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For Immediate Release

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Goodwill Praises Essential Workers with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act Celebrates 30 Years

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana announced that it is recognizing the essential employees with disabilities who have remained committed to their work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This Sunday, July 26, the Americans with Disabilities Act celebrates 30 years of increased accessibility and employment opportunities for people like Matthew Easterday, who started working at Goodwill in 2013.

In addition to fragile X syndrome—a genetic disorder characterized by intellectual disability—Easterday is also colorblind. As an associate at Goodwill, his responsibilities included purging, which required him to remove items tagged with a particular color from the sales floor. In order to accommodate Easterday and others who are colorblind, Goodwill changed its colored tags to also include the written color.

Although he initially required a job coach to assist during his shifts, Easterday now works almost entirely independently. He even recently picked up a second job at Kroger, where he is already well-known by regulars and appreciated for his expert bagging skills and positive attitude. He is busy but enjoys the independence and structure.

The freedom that comes with the Americans with Disabilities Act includes the heavy responsibility of employment in times of pandemic, as evidenced by Easterday, who has remained consistently working since March.

“As a result of COVID-19, the general public has developed a greater appreciation for the essential workers who continue to ensure our store shelves are stocked, our groceries are bagged and our public areas are clean,” said Kent A. Kramer, president and CEO at Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. “In our time of need, essential workers like Matt did not falter in their commitment, but they do not wish to be treated as heroes or extraordinary individuals—all they desire is to be contributing members of society where they are equally represented.”

As we reflect on the last 30 years of progress, we ask you to recognize the sacrifices that persons with disabilities make to secure employment and to consider how we can further develop a culture of inclusion.

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About Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana

Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana changes lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health and employment. Goodwill serves 39 Indiana counties and operates more than 70 retail locations, as well as charter schools for adults and youth, a maternal-child health program, a child care center and more.