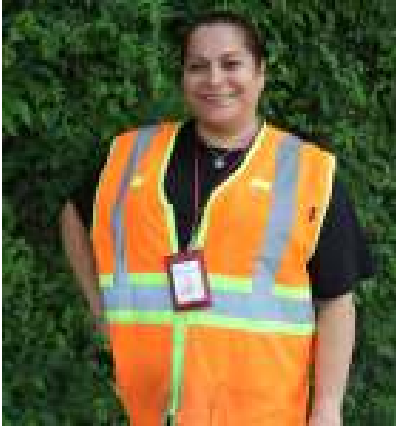


# From This Day Forward- Abbi's Story

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

**"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."**

"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.