

# GOOD NEWS

SUMMER 2018

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH THE POWER OF WORK

## NEW WAYS TO SHOP GOODWILL

**R**appahannock Goodwill (RGI) is known for its many stores in our region that sell amazing treasures including home décor, gently used clothing, books, shoes, and more! Goodwill continues to expand how you can shop for amazing bargains. With the addition of a new store in north Stafford and online shopping, there are now more ways than ever to shop and save at Goodwill.

“Online is a growing business for us,” said Ted Smith, RGI’s Senior Vice President and Chief Operations Officer.

RGI has long used online sites like eBay and amazon.com, but became fully invested online about 18 months ago by joining shopgoodwill.com and hiring staff to oversee the processes, Smith said.

Shopgoodwill.com is operated by Goodwill of Orange

County, California. Smith said there are now about 100 Goodwill agencies participating. While RGI still uses eBay and amazon.com – especially for books – shopgoodwill.com features a selection of jewelry, watches, collectibles, and select clothing. By selling some items online, RGI has developed a new sizable customer base with people shopping across the country. Those new customers are now helping to support our local mission.

Smith said he’s heard some people worry that the best items will only be sold online, but he said it’s not true. “In fact, only a small percentage of donated items make it to the online sites. By far, the vast majority of donations are sold in our stores.” Smith said all of the local Goodwill stores are perfect for the everyday shopper and those out to find hidden treasures.

*Continued on page two...*



**DONNIE'S COLUMN****\$83.6 MILLION AND SO WHAT?**

By Donnie Tolson, President &amp; CEO

Let me start with \$83.6 million. That's the economic impact generated by Rappahannock Goodwill (RGI) during 2017, according to analysis by Elliott D. Pollack & Company.



Of that, about \$81 million is purchasing power created by Goodwill's activities. Another \$3 million accrued to the Commonwealth's treasury via various taxes.

These numbers cement our belief that RGI should sit at the table with local and regional economic development champions. But they also beg the question, "So what?"

Being a major regional employer (700 employees), creating new jobs (more than 300 in the last 5 years) and injecting our \$35 million budget into the local economies are all impressive (to us) outcomes of our social enterprise. None of these, however, are our reason for being.

That's the "so what," and it's manifested in the more than \$1 million of subsidized workforce development services we underwrite each year, our support of persons with disabilities who wish to work, our many collaborations with partners such as Micah, Empowerhouse, and AmeriCorps, and on and on.

But the most telling metric is 1,601.

That's the number of people with barriers to employment who in 2017 sought RGI's assistance and achieved our Holy Grail – a job when one appeared unlikely.

These heroes defeat barriers like prior incarceration, domestic abuse, chronic poverty, lack of education, disability, and substance abuse.

Give me a ring if you wish to hear more about our economic impact and, more importantly, our impact on your fellow citizens. ■

**NEW WAYS TO SHOP GOODWILL***...Continued from page one*

As if shopping 24/7 online weren't exciting enough, RGI is about to open a new bricks and mortar store in our region. On August 31, 2018, RGI will celebrate the Grand Opening of a new store along Route 610/Garrisonville road in North Stafford. Similar in format and layout to the Harrison Crossing Store in Spotsylvania, the brand-new store of about 11,000 square feet is located at the intersection of North Stafford Center Complex and Route 610/Garrisonville Road, next to Walmart Neighborhood Market.

"We wanted to be one of the first tenants of this exciting Stafford County development," Smith said. "We're setting aside some fantastic merchandise for the grand opening."

The transaction was handled by Silver Companies. DLR Contracting is completing the buildout.

Whether shopping online or in a local Goodwill store, the end result is the same. "We appreciate the continued generosity of our donors and shoppers, because when items are purchased from RGI, the money goes back into providing services for job seekers," Smith said. "It's a win for everyone." ■

**Our Mission**

We create jobs locally, prepare people to succeed at work, and help them overcome barriers to employment.

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## JOB SEEKERS NOW HAVE NEW OPTIONS TO FIND EMPLOYMENT

**B**y her own admission, 18-year-old Mary Heilig dropped out of high school because she was severely lonely and anxious. The director of Culpeper County Alternative Education Program referred her to The Groundwork Project, a Rappahannock Goodwill (RGI) and Verdun Adventure Bound joint venture.

