

GOOD NEWS

SPRING 2019

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH THE POWER OF WORK

GOODWILL – SERVING JOB SEEKERS AND EMPLOYERS

T.S. was homeless and on Virginia's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) when she learned of Rappahannock Goodwill's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Program.

She participated in a paid internship at Culpeper manufacturer Bingham & Taylor. Over the course of three months, T.S. assisted human resources, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and front office staff. The WIOA program funded her work experience, facilitated by a Goodwill case manager, at no expense to Bingham & Taylor.

"T.S. so impressed her supervisors, Bingham & Taylor created a new administrative role and hired her," said Megan Bergen, Rappahannock Goodwill Vice President, Mission Services and Chief Mission Officer.

RGI's mission is to create jobs locally, prepare people to succeed at work, and help them overcome barriers to employment. "We do this through the services we provide to individuals, regardless of where they are on their journey toward work," said Donnie Tolson, RGI President and CEO. "We also meet our mission by providing services to local businesses. Many of the services are provided free of charge."

Tolson is seeing results. "For one of the first times ever, an employer in the economic development sector came to us," he said. "They needed 20 welders. We connected them with two welding schools, and they had 29 applicants." Tolson said that is just one example of how RGI can connect employers with individuals who are looking for work.



Free RGI services available to employers include:

- Job Listings – When you send RGI your job listings, they are available to the job seekers who visit our centers each month. You can also contact us to screen resumes and identify qualified applicants for your specific needs.
- Directing Openings to Special Groups – RGI can facilitate direct connections between your hiring professionals and people with disabilities, veterans, and returning citizens.
- Job Fairs and Hiring Events – We can help bring together multiple businesses to recruit for open positions, and single-business events where on the spot interviews may occur.
- Assistive Technology – Each RGI center has a universal workstation, which businesses can use for staff training.
- Digital Skills Training – Through a grant from Google.org, we offer free training for your staff on office suites and individual applications.
- On-the-Job Training – New employees receive training on the job, with reimbursements to businesses of up 50 percent – 75 percent in some circumstances – of the wage rate for that participant.
- Paid Internships – Our paid internship program is a cost-effective way to recruit and evaluate potential employees.
- Incumbent Worker Training – Funding assistance is available to qualifying employers for new or upgraded skills training for full-time, permanent staff.
- Labor Market Information – We can provide quantitative or qualitative data and analysis to help with informed planning.

In addition, RGI offers fee-based services through Taskforce Staffing, providing short- and long-term temporary placements, temp-to-hire, direct hires, and customized payroll options.

To learn more about the opportunities RGI offers, visit our website at www.fredgoodwill.org/HR, call us at 540-371-3070, or email info@fredgoodwill.org. ■

Note: WIOA, in partnership with Virginia Career Works Bay Consortium Region and Virginia Career Works Piedmont Region, funds on-the-job training, paid internships, and incumbent worker training.

DONNIE'S COLUMN**WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?****YOU NEED EMPLOYEES? TAKE OURS!**

By Donnie Tolson, President & CEO

Like most employers I run across, I sometimes grumble about how hard it can be to find good, respectful, entry-level and semi-skilled employees who treat the customer as they would wish to be treated. In addition to finding my own staff of 600+ at Goodwill, it's my job to help create those employees for area businesses. My grumbling is not hypocritical; it's more a fact of life in today's seller's market for labor.



One obvious solution is to look to non-traditional sources of labor, like people with employment barriers. And, where, pray tell, would you look for those resources? Well, Goodwill, of course!

Nearly 10,000 people come to us each year seeking help finding a job or getting skilled up to find one. We operate three job help centers and two Virginia Career Works Workforce Centers, and we own and operate the temporary employment agency Taskforce Staffing®. We also seek to provide work experience, soft skills training, and various wraparound supports for our own workforce, some of whom look to exit Goodwill employment to a brighter future.

