

Destiney Launched a Great Career | New Success Story



From Goodwill Industries of the Southern Piedmont <community@goodwillsp.org>

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“They gave me a family feel. They seemed to really care about my future and about what I wanted to do. They pushed me and helped me get it.”

Destiney

Goodwill's Construction Basics and HVAC training programs (RENEW cohort)

FINDING GOODWILL

Destiney Johnson was searching for a long-term career when she found Goodwill's [tuition-free training programs in construction and trades](#).

"I was a manager at Zaxby's, and I worked part-time at Panera Bread overnight. I wanted something different. I wanted to find a career; something I could grow with," Destiney shared. "I like to be outside and do things with my hands. I looked online for classes, and they were really expensive. Then the [Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center](#) popped up for free classes."

TUITION-FREE TRAINING

Destiney was a member of the fall 2021 cohort of the Renewable Energy and Efficiency Workforce (RENEW) Training Program, delivered at the Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center in partnership with the City of Charlotte. In the program, Destiney learned the skills and earned the certifications she needed to launch a successful construction and HVAC career. The class was lovingly nicknamed SHENEW, because it was an all-women cohort.

"Walking into a room and seeing a group full of women, rather than a group full of men and me being the only one – that made me a little more comfortable," she emphasized. "It made me feel like, 'Okay, I can kind of stick with this and see where it goes.'"

WRAPAROUND SERVICES

In addition to [tuition-free training programs](#), Goodwill participants are assigned a Career Navigator who helps them with resumes, interviews and more. Verona

Hendricks, the Goodwill Career Navigator assigned to Destiney, gave her valuable advice about pivoting to a new industry.

"She was amazing," Destiney exclaimed. "[Verona taught me] how to navigate the world and how to communicate with people in a professional way. She helped me update my resume and helped me with interviews."

Additionally, Goodwill's [Employer Engagement Team](#) assists participants by working with local employers to set up job interviews, career fairs and the like. The team helped Destiney secure two different jobs.

"While I was still taking the [HVAC course](#), they were able to find me a maintenance technician position, which I stayed at for about seven or eight months," she said. "After I realized I wanted to get my hands dirty with the HVAC units, they helped me find another job at a heating and air conditioning company here locally in Charlotte."

PATHWAY TO PROSPERITY

After working with HVAC systems for more than a year, Destiney transitioned back to maintenance, taking a maintenance technician position with an apartment company.

"I knew I wanted to do apartment maintenance, but I knew I needed certain experience. The first maintenance job was commercial; then I got some residential HVAC experience," she shared. "I've come a long way. The financial aspect has been great – I've never made as much as I'm making now. The biggest change has been the discipline [I've gained.]"

After more than two years removed from the program, Destiney still stays in touch with her fellow classmates and the staff at the Goodwill Construction Skills Training Center.

"They gave me a family feel," she said. "They seemed to really care about my future and about what I wanted to do. They pushed me and helped me get it."

HELP OTHERS LIKE DESTINEY

When asked what it meant to her to have this opportunity at no cost, Destiney simply said, "It means everything. The classes I wanted to take were very expensive, and at the time, I just did not have the money to make it happen. If that free class was not there at the time, I may not have been in the field I am now."

If you would like to help fund the [programs](#) and [services](#) that Goodwill offers to the community free of charge - like the ones that helped Destiney on her pathway to prosperity - consider [dropping off your gently used donations](#) at one of our locations or [making a financial contribution](#).

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