



NEWS RELEASE

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**GOODWILL'S GOOD CAREERS ACADEMY
PROVIDES AFFORDABLE TRAINING FOR HIGH-DEMAND JOBS
*Program set to expand in 2010 with new locations, career training programs***

SAN ANTONIO – Goodwill is expanding its efforts to help San Antonians pursue careers in information technology, healthcare and other high-demand fields.

The Good Careers Academy offers training that sets individuals on career paths as certified nursing aides, medical front office staff, pharmacy technicians, medical assistants, computer support specialists and business office administrators.

With one location successfully underway, Goodwill is adding new locations for the academy, including one in North Central San Antonio.

The academy provides top-quality training, affordable tuition, internships and job placement assistance. Because it's backed by Goodwill, the academy offers tuition at a significantly lower rate than many other career training schools, while adding support both in and out of the classroom to help students successfully complete their programs. Training programs vary in length from eight weeks to five months.

Students receive first-rate instruction through a partnership with the Alamo Colleges, which provide instructors, curriculum and expertise for many of the academy's programs.

The first Good Careers Academy location within the Goodwill store at 12332 I-10 West at DeZavala Road opened in fall of 2009. A new location opens in May within the Goodwill store at 13311 San Pedro Avenue (Highway 281 at Bitters Road).

More locations are in the works to meet the demand for this type of career training, says Bob Dugas, president and CEO of Goodwill.

"The combination of professional instruction from the Alamo Colleges and Goodwill's case management services means that students receive unparalleled support as they work to complete their courses and start new careers," Dugas says. "We are working to meet the demand for this kind of affordable training throughout the city."

COMPUTERS, HEALTH CARE CERTIFICATIONS AVAILABLE

The academy's program for computer support specialists provides two certifications from the Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA) in one convenient course:

- A+ certification offers entry-level IT technician training. The course covers preventive maintenance, basic networking, installation, troubleshooting and communication.
- Network+ certification trains participants in networking. The course covers maintaining, managing, troubleshooting, operating and configuring basic network infrastructure.

Tuition is \$3,500 for the A+ and Network+ four-month IT certification program, a cost that includes the first round of certification exam testing, tools and course curriculum.

The Good Careers Academy also offers medical certification programs. The Certified Nursing Aide program (CNA) provides entry level training in the nursing field. Nursing aides help care for people with physical or mental illnesses in a hospital, nursing care facility or mental health setting. Tuition for the eight week program is \$750, which includes the first round of exam testing. The course is completed in eight weeks.

A medical front office certification program provides instruction on office administration, medical billing/coding, HIPAA regulations, insurance vocabulary and more. Tuition for the four-month program costs \$900 and includes the first round of exam testing.

Pharmacy technician training includes internship opportunities at H-E-B and CVS Pharmacy. Training for the certification exam takes three months with a tuition of \$3,500.

The Business Office Technology program provides training in the latest industry standards. The three-month program is offered for a tuition of \$2,000.

Before beginning a program, students are assessed to determine if any prerequisite courses are needed. The Good Careers Academy provides basic skills training to build a foundation for other certification programs. Courses include GED Preparation, Microsoft Office, and Computer Technology, which offers basic training in Windows, IC3 Internet Computing and more.

All prerequisite courses are self-paced and cost from \$100 to \$200. All courses take place at the academy, which includes an IT lab and a medical training classroom.

Registration for all programs is ongoing. A non-refundable \$50 deposit is required upon registration. Some applicants may be eligible for up to a 90% discount on tuition if they qualify for specific grant funding. The academy will also refer those who qualify to other potential funding sources. For more information please call 210-924-8581 ext. 5200.

SUPPORT FOR SUCCESS

The academy fills a niche among career training schools by offering certifications at a significantly lower cost than other proprietary schools, while adding all the supports that a United Way agency such as Goodwill can provide.

“At some schools you pay almost as much for a certification as you would for college. We want to make these certifications available and affordable for everyone who wants to enroll, while providing wrap around services” says Donna Lazzari, Goodwill Vice President of People Services.

The academy offers students support beyond the classroom to help them with factors affecting their academic success, such as childcare, transportation or uniforms. All students are paired with a career coach who will provide them with support in reaching their goals and connect them to additional resources as needed.

“The career coaches will help them remove barriers to academic success, whatever those barriers may be,” Lazzari says. “They’re a resource to help students address any non-instruction related issues.”

Students also take part in on-the-job internships as part of each curriculum, along with job placement assistance upon completing their programs. Each student will have access to career coaching, resume help, job leads, job fair opportunities and one-on-one networking with employers through the academy.

DEVELOPING THE CITY’S WORKFORCE

The academy helps individuals get on a promising career path while helping to meet demand for fast-growing career fields. It’s an expansion of Goodwill’s ongoing efforts to connect employers and well-qualified job seekers.

“Goodwill has been strong in workforce development and placement for years, but the academy allows us to take our services to another level by preparing individuals for high-demand, skilled occupations,” Dugas says.

The academy is guided by industry advisory councils made up of area business leaders in information technology and healthcare fields. The councils provides input on curriculum, insight into the business community’s needs and also helps connect students with internship and job opportunities.

ABOUT GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF SAN ANTONIO:

Celebrating 65 years of community service, Goodwill is helping to change lives through the power of work. Each year, Goodwill provides employment services to nearly 50,000 San Antonio-area individuals who face employment barriers. In addition to operating 16 retail stores, over 25 donation stations and 11 Job Help Centers/Good Career Centers in San Antonio, New Braunfels, Seguin, Laredo and surrounding areas, Goodwill handles almost 40 contracts for services, ranging from document management to grounds maintenance.

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