Dear Friends,

Calendars help us mark the passage of time, note milestones, and provide a framework to plan for the future. The year 2015 was a year of change and growth for MERS Goodwill, with important milestones achieved:

- We served a record number of people in our community – 69,343!
- We had a record number of donations – 1,427,929!
- We had a record number of customers making purchases in our stores – 4,864,701!
- We had record revenues from all divisions - $156,097,455!
- We said “thank you” to Lewis Chartock, our president/CEO for 21 years, as he retired in October.

We both want to recognize that these achievements are the result of dedication, passion and hard work on the part of our Board members, our staff, community partners, donors and shoppers. We offer our thanks for the role you have played in truly helping us change lives through the power of work.

We know we will continue to face new challenges in 2016 and beyond. Our strong belief is that, with the support of the community, MERS Goodwill will continue to make a difference in the lives of people – one person at a time.

Cordially,

David Kutchback
President/CEO

Christopher Tabourne, Chairman
Board of Directors

Mission Statement:
Changing lives through the power of work.
**SERVICES AVAILABLE**

- Vocational Evaluation
- Community Employment Services/Job Placement
- Skills Training Programs:
  - Office Computer and Administrative Skills Training (Office CAST)
  - Building Maintenance
  - Culinary Arts
  - PC Technician Skills Training (A+ and N+)
- Supported Employment: Assessment, Job Development, Job Coaching, Long-Term Retention
- Supported Living
- Sheltered Employment
- Project Grow: Comprehensive vocational services for deaf or hard of hearing individuals
- Careers in Transition (CIT): Services for displaced individuals
- Transition from School to Work
- Child Day Care Center and Pre-School
- Next Generation Career Centers (NGCC):
  - WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
  - WIOA Youth Program
  - Head Injury Employment Program
  - Juvenile Justice Program: Employment and educational service for juvenile offenders in the City of St. Louis, housed at Innovative Concept Academy
  - Community Corrections: Residential services and vocational supports for women
  - Missouri Work Assistance (MWA): Employment services for individuals who are receiving TANF
  - Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
  - GED Instruction
  - ACCESS: Services to victims of domestic violence
  - Employment Services for those with diagnoses on the Autism spectrum
  - Veterans Services

**DONORS**

- Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Abrams
- Audrey Adreon
- Jean M. Agatstein
- Jeff Ahne
- Edward and Corinne Barry
- Mary Kay Beiermann
- Mark and Barbara Bernstein
- Ruth S. Burger
- Stephen and Susan Campbell
- M. Susan Cerwin
- Citizens National Bank
- Osmond and Sandra Conrad
- Mark and Dorothy Crinnion
- James and Cynthia Davies
- David M. Dolan
- Emerson Charitable Trust
- Enterprise Holdings Foundation
- Fischer-Bauer-Knirps Foundation
- Pattylynn and James Fogle
- Bettie Gershman
- Graybar Foundation
- Greater St. Louis Community Foundation
- Hortense Growe
- Mr. and Mrs. M. Myron Hochman
- HP Products
- J.W. & Mildred A. Kising
- Charitable Foundation
- Louis and Carole Loebner
- Eugene and Cynthia Morganthaler
- Shirley Y. Mosinger
- New Choices Family Group
- Parkway School District
- Mary Anne Pemberton
- Mildred Simon Foundation
- Norris B. Runnalls Irrevocable Trust
- Lawrence and Shirley Schermer
- Schwab Charitable
- Frank L. Seeger
- Roy and Carolyn Smith
- Robert Stahlhut
- James E. Stinson
- Jerry and Greta Stoliar
- Alice B. Thomas
- Floyd and Joan Utne
- The Von Gontard Family Foundation
- Plus the thousands of people who generously share their household goods, clothing, personal items, cars, boats, etc. to help us raise funds to support our employment programs!

**2015 FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**PUBLIC SUPPORT**

- Contributions of inventory: $57,035,281
- Associated organizations: 723,424
- Other: 935,124
- **Total Public Support**: $58,693,829

**REVENUE**

- Store and salvage: $68,661,696
- Employment and training: 2,014,446
- Contract services: 5,277,826
- Sheltered workshop: 1,100,370
- Other program services: 1,826,858
- Investment income: (512,687)
- Miscellaneous: 35,117
- **Total Revenue**: $97,403,626

**Total Public Support and Revenue**: $156,097,455

**EXPENSES**

- Program services: $145,221,852
- Management and general: 6,466,871
- Fundraising: 2,728,557
- **Total Expenses**: $154,417,280

**Change in Net Assets**: $1,680,175

**ASSETS**

- Cash and cash equivalents: $5,978,539
- Account receivables: 4,426,591
- Inventories: 2,809,834
- Investments: 14,704,203
- Property and equipment: 40,763,830
- Other: 2,568,511
- **Total Assets**: $71,251,508

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

- Accounts payable and accrued expenses: $8,224,868
- Net Assets: 63,026,640
- **Total Liabilities and Net Assets**: $71,251,508

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT FIRM:**

Schowalter and Jabouri, 11777 Gravois Road, St. Louis, MO 63127
Defying Expectations and Making a Difference in Ferguson

Darius Luckett is making a significant difference in the lives of his peers and the surrounding St. Louis community during a time of needed healing.

