

1.04 History of Licking/Knox Goodwill Industries

In early June 1957, The Business and Professional Women's Club of Newark saw the need to undertake the development of Goodwill Industries in Newark as a division of the Columbus Goodwill. The first organizational meeting was held June 21, 1957, which formed an Advisory Board. The first official meeting of the Advisory Board was convened July 10, 1957.

Columbus Goodwill's Executive Director Reverend George Morey Evans gave early leadership to the fledgling division with the assistance of Mr. George Oliphant of Columbus. The official Grand Opening of Newark Goodwill Industries was March 4, 1958, in a rented building on Everett Avenue. It had the sum total of one (1) employee.

By 1959, seventeen (17) individuals with disabilities were employed and laundry equipment was purchased. In the same year, Goodwill became a member of the Licking County United Way. Growth continued, and in 1961 Goodwill purchased and moved to new facilities at 24 Wilson Street where it housed production and rehabilitation facilities.

A retail store and workshop were opened in March 1965 in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. A store then opened in Newark in August 1966 at 33 South Fourth Street. Financial losses forced the closure of the Mt. Vernon store and workshop in 1979.

Greater emphasis was placed on rehabilitation and preparing workers for competitive employment from 1966 through 1972. To that point, the largest caseload from the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation was seen in 1971. Goodwill continued to flourish until 1976.

Early in 1976, the Columbus Goodwill terminated their traditional programs for satellite divisions. In May all divisions either had to shut their doors or become an independent Goodwill facility. On November 16, 1977, the Newark Goodwill became the Licking/Knox Goodwill Industries, Inc. The years following were difficult and trying times for an independent agency.

The Board of Trustees voted to move the Goodwill facilities to 55 South Fifth Street in 1979. A loan in the amount of \$219,000 was assumed and renovation of the facility was completed in September 1980.

A janitorial program was developed in cooperation with the Ohio Industries for the Handicapped (OIH). Licking/Knox Goodwill was certified as a "State Use Agency" in 1983. The first janitorial contract was received through OIH in October 1984 for the Ohio Department of Transportation District Headquarters. In 1985 a janitorial contract was acquired at the Owens Corning Technical Center and in 1988 a janitorial contract at the Newark Air Force Base was added. Licking/Knox Goodwill Industries' janitorial contracts continue to grow and are a major source of training and employment for our clients.

New horizons were explored in 1987, when a feasibility study was conducted in association with the local county government offices in the area of recycling. Based on the positive conclusions of that study, the Board of Trustees voted to proceed with the construction of a new recycling center. Grants were applied for, and in May 1987, construction of the recycling center facilities was completed. A grand opening occurred in April 1988.

A janitorial contract at the Bricker Federal Building was added in 1991 and created fourteen jobs. This was followed by an emergency start-up contract at DCSC in October 1992. The DCSC contract was the largest janitorial set-aside contract in the nation. It had a total dollar value of \$2.8 million and created employment for sixty individuals.

Goodwill Industries' growth continued to soar. New janitorial contracts were established, man-hours and employees increased at Newark Air Force Base and the Bricker Federal Building and in-house contracts increased. This, in turn, resulted in the vehicle fleet being upgraded to handle employee transportation to and from the federal contracts and the upgrading of the facility on Fifth Street.

In 1993, the recycling center looked at ways to operate more efficiently and effectively. The center applied for and received a series of two grants from the Coshocton-Fairfield-Licking-Perry Solid Waste District. The first grant enabled the center to purchase new equipment, repair existing equipment, and construct a drive-thru complete with covered carport. A second grant was approved in the fall 1994 for the construction of a new recycling center.

New administrative staff positions were created in 1994. Space became a problem, so the Board of Trustees approved a leased facility proposal for 99-109 Union Street in July 1994. This facility housed the administrative and human resource offices, donated goods processing center, and an annex store, which opened in January 1995.

In July 1997, the Recycling Division was merged with the Retail Division. Due to a down turn in the markets, high operational expenses and the resulting losses incurred, the Recycling Center was scaled back and transformed into a drive-through Attended Donation Center and salvage operation between January 1998 and January 1999. In March 2002, the Attended Donation Center was closed and operations transferred to the Annex Store Attended Donation Center.

The Retail Division has steadily grown. A store opened at 8 East Vine Street in Mt. Vernon in March 1995. Due to its small size and lack of customer parking it was moved to the Mt. Vernon Shopping Plaza, 855 Coshocton Avenue in January of 1998. A store was opened in Utica in May 1997. This store is on U.S. Route 62, almost at the corner of State Route 13. This store has helped tremendously in providing services to northern Licking and southern Knox Counties. In November 2000, a store was opened in Johnstown on U.S. 62. This store has 6,500 square feet and was our second store located in a retail shopping center. This store brings the Goodwill message and provides services to western Licking County.

In April 2000, the Retail Division began selling donated goods online at the "Virtual Store." This operation is a cooperative effort with Goodwill of Orange County California through the shopgoodwill.com website. The Virtual Store has grown to a staff of two fulltime employees and is currently one of the top ten online sites of all participating Goodwills.

In 2001, our Retail Division experienced a 58.3% annual growth in retail sales. This represented the highest annual growth rate of any retail division in the entire Goodwill organization.

As business expanded, Licking/Knox Goodwill Industries, Inc., became one of the top ten employers in Licking and Knox counties with over thirty-four janitorial contract sites for five years, from 1993 through 1998. Licking/Knox Goodwill was the fastest growing Goodwill in the world with a growth rate of 585%. The Board of Trustees developed a master development plan to build for the future. An ongoing process of acquiring property contiguous to Goodwill began. A new 9,000 square foot administrative office building was built at 65 South Fifth Street; a 2,400 square foot facility was built at 51 Wilson Street for the transportation facility. In a short five years, Goodwill reinvested 1.5 million dollars in capital improvements and property acquisitions. In collaboration with the community, Goodwill opened three efficiency apartments and two homes to provide transitional housing with preferences given to homeless veterans.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Department began working with consumers from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission in 1998. At that time, only one staff member was employed in this department. In July 1999, the Vocational Rehabilitation Department signed a contract with the Department of Job and Family Services—Ohio Works First to provide services for the “hard” to serve. This department signed another contract in July 2001 with the Department of Job and Family Services—Workforce Investment Act to provide services for at risk youth. Currently this department provides the following services: Work Adjustment, Situational Assessment, Occupational Skill Training, Job Coaching, Job Development, Job Placement, Job Retention, Career Interest Assessments, Life Skills Training, and Supported Employment. This department continues to grow and currently employs four fulltime staff members.

Licking/Knox Goodwill Industries, Inc., has recommitted itself to the vocational rehabilitation and training of individuals with disabilities and/or individuals who may be vocationally disadvantaged so that all have a chance, not charity, in today’s competitive workforce. ***We Believe in the Power of Work!***