

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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From Homeless, Single Mother to Registered Nurse
and Goodwill® Graduate of the Year

**Goodwill Industries International Honors Tiarra Barrera-Hammond
as its 2016 Kenneth Shaw Graduate of the Year**

LONG BEACH, CA — Tiarra Barrera-Hammond has faced many challenges over the past several years. During her early 20s, she had to start over in California. As a single mother with two young children, Tiarra faced more challenges than expected, including becoming homeless. She learned about a Goodwill® Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training program run by Goodwill, Serving the People of Los Angeles County (SOLAC) based in Long Beach. 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. Goodwill Industries International has named Tiarra Barrera-Hammond as its Kenneth Shaw Graduate of the Year.

“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 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 CNA program, she remained in school full-time to complete her RN pre-requisite courses. She was later accepted into the college’s Associate Degree nursing program, and she earned her degree two years later.

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

“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. She will receive her award at Goodwill Industries International’s annual Delegate Assembly conference in June.

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Goodwill Industries International's Kenneth Shaw Graduate of the Year Award honors an outstanding person for completing a Goodwill career program and becoming competitively employed by a non-Goodwill employer in the community. The award was renamed in 2008 to honor the late Kenneth Shaw's significant contributions to the Goodwill enterprise over a four-decade period.

ABOUT GOODWILL INDUSTRIES INTERNATIONAL:

Goodwill Industries International is a network of 164 autonomous, community-based organizations in the United States and Canada with a presence in 13 other countries. Goodwill is one of America's top 20 most inspiring companies (*Forbes*, 2014). Goodwill organizations are innovative and sustainable social enterprises that fund job training programs, employment placement services and other community-based programs by selling donated clothing and household items in more than 3,100 stores and online at shopgoodwill.com[®]. Local Goodwill organizations also build revenue and create jobs by contracting with businesses and government to provide a wide range of commercial services, including packaging and assembly, food services preparation, and document imaging and shredding. Last year, Goodwill placed 312,000 people in employment in the United States and Canada. In addition, more than 35 million people used computers and mobile devices to access Goodwill education, training, mentoring and online learning services to strengthen their skills. To learn more, visit goodwill.org.

For more information or to find a Goodwill location near you, use the online locator at Goodwill.org or call (800) GOODWILL. Follow us on Twitter: [@GoodwillIntl](https://twitter.com/GoodwillIntl) and [@GoodwillCapHill](https://twitter.com/GoodwillCapHill), and find us on Facebook: [GoodwillIntl](https://www.facebook.com/GoodwillIntl)

ABOUT GOODWILL SOLAC:

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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