Dear Friends,

Nonprofit organizations thrive only if they are growing and improving. MERS/Goodwill continues to expand the Retail Division and adds at least one new program that meets a community need every year. During 2014, we moved four existing store operations to new sites, all into new construction that we own, and opened a new/expanded employment program for veterans. In addition, a Department of Labor grant channelled through the Safer Foundation allowed us to expand services to adjudicated youth in our region, with particular emphasis on Ferguson. Overall, we served more than 60,000 individuals in 2014.

Our blueprint for 2015 includes remodeling/refreshing five existing stores, building a new store in St. Louis and two new stores in Springfield, Mo. (one of which will replace the current store on Battlefield), and searching for sites in Rolla, Jefferson City, Crystal City, and a spot to where the Harvester store could be moved.

Our staff are doing the planning, the construction, and the implementation of new programs, but the building blocks come from you—our donors who continue their generous support, our community partners and funding sources, sister agencies in the Goodwill and IAJYS networks, our dedicated board members, and an exceptional staff.

Thank you to all of you who make the success of our mission possible!

Cordially,

Jay Summerville
Chair, Board of Directors

Lewis C. Chartock, Ph.D.
President/CEO

On the inside flap of the endsheet is the blueprint for new construction which will be completed in 2015. All new construction and moves of existing stores for calendar year 2014 included four Missouri locations:

- University City on Aug. 14
- Hannibal on Oct. 2
- O'Fallon on Oct. 16
- Poplar Bluff on Dec. 11
Lorraine Orr  
HOMETOWN HERO

Those who have had the pleasure of crossing paths with Lorraine Orr remember her as a true hometown hero; a wife, mother, grandmother, and friend who devoted an entire lifetime to volunteering in the St. Louis community, which earned her the Goodwill Lifetime Achievement Award in 2001. For Kathy Smith, the fondest memories of her mother, Lorraine, include her involvement with Goodwill: “She wanted to make sure we knew the value of donating to Goodwill. It’s not just about giving, it’s about creating opportunities and changing lives through its programs.”

In 1953, Lorraine began serving on the Volunteer Board of Goodwill Industries Services as Vice President of Membership. From then on, giving to Goodwill became a focal point in the Orr household. Kathy’s memories of her mother at home read like a donation workshop; there were always designated Goodwill bags and boxes scattered throughout the house, a tradition that Kathy, her sister, and her brothers continue to this day.

As the years passed, Lorraine’s generosity kept growing and her passion for giving was contagious. When Lorraine’s husband retired, being involved with Goodwill became his passion as well, and he spent the rest of his life by his wife’s side helping her. Today, a plaque honoring him sits in a garden above a bench at the Goodwill International headquarters.

In June 2013, at the age of 92, Lorraine Orr passed away; yet, her generosity and devotion to Goodwill continued. Lorraine made sure her commitment to Goodwill would help others she couldn’t reach in her lifetime and designated MERS/Goodwill as one of her heirs.

For Kathy, the impact her mother has had on individuals and communities is priceless. “Service mentality was where her heart was,” remembers Kathy. “It warms my heart knowing her legacy is helping to build a stronger community.”

Chris Ross  
HOMETOWN HERO

When Chris Ross, Manager for H.M. Dunn Aerospace, heard about the MERS/Goodwill STL Youth Jobs program, he immediately wanted to learn how he – and his employer – could get involved.

The STL Youth Jobs program aims to help disadvantaged St. Louis city youth secure meaningful employment, experience positive adult relationships, and acquire workplace and social skills.

After attending several job fairs to better understand the program and youth it serves, Chris was introduced to two clients – Duane, 19 and Jordan, 18. Both were interested in electronics as a career path but had no relevant work experience.

Chris faced challenges with Duane and Jordan, but was prepared to be a role model employer as the young men struggled and adjusted to meet the demands of their new workplace.

Today, Duane and Jordan have enrolled in Forest Park Community College and Lincoln University respectively to pursue their dreams.

