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Goodwill Industries of Arkansas Announces Promotions and Additions to Leadership, Including Two Vice Presidents

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (August 10, 2022) — Goodwill Industries of Arkansas is excited to announce the promotions and additions of leadership positions, effective immediately. Three promotions include **Tammy Wheaton**, vice president of mission services; **Elizabeth Blaty**, The Academy director; and **Carloas Wilson**, The Excel Center® director. Joining the organization in a new executive leadership role, **Joanna Lever** will serve as vice president of education. Three new directors are also joining the mission-minded organization – **Julie Abernathy**, director of compliance and data analytics; **Lane Gammel**, marketing and community outreach; and **Teresa Perkins**, career services – who are filling vacated positions.

“Goodwill needs strong leadership to implement our mission of changing lives through education, training and employment across the state of Arkansas,” said Goodwill Industries of Arkansas President and Chief Executive Officer Brian Marsh. “Each of these individuals has a passion for service and their well-earned promotions and additions will help champion our mission.”

Joanna Lever – Vice President of Education

Lever will act as the superintendent for The Excel Center® locations. She will provide strategic direction to lead the development of service delivery standards and procedures for educational strategies. Lever began her career as a teacher before becoming the founding principal of the Fayetteville Virtual Academy in 2016, and later taking on the role as director of personalized learning for the Fayetteville Public School District. Lever most recently held the position as director of charter development at Arkansas Public School Resource Center since 2019.

Tammy Wheaton – Vice President of Mission Services

Wheaton will drive the aggressive and successful growth of the organization's outreach to employers and job seekers by fulfilling its goals in partnership with the CEO, by providing leadership and coordinated direction to the Mission Services leadership team. Wheaton, who has served as director of The Academy at Goodwill and Career Services since 2018, has 15 years of workforce development experience focusing on employment and training initiatives. Wheaton was recently selected to represent Goodwill Industries of Arkansas to serve on the City of Little Rock Workforce Development Board.

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Julie Abernathy – Director of Compliance and Data Analytics

Abernathy will ensure organizational performance excellence and compliance with all internal and external program standards, data integrity and analysis, and promote continuous quality improvement for Goodwill Industries of Arkansas. She will be responsible for leading the Compliance and Data Analytics department, the organization's efforts to achieve and maintain the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) certification, as well as overseeing efforts to modernized data reporting features and identify improvements to operational processes. Abernathy is a Certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt with more than 20 years of experience driving positive change initiatives for many of the most largely recognized financial technology pioneers across the globe.

Elizabeth Blaty – The Academy Director

Blaty's responsibility is to create meaningful training and credentialing opportunities for all program participants enrolled in The Academy at Goodwill Industries of Arkansas. She will lead all aspects of the private, licensed trade school, with a service area covering the entire state. With more than a dozen years of management experience, Blaty originally joined Goodwill as a participant in the Transitional Employment Opportunity reentry program in 2018, and became the administrative assistant for Mission Services after graduation. She most recently served as the office manager at The Excel Center®.

Lane Gammel – Director of Marketing and Community Engagement

In his role, Gammel will focus on strategies for marketing, communications and public relations that support Goodwill's brand and ensure a positive and consistent image. Before joining Goodwill, Gammel was the director of communications at Harding University. Earlier in his career, he spent 24 seasons with the National Football League's Seattle Seahawks, including 11 as director of communications. There, he developed strategic organizational narratives that enhanced brand awareness.

Teresa Perkins – Director of Career Services

Perkins will direct career services team members to higher levels of growth - ensuring they are effectively serving all job seekers. An educator for more than 28 years, she has trained and mentored students in technical and career advancement in both high school and higher educational settings across central Arkansas. She has also served as a business consultant for Paulette Vick Insurance Agency and Simply Delicious Restaurant. While serving as program coordinator at Simply Delicious Restaurant in Jacksonville, Ark., her student-led teams won six state championships in the National Restaurant Association's ProStart competition and was also named Arkansas ProStart Teacher of the Year twice.

Carloas Wilson – The Excel Center® Director

Wilson acts as the chief academic officer for The Excel Center® and provides a hands-on approach to leadership in directing, planning, managing, and coordinating the educational goals and vision of the school. Originally hired as the sciences teacher upon the school's inception in 2017, he taught biology, chemistry and physical science. Before joining The Excel Center®, Wilson served as a tenured track associate professor at Arkansas Baptist College for 10 years.

About Goodwill Industries of Arkansas

Goodwill Industries of Arkansas is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to changing lives through education, training and employment. In the last fiscal year, our career services team helped 458 people find work at companies around the state. Through our various education, training and employment programs, Goodwill Industries of Arkansas provided services to 4,346 Arkansans. Since opening in 2017, 65 adults in Arkansas have graduated high school and earned their diplomas through The Excel Center®, Goodwill's high school for adults. Visit www.goodwillar.org for more information.

About The Excel Center® at Goodwill Industries of Arkansas

The Excel Center® at Goodwill Industries of Arkansas is the first and only adult high school in the state of Arkansas and is a unique, tuition-free charter high school that awards industry recognized certifications and high school diplomas, not *GEDs*, to learners ages 19 years and older.

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About The Academy at Goodwill Industries of Arkansas

The Academy at Goodwill Industries of Arkansas, licensed by the Arkansas State Board of Private Career Education, provides the training needed to secure new employment and advance careers. The goal of each program is to provide opportunities for non-traditional students to earn industry credentials and certifications that lead directly to employment in jobs that guarantee a living wage.

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