

# A look at Goodwill's contribution to Gaston County

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Special to The Gazette

When dropping off clothing or household items at a local Goodwill or getting a deal on a purchase, you're helping provide employment and training for job seekers in Gaston County and boosting the local economy. This was

the message Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont officials shared with Belmont Rotarians at a recent meeting.

Chief Operating Officer Jose Luis spoke about the growth and development of Goodwill Industries and the economic impact Goodwill has on communities, while Liz Romero, director of

regional career services, talked about the job training services Goodwill provides.

After recently opening a large donation and sales center in Belmont at 6507 Wilkinson Boulevard in the former Bi-Lo Supermarket location, Goodwill now has three in Gaston County employing 140 workers and providing an economic

impact in 2022 of \$30.6 million. The other two Gaston centers are in Lowell at Franklin Square at 1004 S. Church St. and in Gastonia at 2204 Union Road.

There's also a Goodwill career center at 116 Armstrong St. in Gastonia, providing services such as computer access,

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resume review, job search support, course enrollment and more.

Founded in Boston in 1902, Goodwill is one of the world's largest private providers of employment and training services and one of the largest non-profits in America, Jose Luis said. The network includes more than 150 independent, community-based Goodwills in the United States and Canada and 12 other countries.

Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont was founded in 1965 and serves 18 counties, 13 in North Carolina and five in South Carolina, and has more than 1,200 employees. Its headquarters are in Charlotte near the airport on Wilkinson Boulevard.

"The purpose of Goodwill is to help people see possibilities, seize opportunities and prosper," said Liz Romero, director of Regional Career Services.

Among ways Goodwill helps job seekers are:

- To uncover their talents and passions
- To acquire new skills or change

careers

- To find work, or find better work
- To re-enter society
- To achieve stability in health, finances or housing
- To advance professional career

Belmont Rotarians also learned that more than 95% of all items donated to Goodwill are resold through the Goodwill system, making a significant impact by reducing landfill waste.

To learn more about Goodwill, visit: **[goodwillsp.org](http://goodwillsp.org)**.

Rotary is an international service organization with 1.4 million members in more than 200 countries. "Service Above Self" is the Rotary motto. Rotarians work together to promote peace, fight disease, support education, grow local economies and protect the environment.

Belmont Rotary Club, which will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2025, meets for lunch and a program on local topics each Wednesday, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church in Belmont. Guests interested in learning more about local businesses and issues and how Rotary serves the community are welcome. For more information, visit [www.belmontrotaryclub.com](http://www.belmontrotaryclub.com).