

Memorandum

Date: April 13, 1993

To: Senator Dole

From: Alec Vachon

Re: Photo Op with Goodwill Industries Graduate of the Year

Goodwill Industries's "1993 Graduate of the Year" is a Kansan -- Ms. Shannon Hilbert of Wichita. This award is given annually to a person who has completed a Goodwill vocational rehabilitation program and found a competitive job outside Goodwill. Ms. Hilbert is 23, currently works as a mail distribution specialist in Wichita, and sustained severe brain damage in an automobile accident.

Ms. Hilbert will be visiting Washington May 4-7, and Goodwill has asked for a photo op. You have time available in your schedule.

DO YOU WANT TO SCHEDULE A PHOTO OP WITH SHANNON HILBERT?

YES _____ No _____

cc: D. Stanley

D A Y B O O K

Photo Op

Ms. Shannon Marie Hilbert, Wichita, KS
Goodwill Industries Graduate of the Year

Wednesday, May 5, 1993, 2:30 p.m., S230

Responsible Staff: Alec Vachon (x4-8959)

2:30 pm. Ms. Hilbert will be accompanied by her mother, Mariam Hilbert, her rehabilitation counselor, Fay Lyle, and Goodwill PR person, Marianne Nash.

2 Photos:

1. One with Senator Dole and Ms. Hilbert;
2. Another with Senator Dole, Ms. Hilbert, her mother, and her rehabilitation counselor.

● Background: Ms. Shannon Hilbert of Wichita is "Goodwill Industries of America Graduate of the Year," an award given annually to a graduate of Goodwill's vocational rehabilitation program who successfully enters competitive employment. This award recognizes outstanding achievement in overcoming barriers to employment.

Shannon, now age 23, was nearly killed in a car accident 7 years ago. She sustained severe brain damage and was in a coma for two months. Persistent impairments include short-term memory deficits and difficulty in organizing her behavior.

After the car accident, Shannon returned to high school and had to relearn her academic skills. In 1991, she entered Goodwill Industries's supported employment program, where she was provided a job coach.

In 1992, she was hired by Koch Industries, where she sorts and distributes mail.

Ms. Hilbert is the third client that Goodwill's Kansas affiliate has had named as the National Graduate of the Year.

Shannon also has had photo ops with Senator Kassenbaum, Congressman Glickman, and will be touring the White House on Thursday.

PHOTOGRAPH RECORDS FORM

DATE AND TIME OF MEETING: 5/5/93; 2:30 p.m.

LOCATION: S230

NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP: _____

Photo 1: w/ Shannon Marie Hilbert of Wichita, Goodwill Industries
of America's Graduate of the Year.

Photo 2: w/ Shannon Marie Hilbert; her mother, Mariam Hilbert;
and rehabilitation counselor, Fay Lyle.

MAILING ADDRESS(ES): _____

Send all photos to: Ms. Jeanne G. Hamrick, Goodwill Industries of
America, Inc., 9200 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814

STAFF MEMBER(S) ATTENDING MEETING: Alec Vachon

PURPOSE/SUBJECT OF MEETING: _____

Photo op with Goodwill Industries of America Graduate of the
Year, Ms. Shannon Marie Hilbert of Wichita.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS: x OFFICIALLY
CONNECTED BUSINESS: _____

NUMBER OF PICTURES ORDERED: _____ DATE ORDERED: _____

DATE MAILED: _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: _____

Please send 2 copies of Photo 1 (one inscribed, one blank); and
3 copies of photo 2 (two inscribed, one blank, to above address.

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF AMERICA, INC.

EXECUTIVE OFFICES • 9200 WISCONSIN AVENUE • BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20814-3896 • 301/530-6500

GIA FAX # 301-530-1516

FAX MESSAGE

Date: 4-13 Time: 9:10
From: Marianne Nash
To: Alexander Vachon
Company: Senator Dole's office
Fax #: 202-224-6721
Number of Attachments: 4 Response Required: Yes X No

Message: I've attached press release as well as
quick request letter.
I look forward to hearing from you
Thank -
Marianne

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IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE ALL THE PAGES INDICATED, PLEASE CONTACT THE SENDER AT THE GIA OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AT (301)530-6500.