When most employers lose an employee to another employer it's called a retention or turnover cost. When it happens here at Goodwill, we call it success. Yes, it's often painful, but it's one reason we exist.

So, I ask, what are YOU waiting for? Rappahannock Goodwill is training your workforce. When you need great employees, take ours. Give us a call. ■

DIGITAL SKILLS FOR EVERY JOB

In today's employment market, every job requires a basic understanding of computers or mobile devices. Even applying for a job requires basic computer skills, as most employers utilize online applications.

"We realize digital skills are necessary to obtain and sustain many types of employment, from cashier to cybersecurity agent," said JoAnn Murchison, RGI Community Relations and Resource Development manager. That's one reason why Rappahannock Goodwill launched the Goodwill Digital Career Accelerator®.

RGI is one of 125 local, community-based Goodwill organizations that received a grant for the project from Google.org. The grant covers the cost of courses so they can be offered free to anyone who wants to learn basic computing skills, update their current skills, or train to use new software and apps. Local businesses also can utilize them for their own staff, sending staff to RGI centers or having RGI staff onsite at the business.



RGI offers four basic classes at its Job Help Centers:

- Computer Basics teaches participants how to use a computer.
- Internet Basics focuses on accessing and navigating the World Wide Web.
- Email Basics guides participants in establishing an email account and using its common features.
- Word Basics teaches use of word processing applications to produce and share documents.

The Goodwill Digital Career Accelerator® program is in its second of three years of funding. "We are planning now to ensure we can sustain the training beyond the three years," Murchison said.

"The demand for digital skills is not going away, it's going to continue to grow," Murchison said. "We're committed to helping everyone in our community get the digital skills they need so they can find employment or advance in their career." ■

To learn more about available courses, please visit fredgoodwill.org/digital.

TEACHING SOFT SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE

For several years now, human resources professionals and business owners have talked about the need to teach “soft skills” to current employees and new recruits. Soft skills usually refers to interpersonal skills such as accountability, dependability, and active listening – all vitally important for employment success. That’s why Rappahannock Goodwill (RGI) includes them in staff training.

“We have a baseline program for everyone during onboarding and orientation,” said RGI Employee Development Instructor John Sylvester. “Then we have separate programs tailored to the needs of our different units.”

One of these programs is for first-time store managers. Here the focus is on coaching, motivation, leadership, and delegation, Sylvester said.

In mission services at RGI, Sylvester presents soft skills courses to larger groups, such as RGI’s AmeriCorps team. “These classes are more focused on workplace communication and conflict resolution,” Sylvester said.

“We plan our courses so that those taking them can become a manager here, become an employee with another organization, start their own business, or go on to further their academic career.”



Then there is a long-term program for individuals who aspire to management positions. “It’s an 18-week course in three parts – 101, 201, and 301 – that’s entirely soft skills based,” Sylvester said. “Toward the end, when people are really getting ready to be managers, we focus on delegation, motivation, and interviewing skills.”

Real-life data, including Department of Labor annual statistics that show what managers are reporting as the soft skills that they most use, guide course development. “Currently, number one is active listening,” Sylvester said. All soft skills coursework is market neutral, so that it is appropriate for any job.

“We plan our courses so that those taking them can become a manager here, become an employee with another organization, start their own business, or go on to further their academic career,” Sylvester said. “It’s a win for RGI no matter how a person advances.” ■

RETHINK GOODWILL FOR HR

Rappahannock Goodwill is known for helping job seekers find employment. What many are just now learning is that many of the employment services provided by RGI are also available to businesses in the region.

RGI can assist business owners and human resources departments with recruitment and training of new staff, and with professional development for existing staff.

Rappahannock Goodwill can present to you and/or your HR team the many free services we offer. ■

Please get in touch to schedule a meeting.

540-371-3070

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Rappahannock Goodwill Industries

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**RETHINK
GOODWILL
FOR HR**

Our Mission

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