Chris plans to participate in the STL Youth Jobs program next summer and is committed to helping kids from high-risk communities beyond MERS/Goodwill’s summer youth programs.
In July 2014, Linda Woodward, a Job Retention Specialist for MERS/Goodwill, celebrated two special milestones: her 20th anniversary with the agency and her official retirement. Linda began her Goodwill career in June 1994 as a temporary Support Staff Supervisor with Metropolitan Employment and Rehabilitation Services (MERS) prior to its merger with Goodwill in 2001. She has seen the agency transform from a retail- and donations-based nonprofit into an organization that annually serves over 60,000 individuals who have barriers to employment through disability or economic disadvantage. Linda held a variety of positions with MERS/Goodwill. Every time she changed positions with the organization it was at the request of someone within Goodwill who knew Linda’s skills and strengths would be valuable contributions to their program’s goals.

When Linda took the permanent position as an Administrative Assistant with Goodwill in 1996, she took it upon herself to learn Bosnian, Russian and Yiddish phrases while working for a Director overseeing five programs. In 2005, Linda took the job as a Transition Specialist for high school students with disabilities, working side-by-side with each student to discern their work strengths and obtain appropriate employment opportunities. In 2007, Linda changed programs and was named Job Readiness Instructor, where she assisted clients with various barriers to work prepare for the job searching process and obtaining employment.

“She has a gift of being able to build rapport and trust with clients, family members, other service providers and employers,” said Carrie Sheahan-Pernsley, Coordinator/Productive Living Board Services for MERS/Goodwill. “It’s so nice to see her encouraging smile and words motivating someone during a learning curve.”

When Linda was working as a Computer Instructor for Goodwill, she spearheaded the need for a program that would help seniors expand their computer skills. Through a grant from the Simon Foundation, MERS/Goodwill started a pilot program in 2006 to provide basic computer skills to seniors. The program caught the attention of the local community as individuals from very diverse backgrounds were seeking computer skills training for a work-based setting. Linda’s advocacy for her clients didn’t stop there; she personally obtained the necessary computer program and keyboard to teach a veteran and former railroad car tender, with the use of only one hand, to type. She also obtained assistive technology to help persons with vision and hearing impairments operate a computer; the list goes on.

The stories of how Linda has helped others are endless. The memories she made and impressions she left during her 20-year tenure with MERS/Goodwill make Linda a true hometown hero.

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For Cintas Corporation, a specialized service professionals company, diversity and inclusion among both employee-partners and suppliers plays a critical role in the Cintas company culture.

In summer of 2013, Lynn Boyd, Human Resources Manager for Cintas’ St. Louis location, met with Katie Nanney, an Employment Specialist for MERS/Goodwill’s Project Grow Program, to share information about Cintas’ employee culture and discuss job opportunities for Katie’s clients. Project Grow is a comprehensive employment services program specifically designed for the deaf and hard of hearing.

Within a few weeks, Katie’s client, Michael, was presented as a potential candidate for a job opening at a Cintas warehouse. Having an employee who is deaf or hard of hearing presents a unique set of challenges for any employer, and Cintas wanted to guarantee a safe and comfortable work environment for Michael. Before Michael’s interview process even started, MERS/Goodwill held ongoing training and educational sessions for Cintas in order to fully prepare the company for the addition of Michael to their team.

Lynn partnered with Cintas’ internal safety department and learned how other locations accommodated individuals with disabilities in the past. One accommodation Cintas made for Michael was having a special light installed in front of the machine he would be operating. In the event of an emergency or scenario where immediate action is required, the light is connected to a fire alarm system and flashes when activated.

“When it comes to hiring an individual with a disability, it’s rare to find an employer that is enthusiastic and so open-minded,” said Katie. “The fact that Cintas not only wanted to learn everything they could about Michael’s disability but invested in his accommodations before he was even hired is truly remarkable.”

Michael interviewed with Cintas’ Plant Manager Dave Skaggs and Production Supervisor Zach Van Fleet, who has some training in American Sign Language, before meeting with the company’s General Manager Quentin Williams, who offered Michael the position on the spot. The team at Cintas put in extra effort to make Michael feel welcome by educating the team about his disability before he came on board. Zach’s understanding of American Sign Language allows him to communicate with Michael and make him feel comfortable on a daily basis.

