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For Immediate Release

Contact: Jenny Kakasuleff, Marketing & Communications Manager
317.345.4176
jennifer.kakasuleff@goodwillindy.org

Duke Energy Empowers Adult Learners With \$40,000 Workforce Grant to Goodwill Excel Centers

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana recently announced a \$40,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to support workforce outcomes at nine Excel Center locations across central and southern Indiana. The Excel Center is a tuition-free high school for adults who are seeking to earn their Core 40 diploma, along with industry-recognized job certifications and college credits.

“If you’ve seen all of the ‘Help Wanted’ signs posted on store fronts, then you’re already aware of the growing labor shortage in our state and country,” said Kent A. Kramer, president and CEO of Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana. “These funds from Duke Energy will help us chip away at this crisis by preparing our students for a well-paying career in a high-demand job.”

This grant supports The Excel Center’s College and Career Readiness Program, which provides dual credit courses, certifications and barrier removal for over 4,200 students annually. Acquiring new skills in preparation for a transition into new employment has become especially urgent with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I hear consistently from Indiana businesses that well-trained workers are one of their greatest needs,” said Duke Energy Indiana President Stan Pinegar. “Many of the jobs don’t require a college degree but instead need skilled workers with specialized training. This grant supports that demand. Developing a skilled workforce is key to attracting and retaining business in Indiana, and it’s a high priority of Duke Energy.”

Katie Reigelsperger started at The Excel Center in October of 2013 with zero high school credits after giving birth to her first son at the age of 13. She graduated in June 2014 with 42 credits and a pharmacy technician certification. She began her career with Riverview Hospital and quickly rose to a managerial position that allowed her to supervise and train other pharmacy technicians. Now, she is teaching the pharmacy technician certification program at The Excel Center.

“Helping others to learn, grow, and reach their goals has been an incredibly rewarding experience,” said Katie. “I am proud to be part of changing the path of generations to come and I am in awe of the men and women I have met through this opportunity.”

With Duke's support, students like Katie will continue to acquire the skills and training necessary to meet the workforce needs of our community while providing for themselves and their families for years to come.

To learn more, visit goodwillindy.org.

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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. The organization 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.

Duke Energy Foundation

The Duke Energy Foundation provides philanthropic support to meet the needs of communities where Duke Energy customers live and work. The Foundation contributes more than \$2 million annually in charitable gifts to Indiana and is funded by Duke Energy shareholder dollars. More information about the foundation and its Powerful Communities program can be found at duke-energy.com/foundation.