When the unthinkable death of Michael Brown on Aug. 9, 2014 happened, Ferguson, Mo., erupted in a series of protests and riots that would impact the spirit of the community for its residents and for the entire nation. As a young man from Ferguson, Darius said it seemed as though the eyes of the nation were looking at him for answers; he responded better than anyone could have imagined.

MERS Goodwill’s Ferguson Forward program was established in October 2014 and is fully funded by Ferguson-based company Emerson. Stemming from the STL Youth Jobs summer program that bridges the gap between youth ages 16 to 23 in high-risk communities and the unpredictable job force, Ferguson Forward is a 6-month work experience program designed to support renewed community enrichment and development in Ferguson and the surrounding North Country area.

Once Darius was enrolled in the program, he was introduced to his MERS Goodwill career coach Chaille’ Jackson. He attended the financial literacy program, provided by St. Louis Community Credit Union, where he learned about balancing a checkbook, maintaining healthy credit scores and reading his first paycheck.

Chaille’ identified local restaurant Drake’s Place as a good fit for Darius and met with Owner Sunny Lewis to discuss potential openings for Darius and other Ferguson Forward youth.

“I was surprised when Darius said this was his first job!” said Sunny. “Teenagers aren’t supposed to have this kind of work ethic. He’s really raising the bar for our youth volunteers and even our full-time employees.”

When the program finds a fit between an employer and a young employee, the possibilities are limitless.
Congrats ICA Graduates!

Thanks to the generous donations and support from community partners, the Innovative Concept Academy has been a mainstay for youth from high-risk communities in the St. Louis region.

As ICA begins a new school year, we want to celebrate the students who recently graduated. MERS Goodwill congratulates the 2015 graduates of ICA who received their diplomas earlier this Summer.

The St. Louis Public Schools, MERS Goodwill, and the Family Court-Juvenile Division have a collaborative partnership as governing partners in the creation of this one-stop service center for St. Louis youth. The goal of the center is to increase the protective factors available to these youth which are aimed at eliminating at-risk behaviors that negatively impact the St. Louis community.

“I am so grateful for this opportunity to join the Ferguson Forward program,” said Darius. “Their support and training led me to where I am now.”
Retail Donations 2015

Number of Retail Stores: 43

4 Store Openings or Reopenings

- **FESTUS** store: new location, 8,500 square feet - over twice the size of the previous space.
- **FOREST PARK** store and donation center: 11,527 square feet of retail space.
- **ALTON** store: had no increase in space, but was updated.
- **SIKESTON** store: 9,653 square feet of retail space.

**TOTAL of 10,477 additional retail square feet.**

Record number of donations: 1,427,929

Fifth annual Cardinals Earth Day drive:

20,000+ pounds (10+ tons) of donations - including computers, monitors, assorted digital paraphernalia, TVs, clothing, shoes

$5,280 in accidental donations across five locations:
- **FESTUS** $1,200
- **JEFFERSON COUNTY** $1,900
- **COLUMBIA** $500
- **ST. CHARLES** $1,200

**RECORD NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS MAKING PURCHASES IN OUR STORES:**

4,864,701
It Happened Again!

**Accidental Donations of 2015**

Throughout 2015, accidental cash donations popped up in numerous locations across the bi-state region, including Goodwill retail stores of St. Charles, Columbia, Jefferson County, Festus and Chesterfield. In 2015, a total of $5,280 in accidental donations was discovered by Goodwill employees.

MERS Goodwill seeks out the original donor to either thank them or return the accidental donation. After 30 days, if the donor doesn’t come forward, the money found goes to MERS Goodwill programs that help the community including:

- A sheltered workshop that serves individuals with severe disabilities
- The Vet Success Program which supports veterans both in their return to civilian employment and independent living
- An autism employment center that helps members of the community with Autism Spectrum Disorder transition toward self-sufficiency.

When making a donation, MERS Goodwill reminds its generous donors to look in all pockets, bags, envelopes and small boxes – just in case you are letting go of something unintentionally.

Whether you take just minutes to quickly gather up a few no-longer needed items, or spend a weekend clearing out old clothes, there is always a chance that a hiding spot still contains something special.
17 September, 2015
Sikeston Store Grand Opening
As MERS Goodwill continues to look for ways to better serve its customers, Southeast Missourians were treated to a bigger and better store just in time for fall fashion hunting. On Thursday, Sept. 17, 2015, Goodwill held a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony for the new, 14,430-square foot retail store in Sikeston. Located at 608 Brunt Boulevard, shoppers and local residents were on hand to get the first peek of the new location’s thrifty treasures. The new Sikeston store location was stocked with fall styles and Halloween décor and costumes. Shoppers were on hand to find great prices and experience the latest trends they expect in a brand new location.

