



## For Immediate Release

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## Goodwill provides relief in difficult economic environment

### Goodwill of Central Arizona

#### Overview

Provides job skills training and career services for those with vocational disadvantages—including physical and emotional barriers, welfare dependency, illiteracy and homelessness

One of 184 independently operating Goodwill organizations worldwide

Serves Maricopa, Yuma, La Paz, Gila and portions of Pinal and Yavapai Counties

Positively impacts the community and individual lives by helping those with disadvantages obtain self-sufficiency and economic independence

#### 2007 Highlights

Almost 11,000 youth and adults benefited from career and training services

4,600 employment opportunities were secured

\$60 million in total revenue

39 retail stores operating throughout central Arizona

850,000 donors

**PHOENIX (June 17, 2008)** — Arizona consumers are feeling the financial crunch and workers are feeling burdened by economic uncertainty and a dwindling job market. Despite difficult circumstances, Goodwill of Central Arizona offers reprieve for anyone feeling the weight of the current financial outlook. More than a retail store – Goodwill of Central Arizona is a human services agency that offers 36 programs to give a “hand up” to individuals facing employment barriers.

“In times of economic uncertainty, individuals look to be more value-conscious and repurposed goods are a great way to cut necessary expenses,” said Jackie Halleen, Vice President of Retail Operations for Goodwill of Central Arizona. “What our customers may not know is that while they find bargains shopping at Goodwill – the dollars they spend contribute to the economic vitality of their communities because we transform revenue into job skills training programs.”

From record high gas prices to climbing grocery costs each week, individuals are looking for ways to save money. Each of Goodwill’s 39 store locations discounts all merchandise 50 percent every other Saturday, with the next sale day being June 28. Senior citizens enjoy 25% off all merchandise every Thursday. For more robust savings, individuals donating to Goodwill will receive a coupon for 20 percent off purchases of \$10 or more.

Goodwill also offers a variety of educational and employment services for those wishing to boost their work skills or seek employment. These services and resources are offered free to the public in an effort to prepare individuals for a lifetime of economic independence and self-sufficiency through the power of work.

Goodwill Career Centers are open to the public and offer free employment resources and access to employers throughout central Arizona to jobs seekers or individuals needing specific employment assistance. Each of the nine Career Centers are open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and offer job postings as well as work tools such as computers, printers, internet access and telephones for job seekers.

Goodwill offers a free comprehensive three-week Computer and Customer Service Training (CCST) program which prepares individuals for employment in the clerical, financial or customer service fields. The CCST curriculum includes computer basics, Microsoft Office, human relations, telephone techniques, resume building, interview skills, financial services training and customer service skills. Completion of the program usually boosts individuals’ hourly wages from minimum wage to almost \$11 an hour.

As a reliable workforce, senior citizens are recognized by Goodwill as being ideal candidates for employers looking for highly qualified workers. For seniors, Goodwill's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) offers low-income individuals a chance to reenter the workforce and gain new skills.

For youth, Goodwill offers a tailored learning experience through their two charter high schools. In addition to a customized curriculum, the schools offer students paid job training. Goodwill's Youth Services department offers many job training programs to help prepare youth for the workforce – both with specific job-related skills and soft skills, such as collaboration and punctuality.

Last year alone, Goodwill served almost 11,000 individuals and placed more than 4,600 in competitive employment. For more information regarding Goodwill stores or career services, visit [www.goodwillaz.org](http://www.goodwillaz.org).

Celebrating 60 years in the Valley, Goodwill of Central Arizona is one of the oldest and largest non-profit agencies in Arizona. Our mission is to "Put People to Work" throughout Arizona by providing job skills training, education and career services to those with vocational disadvantages that can include physical and emotional barriers, welfare dependency, illiteracy and age. In 2007, we served 11,000 youth and adults on their quest toward self-sufficiency and placed more than 4,600 into competitive employment. For more information on Goodwill of Central Arizona visit [www.goodwillaz.org](http://www.goodwillaz.org).

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