“Employers take a chance when they hire anyone because they need to make sure their cultures are ready to make a new employee feel included,” said Lynn. “Hiring Michael was an exciting experience because he is such a perfect fit for our company’s culture, and we’re excited to see him grow!”
Nathaniel Brown, Jr.

**CLIENT SUCCESS STORY**

Nathaniel Brown, Jr. was out of work and needed help finding a job. While waiting for the bus one day, Nathaniel began talking with someone who knew about the community employment programs offered by MERS/Goodwill.

Nathaniel was referred to MERS/Goodwill’s Job Placement services by Missouri’s Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and became involved in its Supported Employment Program. This program is designed to meet the employment needs of individuals with developmental disabilities; it includes discovery and exploration to decide on a job goal, job development to find a permanent position, job coaching to learn the responsibilities of the position, and retention to maintain employment long-term.

When asked what the biggest obstacle was in pursuit of reliable employment, Nathaniel said, “I hadn’t had a legitimate job in over a decade and employers considered my community work to be invalid.”

Nathaniel’s success in the program was possible due to his eagerness and optimism in finding the right job. MERS/Goodwill Employment Specialist Tom Lemon recalls, “Nathaniel would call me throughout the week to let me know about job leads, businesses he was interested in, or places that he saw that were hiring. He never gave up.”

When Tom saw an opening for a housekeeping position at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, he immediately thought of Nathaniel as a qualified candidate. Nathaniel, said, “Tom taught me how to speak with people professionally and look people in the eye. He also helped me understand how to interview for a job.”

Nathaniel’s work on his interview skills paid off. Barnes-Jewish Hospital was impressed by his interview and offered Nathaniel a full-time position as a housekeeper. He gladly accepted the offer and began his work in June 2014, receiving benefits and a short-term disability package.

“We need more people like Nathaniel at Barnes because he is a great worker and always has a smile on his face,” said a BJH employee.

With the help of MERS/Goodwill, Nathaniel found a job that was right for him. He is one step closer to reaching his long-term goals of being more independent and able to support his family if they ever needed it.

Vickie Jones

**CLIENT SUCCESS STORY**

Vickie Jones has so many things to be grateful for in 2014 – celebrating four years as a breast cancer survivor, a new apartment, her friends and family, and especially her new full-time job.

Vickie was diagnosed with a developmental disability at an early age. She dropped out of high school and had her first child at the age of 17. Vickie struggled to financially support herself and her children, and then the unthinkable happened. Vickie was diagnosed with breast cancer in August 2003 – just shy of her thirtieth birthday – and would spend the next six years in recovery. The stress of undergoing chemotherapy and radiation took a toll on Vickie. She struggled to cope with both her disability and diagnosis and developed severe emotional distress during her treatment, which ultimately manifested to extreme anger, affecting her ability to find and keep employment.

Vickie turned to Missouri’s Vocational Rehabilitation services and was referred to MERS/Goodwill. Vickie was eligible for MERS/Goodwill’s Computer Works program, which provides in-depth, one-on-one job training and development for individuals with Development Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Vickie joined the Computer Works program on June 17, 2013, where she learned how to demagnetize and physically break down computers and their components, starting with a goal of five computers a day. Within two months, she could tackle 28 computers a day – more than any client had ever accomplished at Computer Works. Vickie loved the challenge of taking on new tasks and learned how to do it all, including computer demanufacturing, stocking monitors, sorting computer components, and collecting materials to set up for the next work day.

“Vickie became my right-hand woman,” said Cynthia Bourgeois, Coordinator for Computer Works. “The fact that Vickie learned so fast and could help train others allowed me to spend more time with clients who needed further one-on-one assistance.”

After just three months in Computer Works, Vickie was no longer suitable for sheltered employment. She was assigned a job developer through MERS/Goodwill and started the process of applying for jobs. Vickie’s biggest obstacle in her transition to full-time employment was learning how to control her anger. At the recommendation of Goodwill, she began taking anger management classes through St. Patrick’s Center.

