



For Immediate Release:  
September 20, 2019

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## **Goodwill of Greater Washington Joins Broad Effort to Observe National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

Washington, D.C. – Every year, during the month of October, Goodwill of Greater Washington joins hundreds of organizations across the United States in recognizing National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This campaign is an opportunity to educate our nation's workforce, facilitate discussion about disability employment issues, and lift up the countless contributions of America's workers with disabilities. The theme for 2019 is "*The Right Talent, Right Now.*"

The history of National Disability Employment Awareness Month traces back to 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

"Every day, individuals with disabilities add significant value and talent to our workforce and economy," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta. "Individuals with disabilities offer employers diverse perspectives on how to tackle challenges and achieve success. Individuals with disabilities have the right talent, right now."

A key focus of Goodwill's mission of transforming lives and communities through the power of education and employment is to provide individuals with disabilities in the Washington, D.C. area the opportunity to obtain sustainable employment. This initiative is accomplished through the hiring of over 130 individuals with disabilities in our contracts division via the AbilityOne Program.

"We are proud to be a part of this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month," said Goodwill of Greater Washington Chief Marketing Officer Brendan Hurley. "It is an exceptional

opportunity to spread awareness about the tremendous contributions individuals with disabilities provide not only to our organization but to the American workforce as a whole.”

Employers and employees in all industries can learn more about how to participate in National Disability Employment Awareness Month and ways they can promote its message – during October and throughout the year – by visiting [www.dol.gov/ndeam](http://www.dol.gov/ndeam).

To learn more about Goodwill’s contracts division and the AbilityOne Program please visit <https://www.dcgoodwill.org/employment/contract-services/>.

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**About Goodwill of Greater Washington:** Goodwill of Greater Washington has been transforming lives and communities through the power of education and employment since 1935.