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03:1043:mmn

April 13, 1993

The Honorable Robert J. Dole
U. S. Senate
SH-141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-3601

ATTN: MR. ALEC VACHON

Dear Senator Dole:

One of your constituents, Ms. Shannon Marie Hilbert, of Wichita, Kansas, has been named Graduate of the Year by Goodwill Industries of America. This prestigious award is being given to Ms. Hilbert for her outstanding achievement in meeting the challenges of attaining and maintaining employment. The Graduate of the Year award is given annually to an individual with disabilities who completed a Goodwill Industries program of vocational rehabilitation services, and progressed to successful competitive employment.

As recipient of this award Ms. Hilbert represents all Goodwill Industries graduates in North America. She will be honored at the Delegate Assembly of Goodwill Industries of America to be held in Fort Worth, Texas this June.

Ms. Hilbert will be visiting Washington, D.C., Wednesday, May 5, Thursday, May 6, and Friday, May 7, 1993. It is our hope, as well as hers, that you might find time in your schedule to meet her.

Marianne Nash, Goodwill Industries of America's communications assistant, has contacted your office concerning Ms. Hilbert's visit to Washington, D.C. We look forward to hearing from a member of your staff regarding your availability for this brief, but worthwhile, meeting. More information about Ms. Hilbert's accomplishments is enclosed.

Sincerely,

David M. Cooney
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)
President & Chief Executive Officer

NEWS



Goodwill Industries of America, Inc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 7, 1993

CONTACT: Jeanne G. Hamrick
Goodwill Industries of America, Inc.
(301) 530-6500

Marie Mareda
Goodwill Industries Easter Seal Society
of Kansas, Inc.
(316) 744-9291

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF AMERICA HONORS KANSAS AS
1993 GRADUATE OF THE YEAR
FOR OUTSTANDING EMPLOYMENT ACHIEVEMENT

(BETHESDA, Md.) -- Shannon Marie Hilbert, a Wichita, Kansas woman who spent two months in a coma after an automobile accident and had to relearn how to walk and talk, has been named Goodwill Industries of America's (GIA) 1993 Graduate of the Year for her outstanding achievement in overcoming barriers to attaining and maintaining employment.

The Graduate of the Year award is given annually to a person with disabilities or other special needs who has completed a Goodwill Industries program of vocational rehabilitation and has progressed to successful employment with an employer other than Goodwill.

Hilbert, 23, is a mail distribution specialist with Koch Industries Inc. in Wichita. Hired in January 1992, her daily work requirements include sorting, copying and distribution of mail and interoffice memorandums. Her responsibilities also include faxing, filing, microfilm and inventory of office material and supplies.

(more)

ADD 1-1-1

"The courage to change her life, and the outstanding success she has had in competitive employment, earned Shannon Hilbert our Graduate of the Year award," said David M. Cooney, GIA's president and chief executive officer.

Hilbert's accident changed her life forever. She was left with short-term memory problems, impulsiveness and difficulty in paying attention to details, which eventually brought on depression.

She turned to Goodwill Industries for help in starting a career in September 1991. Hilbert entered Goodwill Industries' Supported Employment Program, which provided her a job coach to assist in job training.

"I had virtually no hope of getting employment in the working world until I went to Goodwill Industries," said Hilbert. "Through Goodwill, I have been given the opportunity to grow personally and professionally. The past two years have been a dream come true."

She feels so strongly about the supported employment program at Goodwill Industries, in fact, that she has organized a group of eight volunteers which have raised more than \$6,500 to support the Goodwill program.

As recipient of Goodwill's national Graduate of the Year award, Hilbert represents all Goodwill Industries graduates in North America. She will be honored with an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., during Goodwill Industries Week, May 2-8. She will receive her award in June at a ceremony during GIA's annual Delegate Assembly in Fort Worth, Texas.