“...As we continue to look for ways to better serve our customers, the new Sikeston store will be fully stocked with fall styles and Halloween décor and costumes. Shoppers will be able to find great prices and experience the latest trends they expect in a brand new location. The timing of this new location opening couldn’t be better!” – Lewis C. Chartock, Ph.D., President and CEO
Lewis C. Chartock, Ph.D., Leaves a Lasting Impression

MERS Goodwill would like to honor and thank Lewis C. Chartock, Ph.D., former president and chief executive officer, for all of his hard work and dedication to the St. Louis area and surrounding communities as he announced his retirement in October 2015. Under the esteemed leadership of Chartock over the past 21 years, the organization has soared to new heights. In just the past decade, MERS Goodwill has grown from 21 to 42 stores with plans in place for more to open in 2016.

Chartock has always been dedicated to helping others and strengthening his community. After receiving his Ph.D. in Social Work from Bryn Mawr in 1974, he held many positions in the social services and education fields. He spent seven years as President of Metropolitan Employment Rehabilitation Service (MERS) and facilitated the merger between two of the most successful and necessary nonprofit organizations in Missouri. When MERS and Missouri Goodwill merged in 2001, he became President and CEO of what we now know as MERS Goodwill.

Chartock engineered the merger when he saw a common mission shared by MERS and Missouri Goodwill, as well as a need to revamp the retail store program. As a matter of fact, when he took over the organization in 1994, MERS’ annual budget was $6.9 million. Today, MERS Goodwill has an annual budget of more than $160 million, just one example that demonstrates how significantly his leadership has affected the growth of the organization and the expansion of staff to exceed expectations year over year. In addition, Goodwill has funded this growth through operational income without being dependent on outside financing. This was an element that was very important to Chartock.
### CARF ACCREDITATION
MERS Goodwill is CARF accredited in the following areas:
- Child and Youth Services
- Community Employment Services: Employment Supports
- Community Employment Services: Job Development
- Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation Services
- Employment Skills Training Services
- Organizational Employment Services
  - Supported Living
  - Supports for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder
  - Transition Services

### Holidays
- **2016 Halloween**
- **2016 Columbus Day**
- **2016 Yom Kippur**

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“I am honored to have worked with such exceptional individuals over the past 21 years, and I am excited to see where the organization is headed.”

— Lewis C. Chartock, Ph.D.
Josh Payne knows firsthand that just about anything can be accomplished with faith in yourself and a great support system.

Josh received support throughout high school from the Special School District (SSD) of St. Louis County as a result of his diagnosis of cerebral palsy. Through the SSD program, Josh volunteered at The Woodlands retirement community, the St. Louis Outlet Center (The Mills) and the St. Louis Zoo, where he helped with bussing tables, mopping, sweeping and assisting with other janitorial tasks.

After graduating from high school in 2007, Josh was eager to find and keep meaningful employment. But in 2008, he needed surgery on his hip that required months of rehabilitation.

In 2008, Josh was referred by his Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to participate in Goodwill’s Assessment Program to explore his interests. There, it was determined that Josh would be a good fit for Goodwill’s Sheltered Employment program, which provides employment and case management services to individuals in a supportive setting.

In 2013, Josh was ready to consider new options, and Jennifer Ansel, job exploration specialist, spent time with Josh to consider competitive employment options. After trying out positions at area employers, he began working with MERS Goodwill Employment Specialist Kathy Piloski.

Josh’s resume is an employer’s dream: extensive volunteer service throughout high school, impeccable attendance and solid references. Josh’s goal was to work in the food service industry and Kathy helped him prepare for the interview process by practicing how to respond to questions in a conversational tone.

In September, Josh attended a job fair at the Moonrise Hotel in the Delmar Loop with Kathy. He learned about a new restaurant called Peacock Loop Diner that was looking to hire employees and was holding open interviews. It’s no surprise that Josh hit a homerun during his interview; waiting for a call back from the potential employer was the hard part.

A few weeks later when Josh was walking home from the bus stop, he got a call from Peacock Loop Diner asking him in for a second interview. They interviewed Josh for only a few minutes before he was hired.

“The Peacock Diner is a perfect fit for Josh,” said Kathy. “They want to hire long-term employees and are open to job coaching. They made it clear that there were no limitations to Josh achieving success.”

It’s been nearly seven years since Josh first came to MERS Goodwill.
The Safer Foundation Grants $810,000 to MERS Goodwill

Teens growing up in poverty often struggle with a host of difficulties ranging from poor academic achievement and depression to drug use, alcohol abuse and violence.

Thanks to the generous support from the Safer Foundation’s Midwest Re-entry and Employment Network, a partnership with the family courts in the 21st and 22nd judicial circuit, the St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment, the American Civil Liberties Union and others, a new MERS Goodwill initiative called MREN Juvenile Diversion Program is in full swing.

