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**Long Beach Nurse Honored by Goodwill Industries International
as its 2016 Kenneth Shaw Graduate of the Year
*Once Homeless, Single Mother and Today St. Mary Medical Center RN
Selected as Goodwill® Graduate of the Year***

Long Beach, CA — June 15, 2016 — Goodwill Industries International has named Tiarra Barrera-Hammond – a Long Beach nurse who was once a homeless, single mother – as its Kenneth Shaw Graduate of the Year. Barrera-Hammond is a graduate of the Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training program at Goodwill, Serving the People of Southern Los Angeles County (SOLAC). She was selected as the 2016 Kenneth Shaw Graduate of the Year award recipient after an exhaustive search was conducted from a nationwide pool of Goodwill graduates.

A video that shares Barrera-Hammond's journey from poverty to working nurse has been released. To view this video, [click here](#).

"During the training program, Goodwill provided me with a scholarship, tutorial assistance and support services to help me succeed as a CNA," Barrera-Hammond said. "The program gave me the inspiration I needed to embark on an exciting new career in healthcare that helped me support myself and my children."

While enrolled in the CNA program, Barrera-Hammond felt called to care for and nurture others in need. She took prerequisite courses for the registered nurse (RN) program at Long Beach City College. After graduating from the Goodwill CNA program, she remained in school full-time to complete her RN prerequisite courses. She was soon accepted into the college's Associate Degree nursing program, and she earned her degree two years later.

Barrera-Hammond eventually passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nursing, and then began a two-year contract to work as an RN at Dignity Health – St. Mary Medical Center.

"Like so many others before her, Tiarra used Goodwill services as a first step to forging a successful career and we're honored to support her in her journey," said Jim Gibbons, president and CEO of Goodwill Industries International. "We admire Tiarra's determination to pursue a rigorous profession and her passion for helping others as a nurse."

Janet McCarthy, president and CEO of Goodwill SOLAC, praised Barrera-Hammond for being a compassionate, dedicated professional who took the initiative to achieve her professional goals beyond her CNA training. "Goodwill SOLAC provided Tiarra with the tools and support services to help her further her education and training as a nurse," said McCarthy. "Tiarra is a role model for other Goodwill CNA students and we are proud of her hard work and the determination she demonstrated to earn her RN license."

Barrera-Hammond is now married with three children. Her family joined her at Goodwill Industries International's Delegate Assembly conference held earlier this month in Omaha, Nebraska to watch her receive her award.

Goodwill SOLAC is a nonprofit organization that transforms donated goods into job training, education and placement services for individuals with barriers to employment. Goodwill SOLAC serves 22 cities and communities throughout Southern Los Angeles County. Goodwill SOLAC's main facility — located at 800 W. Pacific Coast Highway in Long Beach — houses its administrative offices, training programs, processing operations, transportation fleet, LiNKS Sign Language & Interpreting Services, a retail store and its e-commerce operations. For more information about Goodwill SOLAC, please visit www.ThinkGood.org.

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Photo Caption #1

Tiarra Barrera-Hammond is beaming at Goodwill's Delegate Assembly, where she accepted the 2016 Graduate of the Year award.

Photo Caption #2

(From left) Tiarra Barrera-Hammond is pictured at the Delegate Assembly with Jim Gibbons, president and CEO of Goodwill Industries International, and Charles Jackson, 2016 Achiever of the Year award recipient.

Photo Caption #3

Tiarra Barrera-Hammond is shown at the Delegate Assembly with her husband Rickey Hammond and their children (from left) Tairajh, Roman and Treasure.