Goodwill of Mississippi
Salutes
Our Employees of the
1st Quarter of 2022 for
their outstanding
dedication and service
to our organization.

Goodwill of Mississippi Mission:
Assisting people with
disabilities and other
barriers to obtain employment.
- A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO -

Brad Steffani

As you read through this month’s newsletter, I ask that you reflect on how the Power of Work has impacted your life and that of those whom you care about. My first “real” job was in my sophomore year of high school. I was a pin chaser. For those of you who are not familiar, that is the individual who works behind the bowling lanes to ensure the machines set the pins and return the bowling ball correctly. It was loud, dirty, and challenging, but I’ll never forget the feeling of achievement that experience gave me. I saved as much of my paycheck as possible and eventually had enough ($500) to purchase my first car. A 1969 Pontiac Tempest with too many doors. Being able to experience the dignity of earning, saving, and purchasing connected me with Goodwill’s mission, long before I knew about Goodwill. Each of us has a unique journey, but I believe the power and dignity one feels with personal career accomplishments is a common thread. Since 1902, Goodwill Industries has operated as a Social Enterprise. Unlike a charity, social enterprises pursue endeavors that generate revenues, which fund their social causes. Our Social Enterprise model allows us to turn your donations into training - training into jobs – and jobs CHANGE EVERYTHING!!!
The 2022 Goodwill Art Show was held April 24th at the Jackson Prep Centre for Arts & Leadership. Over 100 students and adults with disabilities and barriers participated in the exhibit. The artwork was displayed, awarded, and made available for the purchase to be given to the artist. Jackson Prep's Youth Leadership Team assisted the GIVS (Goodwill Industries Volunteer Services) organization with the hosting of the event. Pictured (Goodwill Industries of Mississippi CEO Brad Steffani & the Jackson Prep Youth Leadership Team) and (Winners in attendance at the Art Show)

Linda Parker... My Story

Linda Parker had a thriving career beginning at Hobby International Airport. In 2012, Linda had a life-threatening stroke that left her partially paralyzed. With her disability, Linda was sent in March 2015, as a client, to Goodwill Industries of Mississippi for rehabilitation training. It wasn’t long before she was hired as the full-time Dispatcher for the organization. About 1 year ago, the CEO for Goodwill discovered that Linda was just 12 hours shy of receiving her Bachelor’s degree. He encouraged Linda to finish, placed her in the Goodwill Tuition Assistance Program and quickly she enrolled in Jackson State.

This past April, Linda Parker at the age of 65 graduated from Jackson State University. Linda says that Goodwill saved her and has greatly helped her feel the value in her life once again. She states that Goodwill is part of her family and has given her so much support. Every day Linda strives to help people in any way that she can, and that she does not plan on ever leaving Goodwill. Linda Parker is a daily inspiring example that it’s never too late to reach a goal or complete a dream. Goodwill Industries of Mississippi is so proud of you.

The Goodwill of Mississippi Mission: To Assist People with Disabilities and Other Barriers to Obtain Employment

Follow us on Social | @goodwillms
Employees of the Year

DIANE DAY 2021 Gray Wiggers Employee of the Year | Ms. Day was hired at Goodwill Industries of Mississippi in March of 2021 to be the Customer Service Instructor. As a lifelong educator, Ms. Day brings a wealth of experience, associations, and vision to the position. Her outlook on life is to be optimistic, grow daily toward her full potential and pass on to others all the education that she can. She states that “each day we have an opportunity to learn more – never waste a day”! Ms. Day says that she has been blessed in her professional career but has never been so fulfilled as she is at Goodwill. “This organization opens doors of opportunity for people like no other and I get to be a driving partner in that”, says Day. The person that has made the biggest impact on her life is her Godmother, an educator and music teacher, Catherine Rayford. She showed her to never settle and to always make a plan to better herself. Ms. Day enjoys fishing, camping, and most anything nature. She loves all types of music, writing poetry and has even written and produces a 1 act play. Ms. Day is married to Garnett Day, and they have 3 sons. She is a member of Alpha Epsilon Lambda, the Beta Omicron Society, and Truevine Missionary Baptist Church. Her advice to fellow Goodwill Employees is to be thankful for the opportunities that Goodwill of Mississippi gives us to support each other and to share that support to others. When she was informed that she had been selected The Gray Wiggers Employee of the Year, Ms. Day states that she was totally shocked and so humbled to be recognized among so many wonderful employees. Her advice is to be willing to go the extra mile and always be on time! Diane Day lives by example and that is why she is the 2021 Gray Wiggers Employee of the Year.