The MREN JDP aims to help teens from the communities of Dellwood, Ferguson, Jennings, Kinloch, Normandy, Pine Lawn, University City and Wellston receive job training and placement. thereby setting them on the path to success. Since the start of the program, MERS Goodwill has seen a great impact on work and education opportunities.

“From day one, Josh made it clear he would do whatever it takes to get a job and he stuck through it despite some speed bumps along the way.”

– Kathy Piloski on Josh Payne
Thank you for a great year.


COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES

United Way of Greater St. Louis – Orvin Kimbrough  
Missouri Division of Vocational Rehabilitation - Jeanne Loyd  
Illinois Department of Human Services - David Reed  
Department of Veterans Affairs - Corliss Strathearn  
St. Louis County Office of Productive Living Services - Donald Kaufmann, Kim Kopff  
St. Louis Agency for Training and Employment - Michael Holmes  
St. Louis Office for DD Resources - Michelle Darden  
Federal Bureau of Prisons - Victor Vega  
Missouri Department of Corrections - George Lombardi

Southeast Missouri Workforce Development Board - June O’Dell  
Jewish Federation of St. Louis - Andrew Rehfeld  
St. Charles County Department of Workforce Development - Scott Drachnik  
Mid-America WIB - Debra Moore  
Madison-Bond WIB - David Stoecklin  
Developmental Disabilities Resource Board - Peg Capo  
Office of Job Training Programs: Jefferson-Franklin Counties - Michael Ravenscraft  
Missouri Family Support Division – Julie Gibson  
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services - Michael Brewer

Mildred Simon Foundation – Joan M. Newman  
Northeast Missouri Workforce Investment Board – Brandi Glover  
22nd Judicial Circuit Court. Juvenile Division - Judge David Mason  
St. Louis City Department of Public Safety - Charlene Deeken  
Southern Illinois Workforce Investment Board – Mary M. Roe  
Safer Foundation – Victor Dickson  
Goodwill Industries International – Jim Gibbons  
Greater St. Louis Community Foundation – Amelia A.J. Bond  
Missouri Department of Mental Health – Keith Schafer  
St. Louis Community Development Agency – Alana Green
### Third Consecutive Top Rating from Charity Navigator for MERS Goodwill

In 2015, MERS Goodwill was once again awarded the highest possible rating from Charity Navigator, America’s largest independent charity evaluator. The latest rating reflects a four-star evaluation for sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency. Only 14 percent of the charities rated by Charity Navigator have received at least three consecutive four-star evaluations.

Charity Navigator ratings are based on the financial information that a charity provides in its informational tax returns, or IRS Form 990. Financial performance categories that undergo careful scrutiny include program expenses, administrative expenses, fundraising expenses, fundraising efficiency, primary revenue growth, program expenses growth and working capital ratio.

Forbes, Business Week and Kiplinger’s Financial Magazine, among others, have profiled Charity Navigator’s unique method of applying data-driven analysis to the charitable sector. It is estimated that last year Charity Navigator findings influenced more than $10 billion in charitable gifts.

Since 2005, MERS Goodwill has received nine four-star ratings and two three-star ratings.
MERS Goodwill kicked off 2015 with a grand opening celebration of its newest 22,524-square-foot retail store and donation center on Forest Park. The new store, located at 4200 Forest Park Blvd., St. Louis, Mo 63108, is located next to the old Forest Park store location, which now houses the Organizational Employment programs. Organizational Employment provides employment and case management services to persons who are choosing a sheltered workshop setting. Participants are required to be certified eligible for sub-minimum wages through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Some of the piece-rate work experiences available include packaging, assembly, collating and machine operation.

The Forest Park store opening continued a retail growth spurt for the agency, as MERS Goodwill plans to continue to expand services and retail operations in the bi-state area.
MERS Goodwill reopened the Alton, Ill., retail store in 2015 just in time for spring. The remodel and celebration took place at the store location at 1719 Homer Adams Parkway.

In addition to the Alton store improvements, MERS Goodwill also relocated the Festus, Mo., location in 2015. Previously at 20 E. Main Street, the new location is three times the size of the current space, providing more retail items for sale and a better donation drop off door. The new address is 1255 N. Truman Boulevard in the former Big Lots space.

The reopening of the Alton and move of the Festus location provides shoppers with the same great prices and experience they expect in a brand new and refreshed atmosphere.

“At MERS Goodwill, we continue to look for ways to better serve our customers and address the needs of the community throughout the bi-state area.” — Lewis C. Chartock, Ph.D.
MERS Goodwill’s board members are instrumental in helping establish the agency’s mission, setting the direction and maintaining the strategic plan. This year, we are honored to have Chris Tabourne, assistant vice president of inclusion at Enterprise Holdings Inc., as Chairperson of the 2015 Board of Directors.

When he first moved to St. Louis nearly 11 years ago, it was important for Chris to find a nonprofit board where he could dedicate his time and service. Through FOCUS St. Louis’ Leadership program in 2007, he was introduced to MERS Goodwill and its diversity of services and involvement in the community. Additionally, the organization’s creative partnerships, such as the juvenile justice program through the Innovative Concept Academy, and the simple and positive mission of breaking down employment barriers and helping people reach their fullest potential, struck a chord with Chris. He was drawn to the Goodwill “Circle of Hope” and loved to learn about how donations to the retail stores fund the MERS Goodwill mission.

