

# **Tribute to Richard L. "Rick" Coleman**

*President and CEO of Goodwill Industries of Central Florida*

## **On the Occasion of his Retirement Celebration**

September 29, 2010

It is indeed my honor to HONOR our friend, Richard L. "Rick" Coleman. Rick is one of the most unassuming, outstanding, no-nonsense leaders in our community. In the Goodwill manner of speaking, he is a "Good Willy"!

Rick is part of one of the greatest social movements in the history of the United States and internationally, the Goodwill movement. This movement can trace its genesis as far back as November 25, 1740, in the Journal of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism:

"After several methods proposed for employing those who were out of business, we determined to make a trial of one which several of our brethren recommended to us. Our aim was, with as little expense as possible, to keep them at once from want and from idleness; in order to which, we took twelve of the poorest, and a teacher, into the society-room, where they were employed for four months till spring came on, in carding and spinning of cotton. And the design answered; they were employed and maintained with very little more than the produce of their own labor."

Goodwill is not just another nonprofit organization. It is an international movement with its roots in Judeo Christian values - a movement that is all about a hand up, not a hand out. It's a movement that still believes that the best social program is a job. It believes that every job has dignity, value and impact, or in the Goodwill manner of speaking, "not charity, but a chance." It's a movement that believes in a chance to earn a paycheck, support one's family, and job, by job, by job, strengthen the fabric of our community through innovation and compassion.

Our friend Rick has a head for the business of Goodwill and a real heart for the people of Goodwill and our community. There are 166 independent, community-based Goodwill agencies in the United States and around the world. Collectively, Goodwill provided employment training and job placement services to nearly two million people in 2009. And Richard L. Coleman, our Rick, is a leader and mentor here in

Central Florida, across the United States and around the world to the men and women who, in the Goodwill manner of speaking, believe in the "power of work." Rick is an innovator, an entrepreneur, and an alchemist, turning rags into riches - not for himself, not for shareholders, but for the good of our community, because when residents of Central Florida who have disabilities, lack education or job experience, or face other employment challenges aren't working, that means Central Florida doesn't work either!

Throughout my tenure with the Edyth Bush Charitable Foundation, Rick Coleman has been part of a small group of select community leaders from whom I have sought help and guidance in an effort to continue fulfilling the Foundation's mission, "Creating Innovative Civic Solutions Helping People Help Themselves." In the aftermath of our country's 9/11 tragedy, Rick Coleman and Goodwill helped the Foundation help the ailing unemployed hospitality workers. During the hurricanes of 2004, Rick Coleman and Goodwill helped the Foundation and the community by giving store vouchers and dignity to those in need. And in the darkest moments of the current recession, Rick Coleman and Goodwill have been the Foundation's "community barometer" of need.

Rick Coleman is one of the most unassuming, outstanding, no-nonsense leaders in our community. He has brought hope, dignity and independence to countless individuals and families within our community, across our country and around our world. Thank you to all of the Board members of Goodwill, past and present, and to the entire Goodwill team for supporting Rick all these years. I especially want to thank Rick's wife, Beth, and his whole family, because without their support and love, Rick Coleman could not do what he has done and what he will continue to do for others.

While Rick may be "retiring," in the Goodwill manner of speaking, in truth, he is becoming part of the "reduce, reuse, repurpose" practice of Goodwill. He will not be put "on the shelf" at one of our Goodwill stores; it's not his nature. He will continue to be an evangelist for the "power of work" and one of the greatest social movements in history. Thank you Rick! You ARE a "Good Willy"!