Goodwill
WESTERN & NORTHERN
CONNECTICUT

# 2024-2026
# Strategic Plan

## Leading With Purpose:
## Empowering Tomorrow

**NAVIGATING THE FUTURE WITH FISCAL RESILIENCE**

**Introducing Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan**

Dear Esteemed Stakeholders,

I trust this message finds you well. It is with great enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility that I share with you an important milestone in the journey of Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut—the unveiling of our new strategic plan, one that places a strong emphasis on fiscal sustainability.

1. **A Clear Focus on Achieving Financial Sustainability**: At the heart of our strategic plan is a commitment to fiscal responsibility and sustainability. We recognize the importance of not only fulfilling our mission but also ensuring the long-term financial health of our organization. This plan is designed to guide us toward a future where we can continue making a meaningful impact while maintaining a robust financial foundation.
2. **Operational Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness**: Our strategic initiatives include a dedicated focus on operational efficiency and cost effectiveness. By streamlining processes, optimizing resource allocation, and embracing innovative solutions, we aim to enhance our organizational efficiency. This disciplined approach will enable us to allocate resources judiciously, making every dollar count toward advancing our mission.
3. **Diversifying Revenue Streams**: In our pursuit of fiscal sustainability, we are committed to diversifying our revenue streams. This includes exploring new fundraising avenues, cultivating strategic partnerships, and identifying opportunities for earned income. Diversification will not only strengthen our financial resilience but also provide the flexibility needed to navigate changing economic landscapes.
4. **Quality Services through Transparency and Accountability**: We understand the trust you place in Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut, and we take our responsibility as stewards of your support seriously. Our strategic plan includes measures to enhance transparency and accountability in financial management as well as service provision. We are dedicated to keeping you informed about how your contributions are utilized and the impact they create within our community.
5. **Engaging Stakeholders in Financial Sustainability:** As valued stakeholders, your insights and perspectives are integral to our success. We invite you to actively engage with us on this journey toward financial sustainability. Your feedback, questions, and collaboration are

essential as we collectively work to ensure a financially resilient future for Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut.

We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and grateful for your continued partnership. Together, we can navigate the future with fiscal resilience, ensuring that Goodwill remains a beacon of hope and positive change in our community.

Thank you for your unwavering support.

Warm regards,

Heather Marquis & Jeffery Neff
Interim Co-Presidents & CEOs, Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut, Inc.

# MISSION STATEMENT

Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut ("GWNC") strengthens communities by helping people with disabilities and other disadvantages maximize independence through job training and other support services.

# ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

**We respect our Customers and Clients**

- All our Team Members are professionals who strive to meet the needs of those we serve.

**We respect our Team Members**

- The diversity of our Team Members is recognized and celebrated. We strive as an organization to improve their career prospects.

**We Communicate Effectively**

- Effective communication promotes productive dialogue. This encourages opportunities to seek new perspectives and make informed decisions.

**We are Accountable**

- We recognize that the actions of our Team Members reflect on the organization as well as themselves.

**We Collaborate**

- Collaboration breeds trust, and trust allows us to be creative and thoughtful.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. **A Clear Focus on Financial Sustainability:**
    - Getting back to black in 2024, increasing revenue and controlling costs

2. **Operational Efficiency and Cost Effectiveness:**
    - Through containment of Labor / Revenue ratios and a healthy DGR ER

3. **Diversifying Revenue Streams:**
    - Expansion of Fundraising and Grant writing

4. **Quality Services through Transparency and Accountability:**
    - Quality of Programs and Customer Service

5. **Engaging Stakeholders:**
    - Strengthening Governance
    - Personnel Communication and Development

# PLAN ASSUMPTIONS

Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut (GWNC) is pleased to present our 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. This plan is the culmination of significant collaboration across all levels of the organization. Individuals representing each Program, Department, and level have contributed to the ideas, goals, and visions represented within this plan.

GWNC's strategic planning is a process of defining our strategy, making decisions, and allocating resources to achieve our outlined goals. We do this by assessing where we are as an organization and where we are going. Information gathered in this process will be used to communicate our priorities and goals with persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

### Assessment Tools-

The goals found herein are based on the needs and relationships with persons served, customers, personnel, and stakeholders.

Goodwill of Western and Northern Connecticut utilizes several tools to assess the needs of these groups. An annual survey is administered electronically via SurveyMonkey to persons served and stakeholders (including but not limited to guardians, conservators, employers, referral sources, and other referral agency personnel as applicable). Both Human Services and Retail personnel participated in SWOT

meetings and value mapping activities to identify organizational needs. Donor feedback questionnaires are also collected. Employee feedback is of vast importance, which is why the organization regularly utilizes surveys to assess sentiment around benefits, training, supervision and beyond. Additionally, feedback is encouraged in multiple ways including in person, suggestion boxes and through formal and a non-formal complaint process.

**Fiscal Position and Competitive Environment-**

In developing these goals, the organization has considered our competitive environment, financial opportunities, financial threats, and the capabilities of our organization. As of the development of this plan, the organization is on the road to recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. In the preparation phase of creating this strategic plan, the organization took a deep dive into the outlook of our financial sustainability. As a result of this work, including input from the board of directors and other stakeholders, the organization's financial health is the focus of this upcoming plan. We know with strong financial health we are better able to achieve our mission, which is the goal of operation. Although the same store's growth year to year has lagged, we have still had overall revenue growth, and our ecommerce operation has considerable upside. The organization maintains its financial stability through a very strong balance sheet, a healthy cash balance and considerable net asset volume. Brick and mortar retail continues to be slow at times, but the thrifting industry has accelerated growth contemporaneously.

**Social Determinants of Health-**

The CDC defines social determinants of health as the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. According to the CDC "these circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources at global, national, and local levels." They state, "social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities – the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries."

The CDC continues "Resources that enhance quality of life can have a significant influence on population health outcomes. Examples of these resources include safe and affordable housing, access to education, public safety, availability of healthy foods, local emergency/health services, and environments free of life-threatening toxins".

Here at GWNC, we are committed to strategically addressing these determinates through our retail stores that provide much needed goods at affordable prices along with our Human Services programs that focus on employment and other supports such as housing and living skills.

**Demographics and Analysis of Human Services (including Career Centers) Staff and Participants in Relation to Local Census (data from 2023)-pending March 2024 person served**

In a review of the demographics of GWNC's HS personnel and participants, it was found that the HS staffing pool is reflective of the population we serve. Additionally, we have found that we serve a larger percentage of African American (35%; GWNC Team Members represent 28.4% of total staff) and Hispanic (29%. GWNC Team Members = 22.1% ) individuals than the statistical state average (12% and 16.5% respectively), as evidenced by the most recent statewide census data available (2019). The gender makeup of the individuals we serve, is also reflective of the most recent census data; it is an even split of individuals served between females and males (50.1% and 49.9% respectively. GWNC Staff = 62.3% and 37.7%, respectively). Approximately 62% of the service area is represented by individuals between 18 and 65 years old. In regard to age: .4 % of participants are 12-15 years of age; 23% are 16-24 years of age; 23% are 25-34 years of age; 19% are 35-44 years of age; 17% are 45-54 years of age and 18% are 55 + years of age.

**Other areas of consideration in development of the strategic plan include-**

- The regulatory and legislative environment
- Use of technology to support efficient operations, effective service delivery, and performance improvement.