“The MERS Goodwill culture in St. Louis is unique; the St. Louis community as well as the organization have a strong sense of giving back and a great emphasis on building a stronger region,” remarked Chris.

One of the highlights for Chris is hearing MERS Goodwill clients tell their story in their own words at every board meeting and learning how Goodwill helped provide them with the skills and resources to overcome barriers in both their personal and professional lives. Chris can see a strong future for MERS Goodwill that includes expanding retail stores and outlets throughout the region, as well as more early childhood development hubs for the backlog of families who need an opportunity for hope.
**Ashley Furniture HomeStore and the St. Louis Cardinals Hosted MERS Goodwill Families for “A Hope to Dream”**

MERS Goodwill was selected by Ashley Furniture HomeStore to help kick off the holiday season with its company initiative, “A Hope to Dream.” The event, hosted at Busch Stadium on Monday, November 9, brightened the dreams of 50 children by gifting them an entire bed set. The children invited to receive a new bed were all children of clients served through MERS Goodwill programs.

Each bed set included a twin mattress set, a pillow, sheets and a comforter. Gift bags and goodies were also provided by Ashley Furniture HomeStore and the St. Louis Cardinals and were set aside on each bed.

Families were welcomed by Fredbird and the St. Louis Cardinals for dinner, photos at a photobooth and a dance party. A brief news conference took place and then the kids were shown to their bed. After the event, MERS Goodwill delivered the mattress sets to each child, crossing this gift off their wish list.

“A Hope to Dream” is an initiative started by Ashley Furniture HomeStore to provide children in the community who do not have a bed to call their own – their very own bed. A portion of all mattress sales at Ashley Furniture HomeStore goes toward supporting the “Hope to Dream” program.

MERS Goodwill would like to thank the St. Louis Cardinals and Ashley Furniture HomeStore for their kindness this holiday season.
Clean Your Way to Spring With Goodwill’s Tips to De-Clutter & Donate

More than 70 percent of Americans engage in the annual tradition of spring cleaning, according to a 2013 survey by the American Cleaning Institute. But one of the most common dilemmas for spring cleaners is what to do with all that stuff.

To celebrate the first day of spring this Friday, Goodwill has prepared seven tips to tackle each day in order to become a spring cleaning master:

Day 1: In honor of St. Patrick’s Day, before you put on that green sweater, go through your closet and remove any clothing you no longer wear. Donate it to Goodwill. Here’s a good rule: if you haven’t worn it in the last 365 days, you probably don’t need it!

Day 2: As you’re cooking dinner, take 15 minutes to go through your kitchen cabinets and find things you don’t use. Goodwill accepts used kitchenware items and household goods.

Day 3: Go through your seasonal holiday décor and donate what you no longer use. That Halloween ghost statue you haven’t displayed since the late 90s? It’s time to let it go. While you’re going through seasonal items, don’t forget to look through your family’s old Halloween costumes and donate those to Goodwill too.

Day 4: Technology changes fast and many people have tech toys, used computers and computer accessories lying around the house. Goodwill accepts working e-readers, tablets and other electronic items as donations, and our Reconnect partnership with Dell gives you a way to recycle those non-working computers.

Day 5: If you have a home office, see if you have any office supplies that you don’t need. Clear your desk of unneeded backpacks, notebooks or binders – all can be donated to Goodwill.

Day 6: The seven days are almost done! But before you congratulate your decluttering efforts, take a minute to investigate the rest and relaxation or entertainment area in your home. How many DVDs do you own that you’ll probably never watch again? CDs, DVDs, Blu-Ray discs, video games – they’re all donate-able.

Day 7: Finally, take one last look at your bookshelf. If your paperbacks have gone the way of the printing press, never fear, you can donate your books to Goodwill too.

With these tips, spring cleaning can actually be fun! But more importantly, know that by donating your used items, you’re helping neighbors set out on a path toward employment.
Win Tickets to a Summer of Concerts at the Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre

Twenty Winners Will See Every Live Nation Produced Concert In The Goodwill Party Deck This Season!

In 2015, MERS Goodwill partnered with Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre and Hollywood Casino St. Louis hotel for a summer full of fun and live music. Twenty donors won a pair tickets to enjoy every 2015 Live Nation concert at the Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, along with hotel accommodations at Hollywood Casino St. Louis! Winners were able to watch the entire summer concert series from the Goodwill Party Deck.

Daylight Savings Time Begins
Spring Equinox
First Day of Spring
St. Patrick’s Day
Annual Earth Day & Electronics Drive
**Goodwill and the St. Louis Cardinals Host Earth Day Electronics Drive**

The St. Louis Cardinals and MERS Goodwill partnered for the organizations’ fifth annual electronic recycling drive on Apr. 22, 2015. Baseball fans were encouraged to donate unwanted computers, laptops, printers and other electronic items at the drive to receive 50-percent-off vouchers for the 2015 baseball season.

