

Get Inspired ✨ September Success Story



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In addition to in-class learning, Craig got to learn on the job—and get paid! See how with Goodwill.



“I thank Goodwill for everything they've done. I got my life back after nine years working nights.”



Goodwill's Construction & Trade Skills
Training Program

September Success Story

"Nine years working at night takes its toll and it just wore me out. I got my life back after nine years."

Meet Craig

Craig is a North Carolina native, who earned a bachelor's degree in architecture in 2001, then took his talents to Atlanta, Georgia, for an internship with Phillips Partnership.

During his time there, Craig worked on a team whose projects included retail shopping centers, lifestyle centers, mall entrances, big box stores, as well as multifamily and multi-use buildings. This impressive range of experience deepened the knowledge he gained in college like drawing buildings, reading blueprints and submitting permits.

In 2012, Craig moved back to Charlotte for a completely different type of work in the pharmaceuticals industry, where he was employed up until this year.

Finding GoodWill University

"I was watching TV and it came on the news, how Goodwill was helping people find placement in the construction industry because of the [labor] shortage in construction," he said. "It was talking about the [classes they were offering](#) and

the young men and women that they had placed in construction."

Before coming to Goodwill, Craig already knew how to read construction plans, but he didn't know much about estimating. He wanted to get back into the field but in a different way. A phone call was all it took to get the ball rolling.

"Goodwill helped me to get a job at Morcon Construction as an estimator,"
Craig said. *"I took classes at Goodwill to restart my career."*

Taking Construction Classes

The [Blueprint Reading and Estimating course](#) offered at the [Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center](#) covers the fundamentals of interpreting residential blueprints and calculating the quantities of materials and labor required to construct a house. This class bridged the gap in Craig's experience.

"My background is more commercial architecture, so it was an opportunity to do estimates," he said. *"It was easier to transition from commercial to residential and then go into estimating because I already have a design background. When they offered the estimating piece in residential, I thought it was very intriguing."*

Lowe's Work-Based Learning Grant

Craig not only took part in this training program, but he also participated in Lowe's Work-Based Learning grant opportunity, which provided four weeks of

paid training. This means that in addition to his in-class learning, Craig got to learn on the job and get paid!

Learning at Goodwill University

Goodwill offers an experience that sets its participants up for success upon completion. In addition to being free of charge, its courses are competitive, accommodating and unique!

"I hadn't seen anyone actually teach estimating in blueprint reading classes," Craig said. "Everybody wanted me to go back to school for six months to two years to get a certification. But I have a family, so I couldn't drop everything I'm doing and go to school for two years."

When Craig learned he could take courses at Goodwill for eight weeks while working, he knew he'd found a winner.

"I realized that I could go to work, take the classes after work, and then restart my career. Both time-wise and financially, it was a really good fit," he said.

Goodwill's Team of Professionals

Not only does Goodwill offer [free training courses](#), but they also come with a team of professionals who take a vested interest in creating long-lasting matches between participants and local employers.

Craig started working with Career Navigator, Keitha Stewart, who helped Craig

write a resume that would appeal to employers. Matt Robson, an [Employer Engagement Specialist](#) at Goodwill, then helped Craig find employers looking for people with his specific set of skills.

"They're fantastic and they were very determined to find me the job opportunity that I was looking for that would fit my timeline," Craig said. "They were very adamant."

Dramatic Change in Life

Craig's life has changed dramatically since landing a job with Morcon Construction.

"The biggest reason I left the pharmaceutical industry was I just couldn't take care of my family because I'm working third shift and I'm sleeping through the day, and that was really hard," he said. "This move has helped me so I can raise my children."

With a son in college and a daughter in high school, Craig is enjoying his free nights and weekends to spend with them. He is looking forward to traveling to Alabama to visit his son and continue teaching his daughter how to drive.

"I thank Goodwill for everything they've done," he said. "I got my life back after nine years working nights."

Goodwill is Just a Click Away

Craig shared that Goodwill donors mean a lot to him since they made this opportunity possible.

"It means that they care about people. I was able to become successful from that," he emphasized.

[Learn more](#) about taking courses at Goodwill or [donate](#) to help others do the same.

Find Opportunity Near You

If anyone finds themselves in a situation like Craig, Goodwill is here to help!

And we aren't just here for those living in the metro Charlotte area. We have [Career Centers](#) outside the city in Gastonia and Concord too. Discover how you can get started today!

LEARN MORE

Donate to Goodwill

Every Goodwill success story begins with a donation. When you donate to Goodwill – whether it be items from your home you no longer need or a

monetary gift – you are helping people in our community get the training and support they need to find employment.

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