JEANNINE JOHNSTON 2021 David Hollingsworth Manager of the Year | Jeannine has been at Goodwill Industries of Mississippi for almost 2 years. She took the job with little to no knowledge about managing an on-line sales site but jumped in with both feet and has grown the Shop Goodwill content and revenue by over double. Jeannine says that many people just don’t understand what Goodwill really does. This organization has changed so many lives by encouraging and giving tools to build confidence to become the people we were meant to be – She says Goodwill has this team atmosphere and a willingness to help each other succeed. One of her favorite things is to see our clients’ become employees and watching their faces light up. “Nothing compares to that!” Jeannine gives her parents the credit for making the biggest impact on her life by showing her to work for what you want. She especially wants to thank Vicki Burton, Roy Johns and Frank Bryant for ALWAYS being there to support her and helping her succeed. When Jeannine is not at work, she might be at the beach. She loves the sun, sand and water, and spending time with her dogs Journey and Ellie. The advice that she would give her fellow Goodwill employees is to never sell yourself short . . . you can do and be anything that you want. Goodwill wants you to succeed, and they will go the extra mile to make sure you do. Presently, along with being a manager, Jeannine is enrolled through Goodwill at the Gemological Institute of America in the Applied Jewelry Course which is training her to properly identify metals and stones. She will finish the 9-month course in September. When chosen for this award, her first reaction was “Who Voted for Me”? She was so shocked! Jeannine Johnston’s co-workers voted for her for the exceptional job that she does. She has excelled at every task that she has been given, and daily promotes the Goodwill Mission. Jeannine Johnston, we Salute you as our 2021 David Hollingsworth Manager of the Year.
Employees of the Year

Colleen Williams 2021 Don Simpson Achiever of the Year | Colleen has been with Goodwill Industries of Mississippi since 2016. She has held several positions at Goodwill and is presently the Shift Supervisor at 51 Place. This is Colleen’s second time to be chosen Achiever of the Year in 4 years. She is recognized for her “pint size explosion of ability” and her get it done attitude. Colleen says that her Mom is her most influential person for how she has taught her to make good decisions, to love unconditionally and to strive every day to be her best self.

She wishes to thank Ms. Charlette Miller for how she trusted her and pushed her to be more at Goodwill -She taught me structure and would say “just try it Colleen – you can do it”. Colleen says that Goodwill has grown her in so many ways and allows her to encourage fellow employees.

Her advice is to always look for the positive and look for opportunities -don’t wait for them to find you. Colleen is a member of New Hope Church and the National Scholastic Honor Society. She is presently pursuing a degree in Physical Education and plans to become a coach. Congratulations to our 2021 Don Simpson Achiever of the Year – Colleen Williams.

SKYLIN SMITH 2021 GIVS Spirit Award Winner | Skylin came to Goodwill Industries of Mississippi in March of 2019 and quickly was promoted to an Assistant Manager at the Goodwill Outlet Store in Ridgeland. Skylin has grown to love what the organization stand for and how it helps so many people that often would be cast aside. He says that his heart is often touched when he has the opportunity to help someone grow past their own expectation to achieve something more. Skylin will tell you that the people at Goodwill are his family and says that they are always there for him, ready to help when he needs them. Goodwill has been Skylin’s main support system since he moved to Jackson, and he especially wants to thank Jessica, Ms. Robin, Vicki, Marianne and Roy for going above and beyond to help him when he needed it most. The most important person in his life is his Mother. Skylin says, “man, I have put her through a lot, but she is always there to support me - now, we discuss everything - she is my best friend!” Skylin enjoys watching sports, being out in nature and loves to try different foods. When asked what his “big dream is, Skylin states that he just wants to have a good, happy, peaceful life, and he knows for sure that he wants to grow with the Goodwill organization. Upon being told that he had been chosen for this award, Skylin said he felt so much gratitude toward so many people for recognizing his hard work and his love for the Goodwill organization. Skylin Smith is the living example of what the GIVS Spirit Award Winner should be. Every day he gives of his heart and shares the true spirit of Goodwill. Way to go, Skylin Smith, our 2021 GIVS Spirit Award Winner.
Goodwill of Mississippi SPOTLIGHT | Digital Skills Team

Goodwill of Mississippi spotlights our outstanding Digital Skills Team which provides free training to the public with 15 different classes to improve digital & computer skills. Team members are Bob Odom (Digital Skills Supervisor) and Digital Skills Instructors, Ben Milton, John Holmes & Tammy Lovier. For information call 601 853-8110 or email bodom@goodwillms.org.