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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Goodwill Northern Illinois Earns National Kaizen Training Opportunity

Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois was recently selected as one of only 5 Gi Kaizen training sites out of 168 Goodwill agencies across the country by Goodwill Industries International of Rockville, Maryland. Training in this process improvement method will take place November 11-14 as national experts visit the region to conduct training at the new Goodwill retail store at 8010 North Second Street in Machesney Park.

Goodwill staff and store managers from as far away as Peoria, Milwaukee and Iowa City will travel to Rockford for training that will help streamline backroom processes in an effort to more efficiently transform donations into saleable merchandise in Goodwill stores.

“Out of the more than 150 Goodwill regions in the country, we’re very pleased to be selected as a training site,” said Sam Schmitz, President, Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois. “We were one of a number of sites that applied for this opportunity.”

Kaizen is a Japanese term for continuous improvement. It’s a philosophy that focuses on continuous improvement throughout all aspects of life. When applied to the workplace, Kaizen activities continually improve all functions of a business, from manufacturing to management and from the CEO to the assembly line workers. By improving standardized activities and processes, Kaizen aims to eliminate waste.

The Kaizen approach is particularly applicable to Goodwill’s unique task of collecting and reselling donated goods to the retail public. In many ways the backrooms of the organization’s retail stores are like factories, where the donated goods are like products that move down an assembly line and out to the store floor for sale.

“Learning the Kaizen process will allow our Goodwill stores to become more efficient, safer and ultimately create additional jobs as we expand,” said Craig Grugel, Director of Retail Operations for Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois.

Grugel added, “Customers will not experience any changes in the stores, as retail operations will not be interrupted during this training period.”

Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois is a community-based not-for-profit organization that provides education, training and job placement for persons in need. Goodwill stores in northern Illinois (Rockford, Machesney Park, Freeport, Sterling) and Beloit, Wisconsin employ more than 170 people. For more information about the Kaizen training, please contact Sam Schmitz at (815) 965-3795.

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