In March 2014, Vickie was offered a full-time position as a porter for RiverCity Casino in St. Louis. For the first time in her life, Vickie has full benefits and time off. She moved into a new apartment and, with the help of Goodwill and good-hearted neighbors, has started filling her home with furniture and décor. When Vickie reflects on how far she has come, it brings tears to her eyes: “I can finally say I’m proud of myself.”
Dennis Cronin

Dennis Cronin has come a long way since 2012 when he was referred to MERS/Goodwill’s Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). In less than two years, Dennis has overcome more personal and professional barriers than most do in a lifetime.

Dennis joined the military following the premature death of his son and the end of his marriage. He was an active duty officer in the U.S. Army Artillery with the First Cannon Battalion in 1986. Upon his return, Dennis struggled to find his place in society. He found himself battling depression, eventually self-medicating with alcohol and moving around living between friends’ homes.

Dennis found solace at the local Veterans of Foreign Wars post in St. Charles and soon became a regular, attending game nights and fish fries and relating to other veterans dealing with depression. As Dennis tried to pick up the pieces of his life, he continued to struggle with living independently.

In March 2012, after spending nearly a week living on the street, Dennis turned to MERS/Goodwill for help, where he connected with Cherie LeFort. As a SCSEP Employment Specialist, Cherie helps low-income persons age 55 or older that need help finding a job by providing subsidized, work-based training.

When Cherie approached Paul Schmidt, District Manager at the VFW Kohl-Jeck Post 2866 in St. Charles to see if there were any volunteer opportunities for Dennis, Paul was eager to be involved. As a Vietnam veteran himself, Paul understands the need for programs and services like the VFW and MERS/Goodwill that provide for veterans. The VFW Kohl-Jeck Post 2866 is one of the largest in the state and raised more than $50,000 for veterans in 2013.

“The average life expectancy of a Vietnam veteran is 63 years old,” Paul said. “It’s our job to do what we can to help these veterans make it past their 63rd birthday.”

Together, Cherie and Paul worked to establish goals for Dennis: create stability in his life, address the prior legal concerns, and eventually obtain a driver’s license. In working toward these goals, Cherie has seen Dennis slowly gain self-esteem and overcome his self-doubt.

“Making the connection with Paul really was one of the best things I could have asked for in giving Dennis a second chance,” said Cherie. “Once Dennis saw that we believed in him, he naturally evolved into this incredibly thoughtful and motivated person.”

Dennis was assigned to help the VFW in June 2013 for 20 hours a week through the MERS/Goodwill SCSEP. Then in March 2014, Dennis was hired by the VFW, working 35 hours a week, and he was able to find a place to live near the VFW post. His position as building manager includes general maintenance, housekeeping, and providing support and scheduling for large events like wedding receptions and fish fries.

As a veteran, Dennis never thought the toughest war he would fight would be after his time in the military but, thanks to the support from Cherie and Paul, he doesn’t have to fight alone.
B’nai Amoona 10th Annual Recycling Drive

MERS/GOODWILL AND THE CONGREGATION B’NAI AMOONA HOSTED ITS 10TH ANNUAL ELECTRONICS AND COMPUTER RECYCLING DRIVE

In the past nine years, the Annual B’nai Amoona Electronics Drive has inspired the St. Louis community to continue recycling and keep unwanted items out of landfills. The tradition continued on Sunday, Nov. 9, as MERS/Goodwill, Congregation B’nai Amoona and the City of Creve Coeur partnered for a one-day electronics recycling and general donations drive. During the drive’s six-hour duration, MERS/Goodwill collected almost three trailers of donations, totaling more than 13 tons!

FACTS AT A GLANCE:
- 45,000 Pounds of Cardinals E-Drive Donations
- 13 Tons of B’nai Amoona E-Drive Donations

St. Louis Cardinals Electronics Drive
TEAM PARTNERS WITH MERS/GOODWILL ON EARTH DAY

MERS/Goodwill partnered once again with the St. Louis Cardinals on April 22 to host the fourth annual electronics recycling and general donations drive. Held on Earth Day, the drive was a major success! MERS/Goodwill estimates the donations weighed over 45,000 pounds (or 22.5 tons) and almost 1,200 individual donors attended. In addition, 28 bulk boxes of computer processing units were collected for Goodwill’s Computer Works program.

