

For Immediate Release
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The Excel Center Celebrates More Than 160 Adult High School Graduates

Goodwill Helps Reduce the Education Gap in Marion County

WHO: Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana presents The Excel Center® graduating class of 2018.

WHAT: The Excel Center will celebrate the graduation of more than 160 adult students, who have overcome various barriers to receive a Core 40 high school diploma along with dual college credits or industry-recognized certifications.

WHEN: **Thursday, June 14, and Friday, June 15**
Doors Open: 5 p.m.
Program Begins: 6 p.m.

WHERE: **Indianapolis Metropolitan High School- Puma Den**
1635 W. Michigan Street
Indianapolis, IN 46222

WHY: The Excel Center graduation ceremony celebrates the life and academic accomplishments of the school's graduating class. According to the American Community Survey (2016), 15% of Marion County's adults lack a high school diploma. To reduce barriers to education, The Excel Center offers resources such as free child care, transportation assistance, extended hours and year-round classes.

The Excel Center is designed for students like Gary Moore, 27, a 2017 graduate who dropped out of school to work and help support his siblings after his mother became ill. While attending The Excel Center, he continued to work full-time and utilized the support of the school to reach graduation.

"If you don't have a way to get to school, The Excel Center can get you here. If you are having trouble with housing, they can help you," Moore said. "Without them, I'd probably still be twiddling my thumbs, trying to figure out what was going to happen next."

DETAILS: The Excel Center graduation ceremony will begin with a processional at 6 p.m. The ceremony will include speeches from graduates and remarks from the Senior Director of The Excel Center Network & Operations, Jeff Hoover, as well as senior leadership from Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana.

INTERVIEW/B-ROLL OPPORTUNITIES:

- **6 - 7:30 p.m.:** Commencement ceremony and select students will share their stories
- **7:30 - 8 p.m.:** The Excel Center directors and student speakers will be available for interviews upon request

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The Excel Center is operated by Goodwill Education Initiatives, Inc. (GEI), the not-for-profit charter school operator created by Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. The school provides licensed teachers and life coaching; a free

child care center; transportation assistance and a flexible and supportive environment that gives each student a realistic path for their educational success and career.