill mission.

Whether shopping, donating or volunteering, we invite you to put your goodwill to work and help improve the lives of fellow Mississippians and their families.
Family means everything to Kizzy Neal. She enjoys spending time with her family, going to the movies or the park, a family BBQ and making sure their needs are met. Kizzy also loves her Goodwill family, including the customers at her first job at the Centre Street Store and fellow employees.

“I love the employees that I left and work with now. We get along like a family and family is important to me.”

“I love that Goodwill gives second chances, as some people like me wouldn’t know where we would be if it wasn’t for the second chance to start over,” she states. Kizzy received her second chance from Goodwill and she has made the most of it. From her first job, she has grown, gaining more responsibility and currently is Warehouse Manager. Her team recently doubled the weekly goal of racks delivered to stores. “Mr. Don, Mr. JD and Mr. Frank trusted that I could manage workers and turn the warehouse around.

Ashley Scott

Ashley came to Goodwill with seven years of customer service experience, which shows by how she treats Goodwill customers. As a sales associate, she brings a positive attitude and strong work ethic to her job which resonates with shoppers. “I have some customers who call me their daughter,” relates Ashley.

She came to Mississippi from the Motor City – born in Detroit and raised there for twelve years. She has lived in Jackson since, attending Calloway High. She is one of 6 children and she looks after her mother who is sick and lives in a local nursing home.

“My mother is my hero. She is sick but always has a very positive attitude and treats people exactly how I would want to be treated. She is a great motivation in my life.”

Her career started fast at Goodwill. She was out of work for a year and a friend suggested she apply at Goodwill. “I filled out an application and JD called the next day. Then I interviewed with Mr. Don and I started right away. It was a real challenge to help open up the Crossgates store. We have built a family here. Look at what we have accomplished! I am proud to be a part of setting up the store!”

Goodwill has taught Ashley patience, and she is working on developing skills that she can eventually apply as a manager. She is especially committed to her church, including attending single parent and evening bible classes. As for spare time activities, she laughed and said, “I have three kids, ages 12, 10, 9! I go to football, basketball and cheerleading practices. I enjoy my children, and looking after my mother. My spare time is their time!”