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Goodwill Industries of Arkansas Partners with Business and Industry Training in Northwest Arkansas

MOU Will Provide Opportunities for Even More Students to Have Access to Skilled Trades Training

SPRINGDALE, Ark. (May 22, 2024) — Goodwill Industries of Arkansas (GIA) and Business & Industry Training (BIT) located in Northwest Arkansas have finalized an MOU that will continue to help bridge the gap between industry needs and skilled trades workers.

BIT will refer students and industry companies to the Goodwill Training and Education Center (GTEC) in Springdale that are interested in trainings The Academy provides such as welding, construction, basic carpentry, industrial truck operator and OSHA certifications. BIT will also refer adult students needing a high school diploma to The Excel Center® at GTEC.

GIA will refer students to BIT for training in electrical systems, motor controls, mechanical drives, robotics, CNC, thermal process controls, PLCs and electrical wiring or other training The Academy does not provide.

“We are thrilled to have this partnership with BIT,” said Senior Vice President and Chief Mission Officer Edie Stewart. “One of GIAs priorities is to provide Arkansans with the skills and training needed to enter the workforce as soon as possible. Our complementary partnership with BIT helps us achieve our goals and fill the gaps in the workforce needed by local industry.”

Julie McAllaster, Director at Business and Industry Training said “Success is found when talent and technical providers work together. BIT is excited about this partnership with GTEC to provide trained individuals that Northwest Arkansas Workforce desperately needs.”

GTEC, which opened in Springdale in July 2023, houses The Academy at Goodwill and The Excel Center®. The Academy is GIA’s trade school where non-traditional students can earn industry credentials and certifications that lead directly to employment. The Excel Center® is Arkansas’s only adult high school for individuals 19 years or older to earn a diploma.

BIT, also located in Springdale, is a not-for-profit consortium of area businesses and industries that share resources and create customized, skill-based training to suit a wide range of needs.

About Goodwill Industries of Arkansas

Goodwill Industries of Arkansas is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to changing lives through education, training and employment. In the last fiscal year, our career services team helped 498 people find work at companies around the state. Through our various education, training and employment programs, GIA provided services to 6,345 Arkansans. Since opening in 2017, 127 adults in Arkansas have graduated high school and earned their diplomas through The Excel Center®, Goodwill’s high school for adults 19 years or older. The Academy at Goodwill, licensed by the Arkansas State Board of Private Career Education, is a trade school that provided training and certifications to 2,524 individuals in FY23 to secure new employment and advance careers. Goodwill also offers reentry services for those coming out of incarceration to help train and find employment. Visit GoodwillAR.org or GoodwillAR.org/GTEC for more information.

About Business and Industry Training

Business and Industry Training is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) training facility that has been offering short term, hands-on training for more than 28 years. BIT has special expertise in industrial maintenance training and offers endless courses in leadership and personal development classes. Their mission is to establish a core curriculum based on the needs of Northwest Arkansas, focusing on 'hands-on and short-term skill-based' training to improve the quality of the workforce.