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Goodwill Receives Lola Wright Foundation Grant

AUSTIN, TX – Goodwill Industries of Central Texas received a \$20,000 grant from the Lola Wright Foundation to fund the expansion of their Assistive Technology Lab.

The organization provides job-related services for people with disabilities and barriers to employment, and as the digital age advances, so has new technology for individuals who may not be able to access conventional methods to search for jobs, contact employers and learn job seeking skills.

The Lola Wright Foundation grant will allow Goodwill to purchase two webcams for their DeafLink Communication System, and four Work Adjustment Training computers fully equipped with assistive technology for their Providing Equal Access Technology (PEAT) Program.

DeafLink provides certified interpreters via the internet, which will allow Goodwill staff to communicate more effectively with individuals who are deaf. This means when a hearing impaired individual walks in to request assistance or ask a simple question, they can sign and communicate with the translator via the webcam and computer, who then relays the message to the staff member—all using the webcam and internet. An example of this benefit to someone might be if they need to be immediately prepped for a job interview that afternoon.

The PEAT Program allows people with disabilities such as cerebral palsy and visual impairments to use computer equipment to job search and secure employment. For example, someone who has limited fine motor skills and cannot operate a keyboard can create a resume using speech recognition software; a client who has low vision could use magnification software to read job postings on the internet.

"The equipment generously funded by the Lola Wright Foundation will allow us to provide employment services using the latest in innovative technology," said Jerry Davis, President and CEO of Goodwill. "It is tremendously important in today's job market to have a working knowledge of computers, and this equipment will allow individuals to develop the skills they need to secure and retain employment."

According to the Pew Internet and American Life Project, only 38 percent of people with disabilities are able to regularly access the internet. With the help of the Lola Wright Foundation grant, Goodwill is looking to help close this gap.

The Lola Wright Foundation was formed by Johnnie Elizabeth Wright in memory of Lola Wright, a hotel owner from Georgetown, TX. The foundation annually donates thousands of dollars to a broad variety of non-profit organizations.

About Goodwill Industries of Central Texas:

Goodwill Industries of Central Texas is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to the mission of providing job-related services for people with barriers to employment. Revenue generated through the sale of donated goods is used to fund job training and employment programs for Central Texans. For more information about Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, go to www.austingoodwill.org.