As I reflect on a rapidly closing 2017, I’m reminded of how far we’ve come since this time last year, when plans for a merger between the central and southern Indiana Goodwills were first being discussed, with an emphasis on the swift expansion of mission services into southern Indiana. Since the merger became final earlier this year, I’ve had the opportunity to spend some time in southern Indiana meeting community leaders, employees and students. I’ve witnessed first-hand the challenges that Candy Barksdale, retired CEO of Goodwill of Southern Indiana, and the Board leadership described when they considered how best to bring more mission services to the region. I’ve also witnessed generosity, compassion and a genuine desire to make a difference.

We’re pleased to report that all of our mission services in southern Indiana — Nurse-Family Partnership, The Excel Center and Goodwill Guides — have recruited staff, enrolled clients and continue to identify individuals who could benefit from the education, employment and health programs Goodwill provides. In July, we opened The Excel Center in Clarksville — the first high school for adults in southern Indiana. We currently serve nearly 200 students and expect to enroll up to 300.

We’re also excited to share that the Indiana Charter School Board approved four new charters for The Excel Center, with locations projected to include Muncie, Marion, Columbus and Bloomington. The new schools will offer an estimated 30,000 high school dropouts a second chance to earn a diploma. With nearly 3,000 diplomas and more than 4,000 industry-recognized job certifications earned since opening in 2010, The Excel Center prepares adults for postsecondary education and career opportunities, presenting a no-cost alternative to a GED. According to U.S. Census data, GED holders are less prepared for college than diploma holders, with only 5% going on to achieve a bachelor’s degree, and they earn significantly less.

The Excel Center model has already expanded to other Goodwills in northern Indiana, Austin, Texas, Little Rock, Ark., Washington, D.C., and Memphis, Tenn. It’s incredible to see the success of the school replicated in communities across the country, but it wouldn’t be possible without our talented staff, who work tirelessly to serve their students, and the thousands of Goodwill employees whose contributions enable us to continue offering mission services. Our community partners have also been indispensable by helping individuals connect with us. Also critical to our ability to deliver mission services are our financial donors and the hundreds of thousands of Hoosiers who shop and donate at our stores.

Thank you all for your continued support of Goodwill. Together, we can empower people to increase their independence and reach their potential.

Kent A. Kramer
President & CEO
Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana

LOCATIONS OF THE EXCEL CENTER
Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana
Implemented by Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana since 2011, Nurse-Family Partnership pairs first-time, low-income mothers with registered nurses who guide women through their pregnancies and ensure children reach critical developmental milestones through their second birthday. Supported by more than 35 years of research, this evidenced-based program addresses the health, development and well-being of low-income mothers and their families. Nurse-Family Partnership has shown positive, long-term change while conserving taxpayer resources.

Nurses make weekly or biweekly home visits until the child is 2 years old, focusing on improving pregnancy outcomes, helping parents learn how to provide responsible and competent care for their child, and offering assistance that will lead to improvements in the family’s economic self-sufficiency.

2,217 FAMILIES SERVED SINCE 2011

“Nurse-Family Partnership prepares first-time mothers for parenthood, paving the path to healthier decisions that will improve the overall course of their families’ lives far beyond graduation from the program,” said Lisa Crane, Senior Director of Nurse-Family Partnership.

In 2016, with funding support from the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), Nurse-Family Partnership began serving a pilot group of high-risk women in Marion County who have more than one child. The nurse home visitors who are seeing this group have completed additional training about mental illness, addiction, and pediatric issues that could arise with other children in the home. A total of 11 mothers have been served in our pilot so far.

"Through increased collaboration with health care providers, this pilot seeks to learn more about how to best serve mothers who not only have infant mortality risk factors such as chronic health conditions, challenges accessing prenatal health care, or substance use disorders, but have given birth to other children as well,” said Kelly Connell, a Nurse Home Visitor with Nurse-Family Partnership.

In 2017, following the merger of the central and southern Indiana Goodwills, Nurse-Family Partnership nearly tripled the number of Indiana counties served from six to 17. In addition, the program was selected to receive $6.5 million from ISDH over 2018–19, allowing NFP to reach more of the approximately 14,000 eligible women in Indiana. According to one study, infant mortality in Indiana could be reduced by 46% if Nurse-Family Partnership were expanded to scale.

