

Media Alert

For Immediate Release
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COVID Leads to a Greater Need for Mentors for Youth in Franklin County

Rocky Mount, VA – The COVID-19 pandemic has changed so many things; however, the need for area youth to experience positive growth through a mentoring relationship is now more important than ever. As students return to a hybrid school model, with less face to face interaction with adult role models, Goodwill is seeking adult mentors to help ensure youth still receive the positive guidance and support they need.

Goodwill's Franklin County Youth Mentoring program is adapting to ensure the safety of mentors and mentees, while still providing much needed mentoring services. The program is using technology to enable youth to remain connected with their mentor. Meetings, resources, and trainings for both the mentors and mentees are available virtually, and Goodwill staff are hosting virtual meetings with mentors and students to ensure the mentoring sessions continue to be productive and successful. The program is also beginning to resume in-person sessions and group activities with enhanced safety precautions, such as outdoor activities, which allow for one-on-one mentoring while social distancing.

"Although the times are changing, the ever-growing need for positive role models for our youth remains the same," states Ernesto Muse, Goodwill Youth Services Program Manager. "Just as this pandemic has caused uncertainty in many adults, the uncertainty in our youth grows as well, and they need mentors now, more than ever. As the times and social climate continue to evolve, so will the Franklin County Youth Mentoring program at Goodwill. We will always seek to do what is best to serve the youth and families of our community."

Goodwill is currently seeking 40 adult mentors to volunteer to provide guidance, support, and encouragement to help youth improve their self-confidence, increase on-time graduation rates, and reduce their risk of future involvement with the law. Educational, recreational, and relationship-building activities with their mentor will help the youth to achieve greater confidence, education success, and better relationships with teachers, parents, and guardians. At-risk youth who are 12 to 17 and living in Franklin County are eligible for the program.

For more information on how to become a mentor, or to learn more about the program, [click here](#).

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About Goodwill Industries of the Valleys

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys serves 35 counties and 14 cities throughout Central, Southwest, and Southside Virginia. Its mission is to help people and families in our community achieve a better life through work and independence. In 2019, Goodwill assisted more than 38,000 individuals with barriers to success, helped 2,921 people find jobs in our community, and provided training opportunities that resulted in 2,550 credentials being earned by individuals participating in Goodwill programs. At the end of July, Goodwill had already assisted nearly 45,000 people in 2020. Visit www.goodwillvalleys.com for more information.

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