

Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana, Inc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Anderson resident to be honored May 19 as Goodwill's Achiever of the Year

Geno Cox, an Anderson resident, will be honored May 19 as Goodwill Industries of Central Indiana's Achiever of the Year. The award is presented to honor an outstanding person who has shown great progress and accomplishment in overcoming barriers to employment.

His store manager, Lori Thompson, describes Geno as an exceptional worker who is independent, outgoing and enjoys challenges. He works hanging clothing on racks at the Anderson Goodwill Store and delivers them to the sales floor.

Blind almost since birth, Geno uses the assistance of Gordon, his guide dog. He grew up in Anderson and attended the Indiana School for the Blind. After graduating, he experienced difficulty finding a job and moved around a lot. Eventually, the father of two returned to Anderson in 2007 and found a job at Goodwill, where he says the staff accept him and have confidence in him.

"To be able to work means independence, it means you feel a part of society, you're doing something every day and interacting with people, and that means a lot to me," Geno says. "I've been blind basically from birth, but I don't let it stop me from doing what I need to do. You can't feel sorry for yourself and sit in a corner because nobody is going to feel sorry for you. You've got to take an opportunity and go after it."

A person who enjoys staying physically fit, Geno moved closer to the store so he and Gordon could, weather-permitting, walk to work, which requires training and memorizing the route. The decision gave Geno greater flexibility because he does not have to rely on public transportation every day.

"No one told him to, and no one made him. He chose to do that," Thompson says. "His confidence level is so great. I think that's what makes him such a great performer."

Cox will receive the award at this year's Celebration of Achievement Awards Breakfast at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, May 19, at The Westin in downtown Indianapolis. Tickets for this event are \$22 each or \$176 for a table of eight. To make reservations, please visit www.goodwillindy.org/breakfast or call (317) 524-4213 by Friday, May 7.

Revenue generated from the sale of donated goods helps people find jobs and helps young people prepare for life and work. For more information about Goodwill, visit www.goodwillindy.org or call (317) 524-4313.

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