As computers are donated to MERS Goodwill, the organization recycles them through its internal computer demanufacturing program called Computer Works, which provides one-on-one job training and development for individuals with development disabilities and autism spectrum disorder. Demanufactured computer components are handled in a way that keeps them out of landfills by either recycling them or by working with other companies that can break down the material further into precious metals and other valuable raw materials. Computers are handled according to guidelines from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and are either demagnetized or physically broken apart, giving donors ease of mind knowing that their information has been deleted properly.
Customers visiting Monkey Joe’s today for the indoor bounce house and playground will find David Stillman, a participant of MERS Goodwill’s Supported Employment Program, hard at work. A Kirkwood native, David is living another day at his dream job, fulfilling his passion for sports and working with kids.

As a child, David had been diagnosed with learning disabilities, but has never let that define him. After graduating from Kirkwood High School in 2010, David interned and volunteered with various recreation centers before attending college at the University of Central Missouri in Warrenton. There David enrolled in THRIVE, a two-year residential program for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

After completing THRIVE, David was referred to MERS Goodwill’s Supported Employment Program, where met Leslie Quarles, director for Goodwill’s South County Career Center. Leslie spent several weeks exploring job opportunities with David.

Through Goodwill’s Discovery & Exploration and Job Development services, David practiced job interviewing skills and worked one-on-one regarding employer expectations and job readiness skills. He attended weekly job readiness training classes and began working with Stephanie Guth, a job developer with MERS Goodwill, once he was ready to seek employment. Stephanie had heard about an opening at Monkey Joe’s and when David secured the job, he was able to complete training in just one week.

David’s role at Monkey Joe’s is invaluable. He works the concessions, assists the ticket counter, helps with event setups and even volunteers to wear the Monkey Joe mascot costume.

“David’s journey continues to inspire me each and every day,” said Stephanie. “You can’t teach an attitude or someone to be positive and David is truly a one-of-a-kind individual.”

After having difficulties finding a job, Jerome Pollard was recently hired as a full-time dishwasher and busser for Sportsman’s Park Restaurant in St. Louis. For Becky O’Brien, the restaurant’s general manager, hiring Jerome was one of the best decisions she has ever made.

Jerome was connected with Becky through the MERS Goodwill Employment Services Program, following a referral from his counselor with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation. At the start of his services with Employment Specialist Tom Lemon, Jerome was working part-time at a fast food restaurant. He had difficulties with reading and writing connected with his disability and needed support in finding a more permanent solution to be able to support himself.

“Jerome had great work history but he struggled with knowing how to promote himself to other employers,” said Tom. “But anyone who meets Jerome knows he is a genuinely good person who works hard and treats others with kindness and respect. He just needed a support system to show that he would be a tremendous asset to any company that was willing to give him a chance.”

Tom helped Jerome create a resume, highlighting a variety of skills he had developed that would stand out to potential employers in the food service industry. He also worked with Jerome on his interview skills.

Jerome started out as a cook at Sportsman’s Park in June 2014. At first, there were some obstacles, but Tom and Becky worked to make adjustments to ensure Jerome would be successful. The group decided that Jerome would transfer to a dishwasher and busser position, where the reading requirements would be minimal. The move proved to be a perfect fit for Jerome.

Becky shares, “It’s been the most wonderful experience hiring Jerome. He’s just the perfect fit for us – he’s dedicated to his job, he knows what he’s supposed to do but still goes above and beyond. Most importantly, he loves the challenge and knows he’s needed here.”

Becky has been more than just a boss to Jerome; she’s been a mentor and is even helping him with learning how to write.

“Coming from a boss’s point of view, Jerome really is one of my best workers,” adds Becky.
MERS Goodwill partnered with local businesses to employ a record-breaking 900 youth.

Through the MERS Goodwill-sponsored Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP), youth with a variety of developmental disabilities from 29 St. Louis County high schools experienced work at a paid summer job, just as many of their high school peers do. In 2015, there were 65 employers participating in SWEP, including St. Louis Goodwill stores, nursing homes, YMCAs, TJX brand locations and more than 30 Schnucks stores.

Participating employers are supportive of the opportunities SWEP provides for youth with disabilities, and every year these employers hire a number of students to stay on after the program comes to an end.

For the third year in a row, MERS Goodwill collaborated with local organizations to support the STL Youth Jobs Initiative. STL Youth Jobs provides local youth from high-risk neighborhoods with the skills and job coaching necessary to achieve and maintain employment and build an impressive resume of job experience. The program had more than 40 participating employers in 2015, including Emerson, SSM DePaul, Cakes by Nette, and St. Louis Community Credit Union.

