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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Goodwill Expands Mission with New Store Openings**

**OAKLAND, Calif.** – Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay (Goodwill) celebrated the Grand Opening of two new retail locations in Northern California and is planning a third new store in the spring. On January 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>, Goodwill hosted opening events at new store locations in the cities of Brentwood and Vallejo. In addition, Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay will be opening their doors to a new store in Fremont, California by April 1, 2010.

“This past weekend we celebrated two new retail stores – our brand new store in Brentwood and our relocated Goodwill store in Vallejo. We hosted community celebrations at each location on Saturday, January 16th, with special promotions, drawings, and prizes,” said John B. Latchford, President & CEO of Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay. “Both of these stores represent months of hard work on our part to expand not only our retail and donations presence, but to bring our mission services to new communities. With every new socially-responsible business location we open, we are creating jobs in the community and expanding our ability to provide workforce development services to those in need. We are especially excited to be a new part of the Brentwood community, which has grown tremendously over the last few years.”

Customers and donors crowded both the Brentwood and Vallejo stores over the opening weekend. Hundreds flocked to the stores to have a look, shop, and to be one the three lucky raffle winners at each location to take home a brand-new ipod. Reactions from those in attendance at our events seem impressed with the new store design. “This doesn’t even look like a thrift store,” said one customer who wished to remain unnamed. “I was surprised to see that it was a Goodwill store – pleasantly surprised,” she added, looking at the price tag. Each store not only features Goodwill’s new retail design, which emphasizes the agency’s mission, but also is equipped with separate donation reception centers to ensure ease and convenience for material donors.

“Goodwill is designing our stores with both customers and program participants in mind. We are creating an exciting retail environment for our shoppers as well as ensuring that those receiving job training at our locations work at a site

comparable to industry retail stores so that they can develop applicable skills for today's competitive job market," added Latchford. "Of our 25 stores, 9 of them feature our new store design. We anticipate that by 2012 all of our stores will feature this new design, which focuses on communicating our mission to the community."

The retail stores of Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay support workforce development community services, ensuring that more than 3,000 individuals and families every year receive the training and support they need to overcome their challenges to obtaining and sustaining employment. Since late 2008, demand for Goodwill's programs has been ever-increasing as more community members are affected by the declining economy and rising unemployment rate. As part of Goodwill's programs, more than 1,000 individuals receive hands-on, paid job training to at our 25 retail stores, three plants, and 21 donation sites annually. In addition to receiving hands-on training participants can also enroll in our job readiness and search classes and receive one-on-one assistance in finding jobs.

Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay is underway with their first-ever retail store location in Fremont, California. The new retail store is expected to open by April 1<sup>st</sup> and will include a separate donation center. The new Fremont Goodwill Store will help the agency expand its mission into southern Alameda County.

Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay is a non-profit agency providing job training, employment experience and life skills, enabling disadvantaged and disabled individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. We do this through financially sound community-based businesses that provide vital vocational services to our community. For more information about Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay and how you can help, please contact Kimberly Scrafano, Vice President of Development & Community Affairs, at (510) 698-7223.

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