- more -

ADD 2-2-2

Goodwill Industries comprises the world's largest network of privately operated vocational rehabilitation programs. Goodwill's mission is to achieve the full participation in society of people with disabilities and other individuals with special needs by expanding their opportunities and occupational capabilities through a network of autonomous, nonprofit, community-based organizations, providing services throughout the world in response to local needs.

In 1992, vocational rehabilitation service was provided to 126,021 individuals through the network of 179 local Goodwill organizations in the United States and Canada, and nearly 22,000 individuals were placed in competitive employment. Goodwill Industries is the world's largest private employer of people with disabilities and other special needs. Nearly 50,000 people with disabilities and other special needs were employed in Goodwill facilities, retail outlets and industrial contract programs in 1992.

- 30 -

ATTENTION EDITORS:

Ms. Shannon Hilbert is available for interviews and photo opportunities. Please contact Jeanne Hamrick at Goodwill Industries of America, Inc. or Marie Mareda at Goodwill Industries Easter Seal Society of Kansas, Inc. for further information.



Donald M. Carney
Chairman

Deryl K. Schuster
Patrick J. Regan
Robert E. Schmidt
Thomas R. Devlin
Kenneth J. Wagnon
Daniel J. Taylor
Donald D. Sbarra
Al Hencheck, Sr.

John F. Jonas, Jr.
President and Founder

Joyce Smith
Assistant Secretary

John H. Leslie, Jr.
Executive Vice President

Randy J. Putnam
Senior Vice President of
Finance and Administration

Crawford Barber
(1972-1983)

CEREBRAL PALSY RESEARCH FOUNDATION OF KANSAS, INC.

2021 North Old Manor • P.O. Box 8217 • Wichita, Kansas 67208-0217 • (316) 688-1888

April 14, 1993

Bob Dole, U.S. Senator
100 North Broadway
Wichita, Kansas 67202

Dear Senator Dole:

I'm writing this letter to inform you of the tremendous accomplishments of a native Wichitan who for the past year and a half has been a client in one of the programs I direct, and to solicit your assistance on this individual's behalf as she travels to Washington, D.C. to participate in Goodwill Industries of America Week.

Shannon Hilbert is currently a full-time employee at Koch Industries in Wichita. She loves her job as "Mail Distribution Specialist" and enjoys a great deal of success on a daily basis. Eight years ago, when Shannon was only 15, she was in a car accident that left her with a head injury so severe there was little hope for her survival, let alone for a productive and fulfilling future. Fortunately for all of us, not even the hospital doctors knew the potential and determination that existed within the invisible walls of Shannon's coma.

Shannon's story of recovery from her accident is miraculous and never-ending. Enclosed is a small history of her triumphs. What I'd like for you to know is that Shannon graduated from high school in 1988 and has become a productive member of our community. Not only does she work full time--doing an excellent job--she contributes her time to volunteer in numerous capacities for the disabled population in Wichita.

The Gateway Program is a joint effort between the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation of Kansas and Goodwill Industries Easter Seal of Wichita. This program serves head injury survivors who want to return to and/or become successfully involved in competitive employment situations. Shannon was named "National Graduate of the Year" by Goodwill Industries of America. This is quite an honor

Shannon Hilbert
April 14, 1993
Page 2

and accomplishment for someone who was never expected to do more than "menial tasks."

During the week of May 2-8, Shannon will be in Washington, D.C. to participate in Goodwill Industries of America Week. During her time there, Shannon wants very much to meet President Clinton. Is there something you can do to assist Shannon in this endeavor? Do you have a suggestion for something I can do? I would appreciate any assistance you could provide. In advance, thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Gail L. Thompson, Director
Gateway Community Options Program

GLT:vf

Enclosure

On November 17, 1984, Shannon was a passenger in the backseat of a friend's car and was in a very serious car accident. The girl made a poor judgement pull-out into heavy traffic and Shannon was nailed. She was taken to St. Francis Hospital and was unconscious from the beginning. She remained in intensive care in a deep coma for one month. She had a massive head injury (Depressed skull fracture), fractured left eye; and a broken collar bone.

We waited, not too patiently, for her to wake up. The neurosurgeon gave me little hope. He said she may wake up soon, then again, she may never wake up. Then, if she does wake up, she "could" have serious brain damage. There was no way he could tell until she woke up.