“He’s the most thoughtful person and his attitude is contagious. His coworkers see the challenges he faces every day and it really motivates them to do a better job. This has just been a heartwarming experience for me, and it couldn’t have happened without the help and support from Tom and MERS Goodwill.” — Becky O’Brien on hiring Jerome Pollard
A Look Back at Our Programs in 2015

Served a record number of people in our community: 69,343

Ferguson Forward Program served 108 youth, and had 41 participating employers.

900 YOUTH placed in summer programs
- 200 students enrolled in 8-week program
- Available for youth ages 16-20
- Youth came from 29 St. Louis County high schools
- 65 employers participating, including more than 30 Schnucks stores

17 Specialized Services

Innovative Concept Academy (ICA) - 11 graduates

63 veterans placed in employment in Missouri

75 Career Center locations.

Computer Works received certification from Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Goodwill needs 325 computer donations per day to successfully serve its clients.
### Calling All St. Louis Clunkers… Donate Your Car for Free Tickets to Six Flags St. Louis

To encourage generosity from the St. Louis community, MERS Goodwill gave four one-day, general admission tickets to Six Flags St. Louis to all automobile owners who donated their vehicles – running or not – in June 2015. With the tickets, donors experienced Six Flag’s new-for-2015 4-D interactive dark ride, **JUSTICE LEAGUE: Battle for Metropolis**, during the park’s Season of Heroes campaign!

All car donations support MERS Goodwill’s training programs and significantly impact the lives of those striving to overcome adversity. The revenue generated from the automobile donations, including cars, trucks, vans, trailers, boats and RVs, is used to support MERS Goodwill’s employment and rehabilitation programs. These programs provide individuals in the community with the training to achieve professional productivity and employment in their life.

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- **Flag Day**
- **Father’s Day**
- **Summer Solstice
  
  First Day of Summer**
Goodwill Day at the Ballpark

Representatives from MERS Goodwill assembled on the field of Busch Stadium on Aug. 3, 2015 for the annual Goodwill Day at the Ballpark. Goodwill’s mission of helping people who are disabled and disadvantaged obtain employment reached more than 60,000 people in the last year.

Representing Goodwill for MERS Goodwill Day at the Ballpark were Executive Vice President of Program Services Mark Arens, Director of Autism Services Jennifer Glassmeyer, District Manager of Retail Latrice Clayborne and Marketing Manager Roni Vetter.

Taking the mound for the first pitch was Julian Moll, a Goodwill client success story and great Cardinals fan!

Located at MERS Goodwill’s Lippman Center on Hanley Road, the Autism Employment Center provides a place where individuals with autism spectrum disorder can go to begin or continue their transition to self-sufficiency. The Autism Employment Program is designed to focus on preparing the individual for the world of work and helping the person obtain the right job.
MERS Goodwill’s summer youth programs are essential to building the self-esteem and confidence of local youth. Thanks in part to the work of Carrie Sheahan-Pernsley, program supervisor for MERS Goodwill’s Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP), youth with a variety of developmental disabilities from 29 St. Louis County high schools are given the opportunity to experience having a paid summer job, just as many of their high school peers do.

Through her hiring and training of job coaches and processing of hundreds of applications, Goodwill is able to provide temporary work experience to nearly 200 high school students each summer.

Carrie implemented a teacher input form for the SWEP program. By receiving specific feedback from special education teachers on student work behaviors and daily routines, the employers and job coaches involved in SWEP can better understand triggers in behavioral changes and adjust to each student’s need.

“In order to provide a valuable experience for these students, we sometimes need to bring in behavioral specialists to provide additional supports. We also have autism support professionals to provide training for the staff,” said Carrie.

“Carrie’s ability to oversee the huge SWEP program year after year is truly remarkable.”

– Beth Brown, assistant vice president of program services for MERS Goodwill
COMING SOON!

Bridgeton Outlet

A strong retail growth spurt positioned MERS Goodwill to expand its programs and services to more communities in the bi-state area in 2015. Due to the success of the downtown St. Louis outlet store, which opened in 2011, MERS Goodwill made plans to open a Bridgeton outlet in early 2016 to help serve bargain hunters outside of the St. Louis downtown area and provide location convenience to customers in St. Louis County.

The outlet store in Bridgeton was officially opened for bargain shoppers on February 18, 2016.

Springfield Expansion

MERS Goodwill expanded its services and retail operations in Springfield, Mo., in 2016. Goodwill opened a 14,587-square-foot retail store in spring 2016, with plans to complete construction on a separate retail store later in the year. In addition, the agency’s long-standing career center will relocate in the summer near Hammons Field, providing greater accessibility in order to fully support the needs of individuals with barriers to employment.

The new MERS Goodwill Springfield location, at 425 S. Western Ave., had a successful grand opening on May 5, 2016.
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Most people are counting down the days until their retirement – but that does not mean all stop working when the time comes. Whether they are bagging groceries at a local supermarket or planning events within the community, those who are at least 60 years old and work 20 hours or more at a Missouri job site were eligible for the 25th Annual Older Worker of Missouri Contest.

