



2019 is an exciting year for both Goodwill and the **YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee** as they each celebrate their anniversaries. Both organization's missions are deeply rooted in inclusion, empowerment, and equity for all and by teaming together they have created new opportunities for positive impact in the community. You can see this firsthand when you enter any of the three YMCA branches and witness a Goodwill volunteer greet you from behind the desk. Community Access Intermediate Track trainees work alongside YMCA staff to scan guest cards, provide keys, fold towels, play with children in the Kid Zone, clean fitness equipment, and more.

YMCA staff and guests have always embraced volunteers with open arms while offering them the chance to gain confidence and skills related to communication, customer service, teamwork, problem solving, and so much more. Last year four Goodwill trainees completed a four-month volunteer rotation. As a result, three of those four individuals are currently employed! YMCA staff were even able to attend the 500 Jobs Celebration that took place last October to commemorate these and other successful hires. Community Integration Specialist Karen Kiley says, "The YMCA is a family and by making our volunteers part of that, they are providing an environment where growth happens, independence is achieved, and people thrive."

This June five new volunteers started their rotation and are learning something new every day! One volunteer, Sandy, says that her favorite part of the experience so far is "the people; everyone is so nice and welcoming". This year the agencies are continuing to further develop their partnership by exploring new ways to engage Goodwill trainees through fitness classes, health and wellness programs, and presentations from YMCA staff about topics such as professional behavior and customer service.

Shanee' Jenkins, Vice President of Social Responsibility and Strategic Partnerships for the YMCA states, "we recognize that by bringing neighbors together to advance the common good, we can improve lives and strengthen communities". Goodwill and the YMCA are proud of the impact that they have had over these last 100 years but their work is far from done. We look forward to even greater positive influence in the future and to celebrating diversity, connection, and achievement for all!