I was a complete wreck. A little Catholic nun, probably 80 years old, came into the waiting room and found me in tears. She asked me if I had talked to the Lord. I told her I had. She said, "Honey, you just have to bug him and bug him, and one day he'll say 'Well, All Right!!'" I took her advice, and I'll never forget her.

The nurses were wonderful at St. Francis, but they also would not give me any real hope. I asked them a lot of questions, and a lot of nights, stayed up the whole night with them. They would always answer my questions, but they were very careful not to give me any false hope.

After two weeks on the respirator, they told me Shannon would have to have a tracheostomy, or the membranes in her nose would be damaged. They felt she was in such a deep sleep, they hadn't planned to anesthetize her. She started kicking and (insurgery) fighting and this was the first sign of fight in her. The next day her doctor felt like she was better, but she remained in the coma.

Later that week, Shannon opened her eyes, but she was still classified in a coma. They started getting her up in a recliner chair the following week. They tied her in with a sheet, because she did a lot of kicking. They told me this was natural, as she was fighting hard to wake up. I guess this is an extremely frustrating time as they are so completely confused.

She was transferred to a private room the middle of December but still remained unaware of her surroundings. This went on for two weeks, and then one day I asked her to raise her arm, and she did. Then I asked her to raise her leg. She did. I was out of my mind with excitement. I would hand her a kleenex and ask her to wipe her nose. Then I put a comb in her hand and guided her hand to comb her hair. When I let go, she continued to comb her hair. I felt like screaming with joy. We had to show everyone that came in the room. By the end of the day, I think she had had enough of being on stage. This is when they decided to transfer her to St. Joe for rehabilitation. I began writing form letters and sending her progress reports to friends.

January 21, 1985

Dear Friends,

First of all, please excuse me for sending a Xerox copy letter. But when I made a list of everyone that would be interested in Shannon's progress, I was overwhelmed. I decided one letter copied numerous times was the way to go.

Two weeks ago, we transferred Shannon from St. Francis Hospital to St. Joseph Rehabilitation Center. The Doctor from St. Joe comes to St. Francis and makes an evaluation as to whether he believes the patient is ready for rehabilitation. At this time Shannon had begun to eat thickened juices and had pulled out her feeding tube that went through her nose, down her throat to her stomach. She had pulled it out several times, but this time, since she had begun to eat a little, they left it out. The day before we moved the Doctor put a plug in her tracheostomey tube in her throat to see if she would go back to breathing OK thru her nose. She didn't have a problem so the following morning that tube was also removed. It left a small hole in her throat that will close up and heal in time. The only tube we had left was the catheter. I had no idea that the day after we arrived at St. Joe that tube would be gone too. But I wasn't sorry to see it go, and I'm sure Shannon wasn't either.

Since Shannon is not considered fully out of the Coma, a Nurse is with her all the time. Because of this, it's not necessary to restrain her in bed, as they feel this agitates the patient more.

The Staff is quite pleased with Shannon and the progress she is making. The first week at St. Joe she learned to feed herself, drink from a glass herself, brushes her teeth, combs her hair and sprays perfume. Later in the week, she began writing words on paper. They're just random words but now she's starting to make small sentences.

She is in a wheelchair and instead of rolling the wheels with her hands, she walks it with her feet. There is a tray in front of her and as soon as the tray is removed, she is ready to stand up, which she can do easily. Walking is very unsteady right now but with a lot of help, she walks to the bathroom. She is able to let you know each time she needs to go to the bathroom.

Shannon is extremely affectionate right now. She's full of kisses and hugs. We learned to Smile again this weekend.

Her vision seems to be OK (even the eye that was fractured). She is focusing much better.

If you ask her how she's doing, she gives you the A-OK sign with fingers.

The Nurse called me at work this morning and said Shannon had picked up the phone and wrote the number 943-5280, which is our home phone number.

