

THE GOOD NEWS

SUMMER 2018 EDITION



Connecting Veterans and Their Families to Careers

In June, Goodwill San Antonio hosted a dedicated career fair for veterans, transitioning service members, and military families at the TriPoint Event Center. The fair brought together 223 job seekers and more than 60 employers representing some of San Antonio's most prestigious companies. Recruiters from USAA, Rackspace, Accenture, and many others were on hand to meet with veterans and discuss their skills in relation to open employment opportunities.

The transition to civilian life can be both challenging and daunting with more than 50 percent of post-9/11 veterans experiencing unemployment after returning from service. [Goodwill San Antonio's veterans career services](#) program helps veterans and their families remove barriers and find meaningful employment. Military men and women bring many transferable values to the civilian workforce such as leadership, a commitment to excellence, a strong work ethic, and a resilience to excel in challenging environments.

Through one-on-one assistance, Goodwill prepares veterans for civilian employment by assisting with resume development, interview practice, and job

coaching in addition to providing certification training and financial planning support. Career fairs, such as the one held on June 12, directly connect veterans to employers looking to hire skilled, qualified candidates. Goodwill is proud to continue serving those who have graciously served our country.

If you are a veteran in need of assistance, please contact one of our [Good Careers Centers](#) for more information.



IN THIS ISSUE

From This Day Forward - Abbi's Story p2 • Fox Tech Partners with Goodwill p3
Graduating to a Better Life p4

From This Day Forward - Abbi's Story

There was a time in her life when Abbi was living a stable, almost idyllic life. She was a trusted friend and a loving wife caring for her home and two children while her husband of thirteen years was the family's sole provider. But life changed unexpectedly when



deception dissolved her marriage, and anger and resentment led to her first encounter with law enforcement. A false support system and a series of bad decisions introduced Abbi to what would become a two-decade long battle with drugs.

“Addiction is so cruel to people,” Abbi recalls. “It makes you to think and feel like nobody wants you, that nobody will help you change your ways. There's always a battle, a reservation in the back of your head.”

In her heart, Abbi yearned to do what was right, but her addiction had a firm hold on her. With her mother now raising her children, Abbi entered into multiple recovery programs only to leave and relapse repeatedly. She bounced in and out of jail, but when she was arrested in 2011 Abbi knew this arrest signified a turning point. She had lost her right kidney to her addiction, but even more devastating, she had lost precious time with her children.

Abbi was released from prison in 2015 determined to change. She connected with Goodwill San Antonio who focused immediately on helping her see forward, not backward. With support from her case manager, Abbi entered into Goodwill's Second Chance program which helps previously incarcerated individuals successfully re-integrate into society by providing opportunities for employment. Through the program, Abbi is being taught how to be a team player and work well with others. She now has the chance to establish a meaningful work history.

From her very first position as a Retail Associate in one of Goodwill's retail stores to her current position as a Receiving Clerk in the e-Commerce department, Abbi has received seven pay raises and has contributed innovative ideas that have led to operational improvements. Her innovative processes have been duplicated by other Goodwill agencies around the country. Success in her words is “non-negotiable” as she prepares to participate in Goodwill's Management Development program to further sharpen her professional skills.

Employed with Goodwill for three years, Abbi is now sober, independent, and reunited with her family. She purchased her first car and obtained a

“Goodwill gives people the chance they don't want to give themselves. No other employment would have given me what I needed most – 'Hope',” she says. “I love coming to work, and I love that Goodwill has given me the chance to grow. I can't wait to see what else I can accomplish.”

driver's license – something she has not had since 1986.

“For the very first time, I like myself; and I can take care of my daughter instead of my daughter taking care of me,” Abbi proudly states.

Life has taught Abbi many lessons – some good, some painful. But through it all she realizes her story could have been very different. Abbi is thankful for the opportunity Goodwill has given her to work, something many take for granted.

FOX TECH HIGH SCHOOL and GOODWILL

Partner to Provide

Certified Nurse's Aide Program

Through an exciting partnership between Fox Tech High School (San Antonio Independent School District's Magnet school for Health and Law professions) and Goodwill San Antonio, 17 Fox Tech Seniors in the health pathway will head to college this fall with more than a high school diploma. Graduates will have also earned a valuable Nurse's Aide vocational certification.

At the beginning of the year, Jennifer Benavides, Fox Tech High School Principal, reached out to Goodwill San Antonio to discuss what would become an impactful partnership. Her goal was to have seniors gain a Nurse's Aide certification knowing fully in her heart that such training would set her students up for future stability and professional success.

The program commenced this past March with students attending the accredited Nurse's Aide certification program at Goodwill San Antonio's [Good Careers Academy](#) downtown location following their daily course studies at Fox Tech. Students received both classroom instruction as well as hands-on experience through clinical rotations. The curriculum was designed to give students the skills they need to work in a nursing home or a skilled nursing facility.

Participating seniors graduated from Fox Tech High School on June 6, and then continued their training

with Good Careers Academy in preparation to sit for the state Certified Nurse's Aide exam mid-June. Following successful completion of the state certification exam, Goodwill provided job placement support for employment.

This collaborative partnership truly changes the trajectory of these students' lives. With a high-school diploma and a marketable skill in hand, students will be able to work in a position earning above minimum wage, enabling them to pay for their post-secondary education while also gaining experience that places them at a competitive advantage over their peers. These dedicated, committed students worked diligently to earn a certification recognized in their field of study that will advance their future educational and professional opportunities.



Mark Milton, Director of Workforce Development for Goodwill San Antonio and Jennifer Benavides, Fox Tech High School principal.

Goodwill has been proud to partner with Fox Tech High School to provide education and training programs that prepare students to either enter the workforce or pursue post-secondary education. Through the support of donations and purchases made in store, Goodwill San Antonio and Good Careers Academy is able to provide such training opportunities to empower more than 550 adults and youth in our community to reach their maximum potential.

DID YOU KNOW



550+

Youth and adults received vocation skills training in high-demand fields in 2017 due to your support of Goodwill San Antonio's mission of changing lives through the power of work.

GRADUATING TO A BETTER LIFE

Goodwill San Antonio celebrated the accomplishments of 30 [Good Careers Academy](#) students at a graduation ceremony held on Friday, June 1. Among those recognized were students who demonstrated incredible courage and commitment to overcome multiple life barriers such as homelessness and addiction to complete studies in either the Nurse's Aide, Medical Assistant, or Pharmacy Technician programs. For many graduates, this was their first time to don a cap and gown and be recognized for their academic achievements with their family and friends present.



Providing the student commencement address on behalf of the class was graduate Denise. As a single mom, Denise had

difficulty providing for her family, and eventually became homeless. She connected with Goodwill San Antonio's Good Careers Academy and graduated with her Nurse's Aide certification. She worked nights at a senior care facility to make ends meet for her family while furthering her training and education through Good Careers Academy during the day. Denise graduated from

the Medical Assistant program at the top of her class, and is thankful for the opportunity to now have a career in the medical field that will support her and her family for years to come.

Goodwill San Antonio's Good Careers Academy provides affordable, short-term vocational certification training in demand-driven occupations. The Academy's accredited programs are structured to help minimum wage earners advance up the ladder of economic opportunity while helping provide a skilled workforce and a more thriving economy to our community. Through the support of donations and purchases made in store, Goodwill San Antonio and Good Careers Academy is able to provide such training opportunities to empower more than 550 adults and youth in our community to reach their maximum potential.



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