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CELEBRATING THE POWER OF WORK

*"Let us realize that the privilege to work is a gift, that power to work is a blessing, that love of work is success."
- David O. McKay*

AUSTIN, TX – Faced with challenges and obstacles to overcome, the newest members of Goodwill's Hall of Honor rose above and achieved success in the workplace. On Thursday, Jan. 20, eight individuals will be inducted into Goodwill's Hall of Honor. The celebration will be from 5:30-8 p.m. at Goodwill's new headquarters at 1015 Norwood Park Blvd. Hall of Honor began a decade ago as a way to recognize and celebrate the achievements of individuals who come to Goodwill for help, excel beyond expectation, and exemplify Goodwill's mission. Stories and photos of the honorees will be unveiled at the event and the keynote speaker is Nancy Crowther, the Accessible Transportation Specialist for Capital Metro.

In 1998, honoree Robert "Bob" Rozelle entered Goodwill's Job Source program, which offers assistance for persons seeking entry into the workforce who have a disadvantaging condition, such as limited access to employment, education, housing, or health care. Bob had an excellent work history, but was having trouble finding work. "I couldn't believe they would hire me at my advanced age," he said.

From 1946-1972, Bob worked as a truck driver – crossing the country many times. He then settled with his wife and three kids in Orlando, Florida, where he founded Sunshine Temporaries. The full service staffing company provided workers for companies like Disney, Pepsi and Coke. "I would get you a job, send you to a place I had a connection with and then turn you loose after 6 weeks...I liked it, it was a good business," Bob said.

In 1981, Bob sold the business and moved to Houston, Texas to seek treatment at the MD Anderson Cancer Center. He participated in an experimental therapy that thankfully worked and once he was in remission, he and his wife moved to the Austin area. About that time, Bob, who had been living with diabetes since 1968, became the primary care giver for his wife, who became ill. They bought and managed a Four-plex and Bob worked at two different vehicle auction sites before joining Goodwill. In fact, he always seemed to find a way to make ends meet.

"Sometimes we made money, sometimes we didn't. When things looked bad, we found something to do," Bob said. "I think the good Lord helps me when I need it."

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Hall of Honor – Add One

Bob said that at his age, he could retire, but that's just not in the cards for him yet, despite some set backs in the last few years. In January 2003, he became very ill and was in a coma for four days. Then in May 2004, he got pneumonia and injured his shoulder, an injury that required surgery several months later. And on May 15, 2004, his wife of 43 years passed away. They were both in the hospital at the time – staying on the same floor, just a few doors down from each other.

"The people at Goodwill have been wonderful to me," Bob said. "I wasn't a client when I started, but I became one. When I had problems and needed help, Goodwill was always there."

While working at the Goodwill donation trailer in Pflugerville, where he currently lives, Bob makes it a point to tell everyone he sees about the organization. "I am so impressed with what Goodwill does," he said. "Goodwill helps people make a life. There has been nothing like Goodwill for me in my life."

Goodwill Industries of Central Texas Inc. is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to the mission of providing job-related services for people with barriers to employment. Revenue raised through the sale of donated goods is used to fund more than 20 job-training and employment programs for Central Texans with disabilities and other disadvantaging conditions. In 2004, Goodwill worked with about 8,000 different individuals, helping them to find meaningful employment and start new lives of independence.

About Nancy Crowther

Nancy Crowther has been the Accessible Transportation Specialist for Capital Metro since 1989. Her primary responsibilities include the implementation of and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, creating transportation regulations for Capital Metro's service for passengers with disabilities and formulating programs to improve Cap Metro's accessibility services to senior citizens and passengers with disabilities. Crowther serves as community liaison for persons with disabilities and senior citizens and is the liaison with the board appointed Access Advisory Committee. She is also Cap Metro's in-house advisor on all accessibility-related issues. An Austin resident for 24 years, she previously served with the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, the Lone Star Girl Scout Council and the Austin Resource Center for Independent Living. Crowther also keeps herself busy with volunteer efforts. She serves on the Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities and the Foster Grandparent Program Advisory Council. She obtained a Bachelor's of Social Work from the University of Texas at Austin and was named the 2001 Alumnus Of the Year by the school.

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