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Media Contact

Debbie A. Roman
(814) 536-3536, ext. 223
(814) 341-2284, cell phone
marketing@goodwilljohnstown.org

Goodwill® GoodGuides® to Celebrate Global Youth Service Day 2011

Youth-Led Project Addresses Childhood Obesity, Encourages Healthy Lifestyle

JOHNSTOWN, PA, April 15, 2011— On Saturday, April 16, 2011 as part of Global Youth Service Day, the Goodwill GoodGuides Youth Mentoring Program, operated by Goodwill Industries of the Conemaugh Valley (GICV), Inc., will present to their peers the results of their 'Healthy Choices' service-learning project on childhood obesity that was made possible by a competitively bid 2011 UnitedHealth HEROES Service-Learning grant from Youth Service America and UnitedHealthcare.

For over two months, GoodGuides program youth (mentees), under guidance of their mentors and GoodGuides program staff, followed the Five Stages of Service-Learning model comprised of Investigation, Preparation and Planning, Action, Reflection, and Demonstration/Celebration (IPARD/C). Youth researched items related to fighting obesity and attended workshops that covered topics of the food pyramid and portion control, fats and sugars, how to properly read food labels, and ways to prevent childhood obesity. Youth also attended presentations by The Penn State Cooperative Extension of Cambria County and the Windber Research Institute conducted at GICV's headquarters in Johnstown.

On Global Youth Service Day, GoodGuides youth will present their findings and celebrate their efforts on Saturday at the Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. The public is invited.

"Getting our youth involved in learning about childhood obesity and ways to address this issue is valuable in so many ways, said Phyllis J. Bandstra, GICV's President & CEO. "This service-learning project allowed the kids to gain tremendous insight into the causes of childhood obesity, and therefore, the ways to avoid it. They took ownership of the project, which facilitated their learning and understanding of this serious topic."

Future workshops for youth (mentees) and mentors will include a visit to a local grocery chain for education on how to purchase healthy foods; and the group will also participate in WalkWorks, a new local walking program for people of all ages sponsored by Conemaugh Memorial Hospital.

The GoodGuides Youth Mentoring Program is a national mentoring initiative operated locally by GICV through a grant by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. It is designed to help youth ages of 12–17 who may have barriers to success to build career plans and skills as they prepare for school completion, postsecondary training, and productive work through structured and supportive relationships with adult mentors

For more information about Goodwill GoodGuides, please contact Cindy O'Connor, GoodGuides Program Manager at (814) 536-3536, ext. 304 or goodguides@goodwilljohnstown.org. To learn about GICV's many services and programs that help individuals with barriers to employment, visit www.gicv.org.

Goodwill Industries® of the Conemaugh Valley, Inc. (GICV) is an independent nonprofit organization established in 1962 to empower individuals and families with employment barriers to achieve their fullest potential in the community through work services. Headquartered in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, GICV serves individuals with disabilities and disadvantages, dislocated workers, youth, and other job seekers throughout south central Pennsylvania in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Huntingdon, Indiana, and Somerset counties by providing education and career services as well as job placement and post-employment opportunities. GICV is a community-based member organization of Goodwill Industries International, a 179-member network in the U.S., Canada, and 13 other countries. For more information, visit GICV's website at www.gicv.org.

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