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 peace of mind that their information has been deleted properly.

Items were accepted free of charge and included computers and computer accessories, phones (home and cell), clocks, VCRs, DVD players, stereos, AV equipment including cable and satellite boxes, and any other electronic devices and general donations. Donors received a voucher for a half-price Cardinals ticket.

Hazelwood Recycle Day

IN JUNE, MERS/GOODWILL TEAMED UP WITH THE CITY OF HAZELWOOD FOR A FOURTH ANNUAL RECYCLE DAY

Held at the St. Louis Mills, the event was open to the entire metropolitan community. MERS/Goodwill, the City of Hazelwood, and its Green Committee had a goal to reduce the need for more landfills. Not only was this a free event, it was also a landfill-free recycling drive. Donations included clothing, books, toys, and furniture.
New Store Openings
UNIVERSITY CITY, O’FALLON, HANNIBAL, AND POPLAR BLUFF!

MERS/Goodwill continued a retail growth spurt as the agency expanded services and retail operations in the bi-state area in 2014. On Thursday, Aug. 14, Goodwill held a grand opening and ribbon cutting celebration for the new, 15,300-square-foot retail store in University City, located at 7531 Olive Boulevard. The day included a visit from KEZK Morning Show radio personalities Vic and Trish, a raffle to win a pair of tickets to the sold-out One Direction concert, and free Krispy Kreme doughnuts.

On Thursday, Oct. 2, MERS/Goodwill hosted a grand opening of its newest 14,400-square-foot location in Hannibal, where shoppers enjoyed the first peek of more than 10,000 square feet of retail space. The store, located at 3503 Stardust Drive, also features a new donation drive-thru that makes donating an even easier and quicker process.

On the heels of the Hannibal store opening, MERS/Goodwill celebrated the opening of its new, 14,400-square-foot O’Fallon store. On Thursday, Oct. 16, eager shoppers got a sneak peek of an abundance of fall finds, including Halloween costume ideas and décor for a happy Halloween. WIL 92.3 FM Radio’s very own Judy Diamond hosted her program live from the new store, located at 1210 Highway K, and showed off her own fabulous Halloween costume from a recent trip to Goodwill.

MERS/Goodwill closed out a strong retail growth spurt in 2014 with the Poplar Bluff store reopening, which took place on Thursday, Dec. 11. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at the new 8,810-square-foot retail store, located at 1335 N. Westwood Blvd.

GRAND OPENINGS CELEBRATED 52,850 ADDITIONAL RETAIL SQUARE FEET

MERS/Goodwill Goes Green in St. Peters

Microgrid Solar partnered with MERS/Goodwill to complete a 25 kW solar installation on the St. Peter’s store location at 620 Mid Rivers Mall Drive. Annually serving more than 60,000 individuals and operating 75 locations across the bi-state area, MERS/Goodwill is aware of the rising costs of energy and the effect it has on operating budgets. The installation is expected to save MERS/Goodwill more than $100,000 over the system’s lifetime, while avoiding the emissions of more than 1.3 million pounds of CO2.
MERS/Goodwill Celebrates Anniversary of New Autism Employment Program

On Tuesday, March 11, MERS/Goodwill celebrated the anniversary of its new Autism Employment Program, which served 70 young adults in its first year and had a 100-percent retention rate for individuals placed into employment. Located at MERS/Goodwill's Lippman Center on Hanley Road, the program provides a place where individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder can go to begin or continue their transition to self-sufficiency by focusing on acquiring work-appropriate skills, broadening community social integration abilities, coaching and post-employment services, and independent living skills for St. Louis area residents with ASD. The celebration featured special guest and MERS/Goodwill client Barton Havens, who shared his personal journey of being diagnosed with ASD and how he overcame his disability to find meaningful employment.

Beth Brown, Mark Arens, and Jenn Glassmeyer of MERS/Goodwill attend the program celebration.

