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**CONTACT: CHERYL LIGHTHOLDER, MANAGER, COMMUNICATIONS, 414-847-4165 OR  
EMAIL CLIGHTHOLDER@GOODWILLSEW.COM**

**GOODWILL SUPPORTS THE LONG-TERM SUCCESS OF  
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES**

*National Disability Employment Awareness Month is commemorated in October, promoting  
this year's theme: 'Inclusion Drives Innovation'*

**October 11, 2017...**In October, Goodwill Industries acknowledges the continuing employment needs of the country's men and women with disabilities during National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This year's theme is "Inclusion Drives Innovation."

Despite campaigns like NDEAM and legislation like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), workers with disabilities continue to experience challenges in securing gainful employment. In 2016, according to U.S. Census data, nearly 18 percent of people with disabilities, ages 16 to 64, were employed (compared to 65.3 percent of those without disabilities). In 2016, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities was 10.5 percent, while the rate for workers without a disability was 4.6 percent. Furthermore, as the population continues to age, the pool of workers with disabilities will grow.

For nearly 100 years, your Goodwill has worked tirelessly to support job seekers with disabilities and disadvantages through training, placement and employment efforts. Last year alone, nearly 65,000 people received services and 9,608 men and women entered employment.

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"We truly believe that inclusion drives innovation, and that inclusive workplaces are better workplaces," said Jackie Hallberg, president and CEO. "We hope our communities will continue to support our ongoing employment services efforts by shopping at and donating to Goodwill Store & Donation Centers; and that area businesses will join our efforts to employ people with disabilities, both during National Disability Employment Awareness Month and throughout the year."

The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), which oversees NDEAM, created this year's theme with input from many of its partner organizations, including those that represent employers, people with disabilities and their families, plus federal, state and local agencies.

"Americans of all abilities must have access to good, safe jobs," remarked U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. "Smart employers know that including different perspectives in problem-solving situations leads to better solutions. Hiring employees with diverse abilities strengthens their business, increases competition, and drives innovation."

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