“It was one of the first times in a really long time that I actually felt included in something, and not like an outcast,” Mary said in her Groundwork Project graduation speech. She said she’d learned about getting and keeping a job, and techniques to alleviate her anxiety, which she still uses.

She subsequently graduated from high school, and has a job she loves.

RGI started The Groundwork Project in 2017 to help at-risk youth ages 16 to 24 develop career readiness and leadership skills, according to Megan Bergen, RGI Vice President, Mission Services and Chief Mission Officer. A grant of \$20,404 from the PATH Foundation funded the program for a second year, through June 30, 2019.

Local school systems and agencies in Culpeper, Orange, Fauquier, and Rappahannock Counties refer participants.

Another new initiative for job seekers is a training program to enhance computer skills. RGI is one of 125 Goodwill organizations across the nation joining forces with Google.org to provide computer skills training through the Goodwill Digital Career Accelerator<sup>SM</sup>. The initiative will enable RGI to help people get the digital skills they need for the jobs of today and tomorrow. Research has shown that those with enhanced digital skills earn more and can advance more readily in their jobs. Services provided to job seekers through the Goodwill Digital Career Accelerator<sup>SM</sup> are all provided free of charge. To learn more, go to [www.fredgoodwill.org/digital](http://www.fredgoodwill.org/digital) or call 540-371-3070.

The Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board, which offers job placement services to the unemployed in the Fredericksburg area, awarded RGI two contracts previously handled by the Virginia Employment Commission.



*Mary Heilig with Sara from RGI.*

RGI is providing job placement and training services through the One Stop Center serving Planning District 16, comprised of the City of Fredericksburg, and Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford Counties. The One Stop Center is designed to put all workforce agencies in one space, making it easier for job seekers to obtain a full range of assistance, and employers to access a ready workforce.

RGI also received the contract for the Adults and Dislocated Workers Program through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Intensive skills training focused on growing industries like commercial driving, health care, and information technology (IT) will better position applicants to secure these employment opportunities. Bergen said RGI hopes to serve 125 people through this program in the next year.

“It’s an exciting time right now for RGI because we have expanded our mission to include barriers to employment beyond disabilities, and all these projects are giving us the way to do that,” Bergen said. Services are provided free of charge to job seekers through grants and from the sales of items in local Goodwill stores and online. ■

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Goodwill Store and Donation Center locations  
can be found at [www.FredGoodwill.org](http://www.FredGoodwill.org).

**By raising expectations,  
we can create  
opportunities  
for job seekers  
and employers  
alike.**



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## “A HAND UP” AWARD RECIPIENTS HONORED AT ANNUAL CELEBRATION

**F**ather of four Virgil White was determined to obtain his Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) so he could support his family without public assistance. After several failed attempts, White came to Rappahannock Goodwill’s (RGI’s) Culpeper Job Help Center. He enrolled in the \$4,500 CDL class free of charge, thanks to a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant. After completing the class while working evenings at FedEx, White passed the exam and is now working fulltime at Mullen’s Markings in Culpeper.

# A HAND UP

for people who are blind or have significant disabilities. Melwood’s Manetta Bishop-Williams accepted the award. Melwood works in the greater Washington D.C. area providing jobs and opportunities for people with differing abilities, maximizing their independence and inclusion in the community. RGI provides cleaning services at Marine Corps Base Quantico through a funding grant provided by Melwood.

White received RGI’s “A Hand Up” Achiever/Graduate Award for making significant improvement in his life using RGI services.

Maria Teresa Barrios received the Volunteer of the Year award for her service through RGI’s Senior Community Service Employment Program. Barrios is a greeter at the Goodwill Outlet in Lee’s Hill. Barrios is also enrolled in RGI’s AmeriCorps GoodSkills tutoring program.

“A Hand Up” awards are presented annually to exemplary individuals helped by RGI services, community members, and volunteers.

“A Hand Up” event sponsors included Wells Fargo, Proxios, and Stafford Printing. ■

Non-profit agency Melwood received the 2018 Community Partner Award in recognition of their ten-year collaboration with RGI providing custodial services at Marine Corps Base Quantico, through an AbilityOne contract. AbilityOne is among the nation’s largest sources of employment