Visit goodwillindy.org/nfp to learn more about Nurse-Family Partnership.

Retired Nurse Pursues a Second Career

Paula Buford was a Qualified Medication Aide for 25 years, working primarily in nursing homes. In 2000, she was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré syndrome, a disorder resulting in varying degrees of paralysis. She went from working in a nursing home to living in one for seven months, receiving intense physical and speech therapy. “I wasn’t ready to retire, but it was impossible for me to continue my career,” Paula said.

Through a program offered by Goodwill to persons 55 and over (the Senior Community Service Employment Program), Paula was given a second opportunity at a career. She was immediately connected with Guest Relations at Methodist Hospital where she currently delivers flowers and mail and escorts visitors. Goodwill also paid for Paula’s preparation course at the Indiana School of Phlebotomy as well as her transportation costs to attend.

“I enjoy working at Methodist Hospital and plan to pursue a second career in the lab department once I pass the state licensing exam,” Paula said.

Aaron Roberts, Paula’s case manager at Goodwill, is also helping her get her driver’s license reinstated, preparing her for her next step toward greater independence.

Goodwill Employee Forges His Own Path

Before Matt Goodsman joined the Goodwill team in Greenwood last year, he had trouble finding a job. “People are seeing the wheelchair and not the person. They just assume that I’m limited in what I can do,” Matt said.

Although Matt started as a book scanner, his managers at Goodwill quickly realized his friendly demeanor and positive attitude would be a valuable asset at the cash register. There was one problem though: Matt’s wheelchair did not fit into the cashier’s workstation.

Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana employs more than 3,600 individuals, two-thirds of whom have one or more barriers including disability, criminal history or lack of a high school diploma. In addition to direct employment, Goodwill offers employees access to career and life coaches who help create custom plans and goals for increasing income, education and employment opportunities. Committed employees who complete the necessary milestones for success are connected with a placement manager who actively helps them find a higher-paying job — at Goodwill or with our employer partners.

828 INDIVIDUALS WERE PLACED INTO JOBS BY GOODWILL IN 2016
“Once we were able to assess the need, we implemented a low-cost solution,” said Ann Stephenson, Disability Services Manager at Goodwill.

The Goodwill Facilities team removed one of the walls from an existing cashier station, allowing Matt to easily fit into the space with his wheelchair. They lowered the cash register keyboard and repurposed a clothing rack into a bag corral to make both accessible to his wheelchair height.

Matt is now the lead cashier and proving on a daily basis that he will not be deterred by his disability.

“I do everything everyone else does every day,” Matt said. “The only thing I can’t do is walk.”

36% OF GOODWILL'S EMPLOYEES REPORT A DISABILITY

New Career Opportunities for an Ex-Offender

Brian King was incarcerated for two-and-a-half months, but the two years he spent on house arrest following his release, combined with his criminal history, made securing a full-time job particularly difficult.

“It was frustrating because I just wanted a chance to prove that I had changed,” Brian said.

For more than two years, Brian worked a series of temporary and odd jobs. In late 2013, after being released from house arrest, he discovered Goodwill's re-entry program for ex-offenders (New Beginnings) that focuses on employment, educational training, life skills development and stability coaching for recently incarcerated individuals.

“One of the most helpful things they taught me was how to talk to an interviewer,” Brian said. “I had street smarts, but I didn’t know how to write a resume.”

Brian completed New Beginnings in May 2014 and earned a welding certification through Goodwill. He then worked with a placement specialist at Goodwill who connected him with Indiana Plan, a pre-apprenticeship training program that prepares participants for a job in the union building trades.

He is now employed with the Carpenters Union, earning nearly three times more than the transitional job where he began.

“I want people to know my journey, and I hope that they are inspired to keep moving forward,” Brian said.

4,077 CERTIFICATIONS HAVE BEEN EARNED THROUGH GOODWILL SINCE 2010
GOODWILL'S EXCEL CENTER BRINGS OPPORTUNITY TO SOUTHERN INDIANA

The likelihood of returning to school declines after age 30, but when Ruth Mullins learned The Excel Center, Goodwill's high school for adults, was coming to Clarksville, she decided it was time to finally earn her diploma.

