



results  
success  
inspiration

**If there's such a thing as a contagious smile, JoAnne Evans has one. Spend a few minutes talking to her about even the most basic, everyday things and you'll find your spirit has been lifted. She's friendly. She's optimistic. She's the kind of person our world could use more of.**



**JoAnne Evans says Goodwill helped her gain the confidence needed to find and keep a job.**

The summer sun shines down from the brilliant blue sky above as JoAnne strides toward a bench in the shade just a few feet away. It's another day of record heat and like all of us, she's doing her best to stay cool and relaxed. As she sits down, JoAnne lets out a happy, gentle sigh and smiles.

When she moved to Detroit from St. Louis, Missouri 15 years ago, she figured she might escape some of the heat, but obviously this year hasn't delivered on that promise. Still, she loves her adopted home and says she is glad that she made the move.

"I came here to live closer to friends and get involved with a church where I knew the pastor. Of course, one of the first challenges I had to face was employment." She remembers wondering, "What was I going to do? How was I going to support myself? It was a big concern."

JoAnne had an associate's degree, some work experience and practical office skills but she also had a significant hearing disability. She explains, "I was always able to get jobs. I worked in the banking industry and at the post office but I never felt comfortable being honest with my

employers about my hearing difficulties. So after a few months on each job, I would find that I just couldn't keep up with the work and I would quit. It was discouraging. I couldn't seem to find a job that really fit me."

A positive thinker at heart, JoAnne didn't give up. She explored several job training and employment programs until her search brought her in contact with Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit. In 2003, she entered Goodwill's Within Reach program. For the next six months, JoAnne received training to sharpen her skills, polish her resume, and most importantly, develop the confidence needed to face her hearing difficulties head on.

"My experience with Goodwill was amazing. They understood me as a person. I felt accepted and respected and that made such an impact on how I saw myself," JoAnne shares.

"Everyone that I met from Goodwill was encouraging and just plain nice! The way they treated me and the resources they shared finally gave me the confidence I needed to be successful. I learned how to find and keep a job from Goodwill."



**JoAnne works in the patient transportation department at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. She loves her job and meets each work day with a welcoming smile.**



After completing the program and serving as a trainee at Goodwill, JoAnne's advisor, Layna Gardner-Lott, placed her in the patient transportation department at Henry Ford Hospital. Almost nine years later, JoAnne is still going strong and celebrating her long term success.



**Significant hearing loss was one of JoAnne's major barriers to employment. The training and support she received from Goodwill helped her communicate confidently with prospective employers so she could find a position matched to her abilities.**

Her face fills with pride as she talks about her job. "I move patients throughout the hospital so they can get from their rooms to testing areas or procedures. I like it because I'm a cheerful, happy person and this job gives me a chance to spread that around a little." JoAnne continues, "No one wants to be in the hospital. Sometimes that means people might be sad or scared or feel alone. So, I do what I can to not only get patients from place to place but also encourage them to stay positive. This is a great job for me because it matches my personality. Being friendly just comes naturally to me."

Looking back, JoAnne says her job at Henry Ford reminds her of what Goodwill did to help her along the way. She explains, "Everyday, I help people get where they are going. I guide them safely to their destination. And that's exactly what Goodwill did for me... they guided me through my challenges and encouraged me to become more than I thought I could be."

With an attitude like that, it's no surprise JoAnne is looking forward to the future. When asked about her goals and what she dreams of doing next, she thinks for a minute, then smiles to respond. "Well, I know I need to finish my education. Hopefully this winter I can get started on that. I want to earn a business degree and open a small business down the road. I have a lot of good ideas so I need to increase my knowledge. That way, when the time is right, I'll be ready to pursue them."

Until then, she's totally content with her job at Henry Ford Hospital. She fills the halls with her friendly spirit and does whatever she can to help patients feel encouraged. JoAnne says it's all part of giving back and that's something she plans to continue no matter where the future takes her.



**JoAnne enjoys the spirit of teamwork in her department and says Henry Ford Hospital is a great employer. She likes having a job that allows her to be compassionate and care for people because those are two of the things she values most.**



**Learn more about clients like JoAnne Evans on Goodwill's YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/goodwilldetroitpr>**

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