

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: David J. Tobiczyk, Vice President – Marketing & Development
412-390-2236 or david.tobiczyk@goodwillswpa.org

Grant from American Eagle Outfitters Supports Goodwill Youth Programs

PITTSBURGH, Pa., Dec. 8, 2009 –Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania has received a \$5,300 grant from the American Eagle Outfitters Foundation to help support the agency’s youth programs. The two programs – Transition Works! and Project SEARCH – provide real-life work experience to youth with disabilities to help them prepare for competitive employment.

“We are very grateful to the AE Foundation for helping us carry on these two very successful programs,” said Vicki Cook, Goodwill’s Director of Development. “For the Transition Works! program, this funding will be used for employability skills resources such as books, games and videos and for student uniforms. For Project SEARCH, it will be used for employability skills resources as well, and for a TV, DVD player, laptop computer and projector.

Transition Works! provides work skills training for high school youth with disabilities ages 16 to 21. Throughout the school year, students participate in four nine-week training rotations to gain valuable job skills. Since its inception, this program has served over 525 youth with disabilities.

The cornerstone of Project SEARCH is total immersion in a large business. Each school day, students report to the host business, learn employability skills in a classroom and valuable jobs skills while participating in three job-training rotations. The ultimate goal of the program is competitive employment. Historically, the placement rate for Project SEARCH has been 85 percent.

For more information on Goodwill’s programs for youth with disabilities, contact Holly Opatick-Rae, Director of Youth Services at 412-390-2244 or holly.opatick-rae@goodwillswpa.org.

###