

Goodwill History

At Goodwill Industries of the Columbia Willamette, we are proud of our history and our mission to provide vocational opportunities to people with barriers to employment in northern, western and central Oregon, as well as southwestern Washington. The purpose of our programs is to enhance the quality of life of the people we serve.

1902



Goodwill was founded in Boston, Massachusetts, by Rev. Edgar J. Helms. A Methodist minister and early social innovator, Helms collected used household goods and clothing from wealthier areas of the city and then trained and hired the poor to mend and repair the used goods. Those items were then resold or given to the people who repaired them. The system worked and the Goodwill philosophy prospered.

1926



George C. Todd was selected by the Methodist Church to serve as Oregon's first Goodwill Executive Director. He studied under Edgar J. Helms, Goodwill's national founder, to learn how to establish and operate a Goodwill.

1927

Goodwill officially opened for business in Portland. The first weekly payroll of \$108 was paid to the new Goodwill's five employees. "Not Charity but a Chance" became by-words for the fledgling Goodwill, emphasizing the organization's goal of providing opportunity instead of charity.

1930



Goodwill's plant was destroyed by fire. Business was conducted in three small buildings nearby until a new building was constructed at NE Sixth and Schuyler. Goodwill moved into the two-story building, which was purchased for \$9,500.

1931

Goodwill's Women's Auxiliary (later called GIVS – Goodwill Industries Volunteer Services) was organized to educate the public about Goodwill's mission.

1936 Mrs. George Todd became the first female chief executive officer of a large Goodwill organization. She retired in 1952.



1952 Rev. Marion Smith was selected as Goodwill's Executive Director following Mrs. George Todd's retirement.

Goodwill held its first "Good Turn Day" drive with the newly formed East Portland Rotary Club and the Boy Scouts. Every year Scouts distribute collection bags to homes and return the following week to pick up donated goods.



1957 The Goodwill drop-box system began. The boxes were placed in store parking lots in neighborhoods throughout Goodwill's service area.



1958 A new program of vocational evaluation and training for people with disabilities began in cooperation with the Oregon and Washington Divisions of Vocational Rehabilitation.

1961 A Goodwill division consisting of one store opened in Eugene. This division became autonomous in 1969.

1971 Goodwill's clerical training school began. Eventually, the office skills program provided training in accounting, computers, word processing and data entry.

1975 The first Attended Donation Centers opened, replacing the "drop box" system.

The Salem Division opened to meet the needs of Marion County's disabled population.

Elmer Beckett became the CEO of Goodwill Industries.



1984 The Work Activity Center opened for business. It is now referred to as Production And Contracts and offers work skills training and jobs for people with mental retardation and emotional disorders.

1986 Michael M. Miller became the CEO of Goodwill Industries following Elmer Beckett's retirement.

1989 Construction of Goodwill's state-of-the-art Vancouver Community Training Center was completed. The facility showcases the Goodwill concept of combining vocational services, donor services, processing and retail operations in one location.

1991 New Community Training Centers opened in Corvallis and Hillsboro.

1992 A new Community Training Center opened in Tigard in the Cambridge Shopping Center.

1993 The Business Information Systems Training (BIST) Program, which trained people with disabilities for careers as computer programmers, graduated its first class and received both the Oregon Governor's Quality Workforce Award and the Oregon Commission on Disabilities' Distinguished Service Award.

New stores opened in Woodburn and Clackamas, as well as a 15,000 sq. ft. Portland Outlet on McLoughlin Avenue.

1994 GICW moved its Portland headquarters into a new building next to its old location on Sixth and Mill. The modern, barrier-free Community Training Center has helped GICW become the largest Goodwill retail operation in the world.



Shennun Braun received the prestigious Edgar J. Helms Staff award.

This award recognizes a Goodwill employee who has exemplified the mission of Goodwill Industries and Rev. Helms' values of unselfish service to people with disabilities or other disadvantaging conditions.

Gresham welcomed a new Goodwill Community Training Center.

1995 GII honored Michael Miller, GICW's President and CEO, with the Kenneth K. King Management Award for his leadership, determination and long-term commitment to Goodwill.

Robert Sellers awarded the Edgar J. Helms Staff.

New Oak Grove Community Training Center opened in November.

1996 GICW established its self-funded Job Connection program for people with barriers to employment.



Opened new Community Training Centers on 122nd Avenue (San Rafael) and West Burnside.

