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**GOODWILL® MARKS NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH
Recognizing “The Right Talent, Right Now” in October**

LOS ANGELES, CA, October 2, 2019 — Throughout the month of October, Goodwill Southern California is honoring the contributions of workers with disabilities by celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

Each and every day, Goodwill mission services are offered in 590 counties within every U.S. state for anyone looking for a new job or a better career. Among the more than 35 million people served by Goodwill organizations within the U.S. last year, there were nearly 288,000 workers with disabilities who looked to Goodwill for help.

NDEAM dates back to 1945, when Congress designated the first week in October to recognize people with disabilities and their potential.

This year’s theme for NDEAM, “The Right Talent, Right Now,” emphasizes the benefits of welcoming the talents of all people, including people with disabilities, to the workplace. At a time when unemployment is low, companies and organizations have a critical need for skilled and reliable workers of all backgrounds.

“We know that work can be a powerful source of pride, identity and self-sufficiency,” said Patrick McClenahan, President & CEO of Goodwill Southern California. “Goodwill not only celebrates the contributions of workers with disabilities, and we are committed to bringing awareness to issues they face in gaining meaningful employment. By doing so, we help build stronger families resulting in a more vibrant community and a stronger economy.”

One of those individuals with the right talent Robert Frank, a utility worker and donation attendant for Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin and Metropolitan Chicago. He is also Goodwill Industries International’s 2019 Achiever of the Year, an award for progress and accomplishment within the Goodwill environment.

Frank was diagnosed with a spelling and reading disorder after having suffered years of abuse as a child. He decided to visit his local Goodwill to find out what options were available to him. He was hired immediately, and five years later, he says he’s “loved every minute of it.” He reached a milestone at age 65, when he read a book for the first time with the help of his Goodwill Way Guide.

"Every day, individuals with disabilities add significant value and talent to our workforce and economy," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. "Individuals with disabilities offer employers diverse perspectives on how to tackle challenges and achieve success. Individuals with disabilities have the right talent, right now."

To find out more about the job, skills and career services available at Goodwill Southern California visit <https://www.goodwillsoocal.org/career-services/>

Media who wish to film at Goodwill Southern California may contact Marla Eby, Director of Marketing & Media Relations, at meby@goodwillsoocal.org

About Goodwill Southern California

Transforming lives through the power of work, Goodwill Southern California (GSC) serves individuals with disabilities or other vocational challenges by providing education, training, work experience and job placement services. Each year, GSC prepares and places thousands of individuals into sustainable employment through programs and services offered at three campuses, Career Resource Centers, WorkSource Centers, Deaf, Youth and Veteran Employment Programs throughout Los Angeles (north of Rosecrans Ave.), Riverside and San Bernardino counties. GSC supports its mission with proceeds generated from more than 80 stores and more than 40 attended donation centers. GSC spends 95 percent of its budget on programs and services. Committed to caring for the earth, each year GSC diverts over 100 million pounds of reusable or recyclable goods from landfills. Goodwill is Good for Everyone!

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