27th Annual St. Louis Working Women’s Show

MERS/Goodwill returned as a sponsor of the 27th annual St. Louis Working Women's Show! The event was filled with hundreds of exhibits, unique products and services, and lots of food, fashion, fitness, health, and fun. The 2014 show was titled, "The Ultimate Girl's Day Out," and was held Feb. 21-23 at the St. Charles Convention Center. MERS/Goodwill held a stage show on Friday at 3 p.m. and Saturday at 4 p.m., where attendees met the stars of Goodwill's own online reality show "Thrift Shop Divas." The "Thrift Shop Divas" hosted a fashion show and shot live for an episode. Also, MERS/Goodwill hosted a booth with a prize wheel that included Goodwill gift certificates.

Spotlight On: Christina Holmes, Program Director of ACCESS

Many victims of domestic violence do not have the financial capabilities or support from family and friends to leave a violent relationship. Thanks to Christina Holmes at MERS/Goodwill, St. Louis area victims of domestic violence have another resource to help work toward an abuse-free life. Christina is Program Director of ACCESS, a program of MERS/Goodwill that assists victims of domestic violence with job readiness training, including properly filling out job applications, developing cover letters and resumes for potential employers, conducting interview training, and facilitating proper attire and transportation to interviews. Christina was honored by the Economic Justice Committee of St. Louis Ending Violence Against Women Network as a Domestic Violence Agency Advocate at the Women's Champion for Social Change Breakfast on Thursday, Oct. 23.

The Dana Brown Charitable Trust Grants $10,000 to Imagination Learning Center

In November, MERS/Goodwill received a $10,000 grant from the Dana Brown Charitable Trust to purchase equipment and supplies for the Imagination Learning Center, which provides day care services to clients participating in MERS/Goodwill rehabilitation programs, MERS/Goodwill staff, and to families living or working in the downtown St. Louis area. The Center’s mission is to provide children with comprehensive education to facilitate cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and linguistic development. The $10,000 grant will be used to update equipment and supplies at the Imagination Learning Center.

Ferguson Forward Kicked Off Six-Month Employment Program

On Dec. 1, nearly 100 at-risk youth from Ferguson and Dellwood began a six-month employment program through the new Ferguson Forward initiative, which is an extension of the STL Youth Jobs summer program. Through funding by Ferguson-based Emerson, MERS/Goodwill's Ferguson Forward initiative will help train, employ, and provide ongoing support through job coaches for 100 youth at more than 30 local small businesses and corporations at no cost to the employers. On Friday, Dec. 19, many of the program's participants celebrated a major milestone by receiving their first-ever paycheck!
Thrift Shop Divas
“THEY NEVER KNOW WHAT THEY’LL FIND, BUT THEY'RE CRAFTING HOPE ONE THRIFT AT A TIME.”

Thrift Shop Divas, an online reality television series launched by MERS/Goodwill and Coolidge Media, kicked off Season 2! Follow a team of financially savvy experts as they upcycle materials from Goodwill stores into beautiful wardrobes and one-of-a-kind home interiors for St. Louisians in need. The four divas strive to touch the hearts of underprivileged St. Louisians while staying on a tight budget. Projects for the divas range from designing a pageant gown for a girl with disabilities to decorating an apartment for a woman and her kids who are struggling to make ends meet. Season 2 has 22 episodes.

Thrift Shop Divas Client Success:
For as long as he can remember, Paul Stevens thought he was different because he had a developmental disability. Paul didn’t want a miracle; he just wanted to be respected, find a good job, and eventually go to college. With the help of MERS/Goodwill’s Job Development Process, he is one step closer to reaching his long-term goals and becoming an independent young adult.

Since graduating high school in May 2013, Paul finally got his driver’s license and found a job he loves working as a food server at Twin Oaks Assisted Living. Paul even auditioned for and got a part in a play as a train conductor in Bye, Bye Birdie at St. Louis Community College’s Meramec Campus, where he toured the campus and got his first taste of the college experience. Paul’s inspiring story can be seen in the Thrift Shop Divas episode entitled, “The Show Must Go On,” where Beth helps Paul find the perfect costume for his role in Bye, Bye Birdie using upcycled materials from Goodwill stores.