“I was attracted to The Excel Center because it was not a GED program,” Ruth said. “Those programs aren’t for everyone.”

Now 38 years old, Ruth originally left high school because she was bullied and lacked support. She started abusing drugs and struggled with addiction for seven years, but has now been clean for over a decade.

“I feel like The Excel Center is my second chance,” Ruth said. “I know I’m here for a reason.”

She attributes her success so far to the staff, crediting them with her renewed confidence.

“The teachers are more hands-on and supportive,” Ruth said.

In addition to attending The Excel Center as a student, Ruth also provides janitorial services to the school through her employment with Goodwill. Maintaining a job while returning to school after decades away requires additional support and understanding from loved ones.

“Being at The Excel Center for 13 hours each day takes away from being a wife and mother, but my family is supportive,” Ruth said. “My youngest leaves notes in my lunchbox — he’s my biggest cheerleader. My son and husband also help me with my math.”

Ruth is excited to achieve this lifelong goal. She is expected to graduate in 2018 and would like to work with mothers who struggle with addiction.

The Excel Center helps prepare students for postsecondary education and career opportunities, offering college credits, industry-recognized job certifications and a high school diploma. Transportation assistance, child care, flexible scheduling, career coaching and accelerated courses are all provided to students at no cost. The Excel Center in Clarksville currently serves 200 students and expects to enroll up to 300. Visit excelcenter.org to learn more.

The Excel Center’s ribbon-cutting in Clarksville, September 20, 2017.
Just 10 minutes from downtown Louisville on the Indiana side of the Ohio River, Goodwill’s Children’s Learning Center is the only child care provider in the region that holds the distinction of National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA). The Children’s Learning Center is a preschool serving children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old.

“Our services set us apart from other child care facilities, allowing us to help all children, challenged to gifted, to reach their full potential,” said Michelle Cissell, Child Care Director at the Children’s Learning Center.

The Children’s Learning Center is a Paths to QUALITY Level 4 (the highest possible rating) child care provider. Paths to QUALITY is Indiana’s statewide rating system for early care and education programs. All Lead Teachers at the Children’s Learning Center hold a degree or certification. The preschool is also a designated United Way Excellence Academy.

“Our educational approach promotes exploration, observation, questioning and discussion among children, and encourages teachers to be co-collaborators rather than instructors dictating a rigid curriculum,” Michelle said.

Through a collaboration with the Southern Indiana Rehabilitation Center, the Children’s Learning Center offers a wide variety of services to ensure that children and their families get the help they need to become healthy and self-sufficient. Services offered include educational seminars for professionals as well as consulting and counseling to families and children who are experiencing behavioral issues. Speech, occupational and physical therapy are also available. Visit goodwillindy.org/clc to learn more.
GOODWILL SCHOLARSHIPS HELP STUDENTS OVERCOME EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS

In July, Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana awarded nearly $60,000 in scholarships to 22 employees, graduates and program participants to help them overcome barriers to pursuing higher education. One recipient, Nina Sharp, had enrolled at The Excel Center, Goodwill’s high school for adults, after dropping out 17 years earlier.

“I was tired of begging for minimum wage jobs that barely covered more than the gas to get there,” Nina said. “When I was turned away from a job folding sheets for being unqualified, I decided it was time to earn my diploma.”

The Excel Center prepared Nina for postsecondary education by helping her apply for financial assistance. After graduating with a 3.56 GPA, she enrolled at Ivy Tech with her math and English requirements already completed from the college credits she had earned at The Excel Center.

“I hadn’t planned to go to college, but the staff at The Excel Center made it easy,” Nina said.

While pursuing her postsecondary degree, Nina unexpectedly faced a new challenge. In 2016, a tornado destroyed the apartment complex in Kokomo where she and her family were living.

“We huddled in the bathroom and watched everything we own get ripped out of the apartment,” Nina said. “The whole ceiling was gone.”

The only thing undamaged was a bookshelf and a box on top containing her diploma and certifications from The Excel Center. Nina’s family continues to rebuild.

