

Goodwill Industries salutes three clients for achievement

Those who donate clothing and other goods to Goodwill Industries of the Conemaugh Valley Inc. and bargain shoppers at Goodwill's stores improved the lives of 26,632 people in six counties last year.



TODD BERKEY/ THE TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT

Achievement award winner Justin Hudson reacts after hearing his name called on Thursday at Goodwill Industries' Community Annual Breakfast as his mom, Wendy Koontz, smiles.

Goodwill raised \$8.8 million of its \$12.8 million in revenue last year through donated goods and retail sales, President and Chief Executive Officer Phyllis Bandstra told those attending the Goodwill Report to the Community Annual Breakfast Thursday.

Funding helped the organization reach new areas, expanding technology and adding programs to further its mission of empowering individuals and families employment barriers to achieve their fullest potential through work services.

"These are new roads to get to the same destination," Bandstra said during the report at Pitt-Johnstown's Living Learning Center.

Three clients were recognized for their success in overcoming obstacles. Ericca Cadwallader, Justin Hudson and Danielle Delso received achievement awards.

Cadwallader has made strides toward her goal of becoming a medical flight nurse, despite her learning disability, said Ann Torledsky, vice president of workforce development.

Cadwallader graduated last year from Portage Area High School and Admiral Peary Vocational Technical School .

She has qualified as a rehabilitation technician trainee with Allegheny and Chesapeake Physical

Therapy and as an emergency medical technician trainee with Cresson Ambulance Service. She now works as an EMT and certified emergency vehicle operator with the Cresson service.

She is enrolled in Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, with an eye toward a certified nurse assistant job at Memorial Medical Center and enrollment in Conemaugh School of Nursing.

Hudson joined Goodwill's school-to-work transition program in 2008 and was enrolled in developmental disabilities services as a trainee. He has been working in Goodwill's production plant since he graduated high school in 2009. He has improved his productivity 400 percent.

Delso came to Goodwill to get support with her personal goals, Torledsky said. Delso said she has learned it is all right to ask for help and that others may see a solution where she sees only gray.

"Her gray has become much brighter since she came to Goodwill," Torledsky said.

Three founders of the Community Intervention Plan youth mentoring initiative were named Collaborative Partners of the Year.

Mike Kane, president and executive director of Community Foundation of the Alleghenies; Intervention Plan founder Steve Purich; and the Rev. Sylvia King of Christ Centered Community Church have helped spearhead the mentoring plan.



"This program is at the pulse of our young people who need it most," King said, encouraging audience members to "tithe your talents to the community."