1997 The new Salem area headquarters, containing a drive-through donation center, vocational services center, store and administrative offices, opened on a 2-acre site. This facility serves Goodwill operations in Salem, Albany, and Corvallis.

1998 A new Community Training Center in Silverton opened in February.

1999 During 1999 Community Training Centers opened in Forest Grove, Sandy, South Salem, Hazel Dell and a relocation of the McMinnville facility.

GICW also began offering free job-placement services to central Oregon residents at a temporary office in Bend. By the end of August, Goodwill was operating a Community Job Center, retail program and donation drive-thru at its new facility at 61329 S. Highway 97 in Bend.

GII awarded Michael Miller the P.J. Trevelyan Award, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to training Goodwill personnel.

2000 GICW opened the Dallas Community Training Center – the first retail store in North America operated primarily by people with multiple, severe disabilities. This facility provides clients with the opportunity to achieve maximum independence and dignity while contributing to the economic vitality of the local economy.

A new Salem outlet opened in July.



2001 GICW won its fifth Retail Excellence Award from Goodwill Industries International. Also, this year marked the expansion of our services to the beautiful Oregon Coast with a Community Training Center in Lincoln City.

2002 GICW received the Facility-Based Workforce Development Program Award from Goodwill Industries International (GII) in recognition of our program for people with multiple, severe disabilities in Dallas, Oregon.

Jim Worsley, Workforce Development Deputy Director, was awarded GII's Robert and Charlotte Watkins Award for Excellence in Mission Advancement.

GICW expanded its retail operations with four more Community Training Centers: Powell, Broadway, Cornell and a new outlet in Hillsboro.

2003 GICW served a record-breaking 11,445 people with barriers to employment.

2004 During 2004, five new community training centers were opened in Oregon City, Lombard, Redmond, Keizer and Fisher's Landing (Vancouver). In addition, a relocated Outlet was opened in Milwaukie.



2005 In July 2005, Goodwill launched its Career Enhancement Program, which offers training opportunities to all employees.

During the year, the organization provided vocational services to 13,937 individuals, and 7,899 people with barriers to employment were placed into community employment positions.



Goodwill donated food, clothing, and furniture to persons who relocated to Portland following Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma; and, donated 22,000 pounds of donations directly to people in Louisiana affected by Katrina.

During 2005, Goodwill opened two new facilities – the Baseline store in Hillsboro, and the "Goodwill on 10th" store at 10th & Taylor in downtown Portland - and relocated its Corvallis operation.

Cheri Folk was awarded GII's Edgar J. Helms Staff award for her outstanding work with people with disabilities and disadvantaging conditions.

2006 During the year, Goodwill served 15,302 individuals through its vocational programs, which included employment; Career Enhancement training; job placement; and provision of job-seeking skills and placement services to inmates of Coffee Creek Women's Correctional facility in Wilsonville, students of De La Salle High School in north Portland, students of Guide Dogs for the Blind, inmates of the Oregon State Penitentiary and the Department of Corrections in Vancouver.

2007 During 2007, GICW opened a new Outlet facility at 117th Avenue, north of Padden Parkway in Vancouver, Washington.

Goodwill served 17,934 individuals through its various vocational services, including English-as-a-Second Language Program, Employee Career Enhancement Program, and Job Connection Program.

2008 GICW developed five new facilities during 2008, including new markets in Salmon Creek, Battle Ground and Woodstock.

Goodwill served 23,681 people with barriers to employment through GICW vocational programs, including Job Connection, Employee Career Enhancement, and English-as-a-Second Language.

Janie Marsh was awarded the Kenneth Shaw GII Graduate of the Year - as an outstanding person with a disability or disadvantaging condition who completed a Goodwill Industries career services program, maintained employment, and has turned their life around.



2009 GICW expanded its retail operations with the opening of the Salmon Creek Community Training Center in January. Also, this year marked the closing of the Griffith Park store in Beaverton and the opening of the new store in Cedar Hills.

Goodwill served 27,205 individuals through its various vocational services, including English-as-a-Second Language Program, Employee Career Enhancement Program, and Job Connection Program.

A review of GICW in May by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) resulted in a sensational outcome: no recommendations for improvement against 629 applicable standards. In addition, GICW was recognized for “exemplary conformance” in areas of leadership, strategic planning and continuous quality improvement.