What is a Thrift Shop Diva?
A Thrift Shop Diva knows that looking like a million bucks doesn’t have to mean that’s what you spent! Rather than emptying her wallet on someone else’s style at the mall, the Divas visit Goodwill for unique fashionable pieces at low prices. You never know what you’re going to find — that’s part of the fun!

Meet the Divas:
• Jenny, the upcycler, loves to transform thrift finds into functional furnishings. Her organization, Perennial, teaches the community how to transform orphaned furniture and more using DIY tricks and hand tools.
• Susannah, the stylist, is a frugal fashion blogger who writes Her Goodwill Hunting and searches for designer labels at Goodwill stores.
• Naomi is an 87-year-old seamstress and fashion fairy godmother who has gained a local reputation for her ability to transform thrift shop finds into highly-crafted wardrobes.
• Beth, the costume designer, is a professional seamstress and member of a singing pirate stunt show. She constructs wardrobes for Meramec College Theatre, adding authenticity to every production from Macbeth to You is a Good Man, Charlie Brown.

Goodwill Summer Youth Programs Served 500 Young Adults

What a great summer for St. Louis youth! MERS/Goodwill partnered with local agencies and employers to offer summer youth programs that address the rising unemployment rate and skills gap training among St. Louis’ youth.

For the second year in a row, MERS/Goodwill partnered with the City of St. Louis and Mayor Francis Slay, along with the Incarnate Word Foundation, to collaborate on the STL Youth Jobs program. In just its second year, STL Youth Jobs served 300 at-risk youth ages 16 to 23 in the city of St. Louis by helping them secure meaningful summer employment, exposing them to positive adult relationships, and providing them with the opportunity to advance their workplace and social skills. New to the program in 2014 were financial training sessions hosted by St. Louis Community Credit Union, which taught youth about budgeting and the importance of saving, establishing good credit, and avoiding predatory lenders.

Through the Summer Work Experience Program, there were 186 St. Louis County students aged 16 to 20 with a variety of disabilities who held summer jobs in their community and received job-coaching support. The students were paid an hourly wage for their work over the 8-week program through a grant from the Productive Living Board of St. Louis County, which is responsible for distributing grants to various programs that support St. Louis County citizens with disabilities. Students and employers were honored for their hard work and contribution to the program with certificates and a recognition event held on Thursday, July 31, at the Jewish Community Center.

SLATE’s Workforce Investment Act Program provides youth with assistance to develop job goals and work experience through tutoring, support in obtaining a diploma or GED, and job placement services. In 2014, 12 youth participated in the program and were each given a project to present at the end of the summer. Two youth from the program were invited by Dr. Kelvin Adams, Superintendent of Schools for the St. Louis Public School District, to present their projects at a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People’s event on Wednesday, July 30. Alviana Watkins received her Certified Nursing Assistant certificate and presented on improving pediatric nursing disparities. Martha Penermon presented on the unfairness women face in aviation career preparation in Missouri.

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. MERS/Goodwill congratulates the 2014 graduates of ICA who received their diplomas on Friday, June 6.
# 2014 Financial Information

## Donors
- John Fox Arnold
- Don and Emily Baldwin
- Mary Kay Beiermann
- Mark and Barbara Bernstein
- Wanda M. Blosefeld
- Gregg and Maureen Bredenkooer
- Dana Brown Charitable Trust
- Carolyn Lyons Club
- Joyce E. Cartwright
- Christ the King Lutheran Church
- Clifford Willard Gaylord Foundation
- Osmond and Sandra Conrad
- Mark and Dorothy Crinnion
- James L. Lewis
- Microsoft
- Musgrave Foundation
- Niidec Motor Corporation Charitable Trust
- PayPal Giving Fund
- Mary Anne Pemberton
- D. Phipps
- Robert Rassieur
- Norris B. Runalls
- Frank L. Seeger
- Robert Stahlhut
- Jerry and Greta Stoliar
- Robert P. Stupp Estate
- Pat and Jane Tracy Fund
- Floye and Jean Utter
- Michelle R. Vinson
- The von Gotard Family Foundation

