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Goodwill Urges Donors Not to Donate Military Medals and Materials

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (July 27, 2020) — Goodwill Industries of Arkansas urges donors not to donate military medals and other items like dog tags, draft papers and service ribbons.

More often than you might think, these types of items are donated at Goodwill Donation Centers around the state. Out of respect for the service members' sacrifices, to protect his/her personal information and to prevent cases of stolen valor, Goodwill Industries of Arkansas does not sell these items.

When possible, every effort is made to locate the service member or his/her family. Recently, we were able to return the Purple Heart of a World War II veteran killed in action to his niece who now lives in Nashville. Today, however, we received the military ribbons and dog tags of Elijah L. Pearce. Unfortunately, our searches so far have been unable to find any living relatives.

"You see these medals and ribbons and imagine the incredible stories behind them," said Public Relations Manager Kerri Nettles. "We want to honor the men and women who lived those stories by keeping the items safe and cherished."

While many times, the donation is made by mistake, sometimes that is not the case. It is recommended, if you find military medals and other items, contact a local military nonprofit or your local VFW for assistance, as many of these items contain sensitive personal information.

Photos of the items belonging to Elijah L. Pearce are below. (sensitive information has been obscured.)

About Goodwill Industries of Arkansas: Goodwill Industries of Arkansas is dedicated to changing lives through education, training and employment. Goodwill runs The Excel Center®,

the first tuition-free high school for adults 19 and older, with life coaches, drop in childcare and transportation assistance. The 501(c)(3) non-profit organization also runs robust reentry program for those returning from incarceration. Fewer than 6% of those who complete the program return to prison. In addition, The Academy at Goodwill is a state licensed private post-secondary career school that offers a variety of certifications for high-demand careers. Goodwill's economic impact on Arkansas was \$200,000,000 in the last fiscal year.