Earlier this year, Nina was nominated for a McClelland Scholarship, which Goodwill offers to students with significant financial need and a barrier to education. Nina plans to use the funds to pay for tuition costs and books.

“Now I can buy my own books instead of borrowing or photocopying them,” Nina said. “I can also graduate without debt hanging over my head.”

Nina is almost finished with her two-year degree in applied science with a focus on industrial electrical maintenance and welding.

“I chose a career that’s always going to be there, and everyone uses electricity,” Nina said. “My long-term goal is to be self-sufficient and independent.”
MEET A GOODWILL GUIDE

Edward Rickenbach, Manager of Goodwill’s Guides program, discusses how his team works with our retail employees, providing career and life coaching services to help them increase their independence and reach their potential.

What kind of services do you offer to Goodwill employees?

Guides help Goodwill employees become economically self-sufficient by connecting them with higher paying careers, both inside and outside of Goodwill. If they don’t have a skill set, we help them enroll in school and apply for financial aid to pay for it. Guides teach financial literacy, budgeting, retirement planning and credit maintenance. We also help remove day-to-day barriers like transportation, child care, housing and lack of food by connecting clients with internal and external resources.

Describe one of your most memorable clients.

I worked with a young woman who wanted to go to school but had three barriers: she lacked child care, had failed a previous entrance exam and was afraid she couldn’t pass, and didn’t know how she would pay for it. Through a grant, we were able to cover her daycare through the summer. We directed her to resources to study independently for the entrance exam, which she passed. We also helped her apply for financial aid, where her education at Ivy Tech is completely funded by state and federal grants. The grants provide enough to help her with child care as well. She is currently maintaining a 98% in all of her classes.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

Witnessing clients transition into a pattern of long-term behavioral change, and managing challenges independent of the program.

How many Goodwill employees have you worked with?

I carry about 60 employees on my caseload at a time and have worked with about 200 over the last two-and-a-half years. I serve a region with 400-600 employees who are not receiving coaching services but who need information or to be connected to community resources.

How do you identify clients?

We build relationships by starting conversations and trying to relate to what they’re interested in, while also letting them know what we do. They come to us when they’re ready. We know our clients are invested because they’re willing to meet us outside of the store on their own time. We maintain that trust by being consistent and patient.

332 GOODWILL EMPLOYEES RECEIVED CAREER AND LIFE COACHING SERVICES FROM A GUIDE IN 2016
LIFE OF A GOODWILL DONATION

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, consumers are discarding more clothing and textiles than ever before, with 12 million tons ending up in landfills in 2012 alone.*

Goodwill strives to be as environmentally low impact as possible by reselling, recycling and salvaging as much as possible to ensure the smallest donations — even your unmatched socks — support Goodwill’s mission.

Visit goodwillindy.org/donate to learn how you can make a difference.

Get a Head Start

Expect to see longer lines at your favorite Goodwill's donation door the closer we get to New Year’s Eve — the last day you can donate and claim it on your 2017 taxes. Beat the crowds by bringing your donations in before the holidays. If you do want to make Goodwill part of your New Year's festivities, our stores will be open from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. on December 31.

Need a Lift?

Do you have a dresser, couch or large donation that you’re unable to bring to us? We can help. Donation pickup for homes and businesses is available in most areas, and it's free! Call us at 1-855-GW-PIK-UP (1-855-497-4587), or schedule online at goodwillindy.org/pickup.

Grand Re-Opening in Fishers

On the morning of Tuesday, September 12, dozens of Goodwill shoppers lined up to be among the first inside Goodwill's newest store at 7440 Fishers Station Drive, near 116th Street and Allisonville Road in Fishers. The previous Fishers Station Drive location closed for the final time on Saturday, September 9 after a special storewide 50% off sale. The new store, which employs 30 people, features digital signage, faster checkout and 10% more floor space.

Bigger Stores. More Stuff.

In 2018, the Greensburg, Scottsburg and Richmond Goodwill stores will be relocating. These new locations will maximize sales floor space and streamline donation drop-off areas, providing an enhanced customer and donor experience. For the latest on these and other Goodwill happenings, visit goodwillindy.org or connect with us on Facebook (goodwillretail), Twitter (@goodwillindy) and Instagram (@goodwillindyin).