## 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: Exploration, 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 professional individuals
- Transition from School to Work
- Child Day Care Center and Pre-School
- Next Generation Career Centers (NGCC):
  - WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program
  - WIA 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

## Services Available
- 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

## Financial Information

### Public Support
- Contributions of inventory: $56,316,940
- Associated organizations: $698,399
- Other: $1,956,381
- **Total Public Support**: $58,971,720

### Revenue
- Store and salvage: $65,180,196
- Employment and training: $19,619,528
- Contract services: $6,943,008
- Sheltered workshop: $969,593
- Other program services: $1,665,564
- Investment income: $920,516
- Miscellaneous: $673,638
- **Total Revenue**: $95,992,043

### Total Public Support and Revenue
- **$154,963,763**

### Expenses
- Program services: $137,127,620
- Management and general: $5,700,410
- Fundraising: $2,558,925
- **Total Expenses**: $145,386,955

### Change in Net Assets
- **$9,576,808**

### Assets
- Cash and cash equivalents: $13,171,442
- Accounts receivables: $4,230,065
- Inventories: $2,476,701
- Investments: $15,132,234
- Property and equipment: $30,156,004
- Other: $2,578,488
- **Total Assets**: $67,749,934

### Liabilities and Net Assets
- Accounts payable and accrued expenses: $6,403,469
- Net Assets: $61,346,465
- **Total Liabilities and Net Assets**: $67,749,934

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**INDEPENDENT AUDIT FIRM**
Schowalter and Jabouri
11777 Gravois Road
St. Louis, MO 63127
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 Stratearn
St. Louis County Office of Productive Living Services - Joyce Prage, Kim Kopff
St. Louis Office 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 Investment Board - June O’Dee
Jewish Federation of St. Louis - Andrew Rehfeld
St. Charles County Department of Workforce Development - Don Holt
St. Francois County Board for the Developmentally Disabled - Leanna Burgess
Mid-America WIB - Debra Moore
Madison-Bond WIB - David Stecklin
Developmental Disabilities Resource Board - Peg Capo
Greene County Board for the Developmentally Disabled - Jan Jones
Office of Job Training Programs: Jefferson-Franklin Counties - Michael Ravencraft
U.S. Department of Labor - Stan Blazek
U.S. Department of Justice - Eric Stansbury
St. Louis Mental Health Board - Janie Dodson
Missouri Family Support Division - Alyson Campbell
Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services - Michael Brewer
Mildred Simon Foundation - Lewis C. Chartock, Ph.D.
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
Missouri Department of Economic Development - Melissa Wiltcamp
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

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David Kutchback
COO/Assistant CEO/Chief of Staff
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Chief Financial Officer
Mark Arens
Executive Vice President, Chief of Program Services
Mark Kahrs
Executive Vice President, Retail Services
Kristy Lance
Senior Vice President, Retail
Philesa White
Vice President, Human Resources
Marvis Washington
Vice President, Contracts
Jeff Cartnal
Vice President, Program Development
Hilary Wagner
Vice President, Employment & Training
DeAnn Briggs
Vice President, Southeast MO Services
Kevin Shaw
Vice President, Retail
Colin Kricinsky
Vice President, Contracts
Becky Polwart
Vice President, Retail
Beth Brown
Assistant Vice President, Employment & Training
Elizabeth Drennan
Assistant Vice President, Employment & Training
Esther Williams
Assistant Vice President, Innovative Concept Academy

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Tani Wolff, Assistant Secretary

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Gerald Kretmer
Robert Lefton
Stacy McMurray
Jack Minner
Harry Mopins, Jr.
James Mosquera

2015 MERS/Goodwill Board of Directors

Seated, left to right: Harry Mopins, Jr., Elizabeth Green, Robert Lefton, Julie Heiler-Rosenfeld, Milton Movitz, Darryl Jones, Edda Berti
Standing, left to right: Elliot Zucker, James Mosquera, Jay Summerville, Kraig Krekemeier, Christopher Tabourne, George Phillips, Michael Ishvitch, Louis Loebner, Gerald Kretmer, Joan M. Newman