Nominations for the 2015 contest were completed by employers, encouraging seniors to keep up an active lifestyle and good health. Ten winners from around the state were picked by MERS Goodwill and were recognized at a two-day award ceremony in Jefferson City, Mo., on Sept. 22-23.

The annual contest is sponsored by the Missouri Senior Employment Coordinating Committee, consisting of Experience Works, Catholic Charities of Kansas City - St. Joseph, MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries, Department of Economic Development-Division of Workforce Development and Department of Health & Senior Services-Division of Senior and Disability Services.
**Spread the Goodwill: Client Success**

Jimmie Anthony has never let a disability or obstacle define him. In 2010, Jimmie was diagnosed as having massive blood clots and soon found himself out of a job for nearly a year. Despite his hard work to recover, by the time he was cleared to reenter the work force, the economy had declined and Jimmie’s finances took a negative turn.

"The workforce had changed drastically since the last time I had been in the market for a job," said Jimmie. That's when Jimmie turned to the Missouri Department of Vocational Rehabilitation for help and was referred by his counselor Nancy Strothmann to MERS Goodwill’s Employment Services program. There he met Job Developer Janel Barber, who began working with Jimmie in October 2013. She helped update Jimmie’s resume while he devised a list of well-respected references so the job search could begin.

When Janel saw an open position as a corrections officer with the Missouri Department of Corrections in Charleston, she encouraged Jimmie to apply because he had prior experience. Jimmie knows first-hand that hard work pays off. On June 14, 2014, he was officially hired as a corrections officer with the Missouri Department of Corrections.

“I have had inmates come up to me and ask me to review their resume or give them some advice on job searching for when they are released,” said Jimmie. “I really cannot say enough good things about Goodwill and the people involved. Whatever challenges you face in life, there is an avenue to help you.”
MERS Goodwill Shows Shoppers How to “Be Your Own Monster”
TRICK OR TREAT!

As an original recycler, Goodwill promotes imagination and resourcefulness every holiday season by encouraging customers to make their own costumes. MERS Goodwill saves shoppers from a witch-hunt for the perfect costume necessities and home décor every Halloween.

In 2015, Goodwill teamed up with Sony Pictures Animation for the release of the monster comedy *HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 2*, which hit theaters Sept. 25. Goodwill shoppers had access to the “Be Your Own Monster” costume generator, where they could find fun costume ideas in connection with the movie online. The site also demonstrated how to use makeup to become your own monster.
Veterans Bring Hope, Give Goodwill as Hometown Heroes

As a retention specialist with MERS Goodwill and 30-year Army veteran, **Tony Harrington** believes that every person has the capacity to gain meaningful employment and become more self-sufficient. He instills this belief in his clients, who, over time, believe in themselves and go on to great successes. Tony is the perfect example of a veteran bringing the successes of a military career into the civilian workforce and impacting everyone he works with. He is deeply invested in the current and future wellbeing of Goodwill’s clients, which truly makes him a Hometown Hero.

Veteran **Dale Lee** landed his dream job at the Department of Defense in May 2015 after retiring from a 26 year career with the U.S. Army. He assists men and women – and future veterans – complete all the necessary processing for military service. While Dale is responsible for helping individuals in their transition from civilian to military life, he personally speaks of the hurdles that exist for veterans and the resources that are available to support them.

“Entering the work force as a civilian was a challenging yet humbling experience because I saw first-hand the obstacles veterans face when applying for jobs,” said Dale. “While the corporate and community resources for veterans are out there, there really is a lack of personnel to offer that one-on-one support for veterans reentering the workforce. I wouldn’t be where I am today without the help of MERS Goodwill’s veterans’ programs.”
Military men and women have a depth of experience, but many do not know how to relate their skills to potential employers, making the transition from military service to civilian life especially challenging. Organizations like MERS Goodwill help to bridge this gap by offering veterans programs and services that include evaluation and career counseling, placement services and skills training programs.

Pam Williams, on-the-job training navigator for MERS Goodwill’s Missouri Career Center, is instrumental in working with local businesses to put dislocated veterans in Missouri back to work. In 2015 alone, Pam placed 63 people overall in employment, with veterans accounting for one-third of those qualified individuals. Her commitment has not gone unnoticed; in fact, Pam was selected as one of five recipients for Missouri’s 2015 Outstanding Service to Veterans award and was honored at the annual Salute to Veterans event in Washington D.C. in 2015.

“It’s such a privilege to be able to do my job by helping veterans overcome the barriers to employment,” said Pam.

“By just talking to these men and women, they are often surprised to see how many skills they actually have that employers find important. Showing veterans they can live life to their fullest potential outside of the military helps them feel empowered again.”

– Pam Williams
Retail and Donations 2015

MISSION STATEMENT
Changing lives through the power of work

MEN'S
Jacket $3

TABLE
Lamp $50¢

DARK
Jeans $4.50

STURDY
Chair $8.50

INTERESTING
Books

LEATHER
Purse $3.50

FESTIVE
Housewares

By shopping at Goodwill stores you help support the MERS Goodwill mission.
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