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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Holiday Gift-Giving Ideas: Help Create Jobs in Southern Los Angeles County This Season**

*You Can Make a Real Difference by Donating to  
Goodwill, Serving the People of Southern Los Angeles County*

Long Beach, CA—December 14, 2016—The holiday season provides the perfect opportunity to give thanks and to give back to people who are facing challenges within our communities. Youth, particularly those at risk for delinquency, need assistance to help them succeed in spite of the unfortunate circumstances they may have encountered. This season, Goodwill, Serving the People of Southern Los Angeles County (SOLAC) encourages you to give them the gift of employment.

In the spirit of holiday giving, Goodwill is urging everyone to make a real difference by giving a financial gift or donating stuff to Goodwill SOLAC. Your gifts and donations are used to help fund industry specific job training, follow along support services and job placement services as well as community-based services, such as career counseling, financial education and industry-recognized credentials. And those services go to help people who need a hand up, not a handout. One such person who benefitted from Goodwill services is Tiarra Barrera-Hammond.

Tiarra faced many challenges in her early 20s when she moved to Southern California in hopes of a fresh start. As a single mother with two young children, Tiarra faced more challenges than expected, including becoming homeless. Months later, she learned about Goodwill SOLAC's Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) Training Program. Determined to support herself and her family, Barrera-Hammond soon enrolled in the training program. It was the beginning of her journey to become a registered nurse.

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

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

Barrera-Hammond ultimately passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nursing. Now married with three children, Tiarra is serving a two-year contract to work as an RN at Dignity Health – St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach. Earlier this year, Goodwill Industries International named Tiarra as its Kenneth Shaw Graduate of the Year.

During this holiday season, if you're having trouble coming up with great gift ideas, Goodwill SOLAC encourages you to give the gift of employment.

"We hope that this holiday season, everyone will fight for job creation, purpose and opportunity," said Janet McCarthy, President and CEO of Goodwill SOLAC. "That's because we know that each and every one of us is able to make a real difference by giving a financial gift or donating our stuff to Goodwill SOLAC."

Monetary gifts can be given safely and securely through the Donate Now button displayed on the homepage of Goodwill SOLAC's website: [www.ThinkGood.org](http://www.ThinkGood.org). All monetary donations go directly to helping members of the community access the services they need to succeed. Goodwill's [donation impact calculator](#) provides feedback on the effect even the smallest donations can have for people in the donor's community.

By donating to Goodwill SOLAC, you help open up opportunities for others in Southern Los Angeles County who are looking to find a job and build skills, including low-income families, single mothers, seniors, youth and many others, including people like Tiarra.

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](http://www.ThinkGood.org).

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