I was so thrilled that she had remembered it. She talks to me on the phone, but about all I could make out was MOMMA. I'm sure the rest was important, and maybe tomorrow or the next day, we'll understand her better. I asked her where I worked and she just blew me away when she answered "PIZZA HUT". She says several friends names, Grandpa, Momma, Daddy, Angie, Sally, Pepsi, Mamoo and Papoo (her grandparents in New Orleans). The Nurse told me she made a complete sentence yesterday. She said "I'd like to go to bed, please."

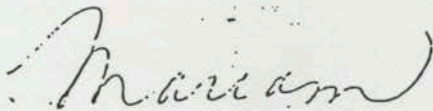
Each day it seems she does something new. She has always been a determined child and I think she is proving it now the way she is fighting this. With GOD'S help, I really believe Shannon is going to be OK again.

I'll keep you updated as time goes on. They estimate she will be there about ten more weeks.

It was nine weeks this past Saturday since the accident.

THANKS to all of you for your Prayers and please don't Stop. We're on a ROLL now.

LOVE,



Mariam Hilbert

February 15, 1985

Dear Friends,

Just thought I'd update everyone on Shannon's progress. Things have really been happening in Room 161 at St. Joseph Hospital.

Shannon has really been coming around a lot in the past two weeks. She is very aware of most everything that's going on. She's also been very confused about why she is in the hospital. It's hard to convince her we are still in Wichita. She didn't know where she was but she was very convinced it was not Wichita. We've been showing her newspapers, phone directories, etc. to convince her, and I think we've finally won.

She refuses to take any medication until they have explained to her what the pill is and what it will do to help her. Good kid, huh?

She dresses herself now and has informed me she is getting pretty tired of the sweats everyday. When you have every color of the rainbow, how could you possibly get tired of them. I think she's trying to tell me she's ready for the designer jeans again.

She has no recall of the accident, which they tell me is normal. I guess it must be pretty scary to finally realize you've missed the last three months of your life. One thing she does remember is important phone numbers and "Who's dating who at South High". What can I say. The kid knows her priorities!

She's talking quite well now. She can say anything, but sometimes gets frustrated when it doesn't come out just the way she wants it. She's not too confident talking on the phone yet. She says she can't talk very good yet, but she really is doing great. She has speech therapy and physical therapy twice a day. She also has occupational therapy, which consists of puzzles, games, etc.

When Shannon was moved to St. Joe six weeks ago, she had very little use of her left arm. Now she can raise it above her head, pump small weights, and snap her fingers.

The big step that she is so proud of, and has to demonstrate to everyone who visits her, is walking. They've had her walking between parallel bars in physical therapy for about three weeks, but now she can walk in the halls if a nurse is with her. Her balance is still a little off, but gets better every day. The nurse usually has to make her go back to her room and rest. She just refuses to quit.

Valentine's Day was a real treat. She rec'd a ton of valentines and flowers, and she has finally become receptive to visitors. She didn't

want some people to come (mainly certain boys) because she felt she looked bad. She asked me to bring her makeup and we had her hairdresser come up and cut her hair and - VOILA - I't's Shannon again!!! On Valentine's Day eve, there were fifteen kids in her room and they continue to come daily now. These kids are the greatest!!!

She seems to have some memory retention as far as simple math, spelling and reading. She can read everything except small print, and they think that may come back later. We keep working with multiplication tables, flash cards, spelling, easy thought-provoking workbooks, and she does pretty good. Her attention span is improving, as we can usually work about six pages before she tires.

Shannon can remember most everything from the past, but she can't tell you what she had for breakfast today.

She asked me the other night, "What will I do if they don't pass me this year?" We agreed that she has just as many friends a year younger than her so it really won't be a big deal if she has to take her sophomore year again.

One thing that really bothers her is that she is no longer ticklish. She just can't figure that out. I told her I'd be really glad if I wasn't ticklish.

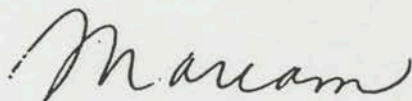
Sometimes she really gets down and she will begin to cry. She just pounds the chair and says, "I don't like to be this way." But then we talk about how bad she was and how far she's come, and how much worse it could have been. It's hard to get through to her how lucky she really is. She is obsessed with when she'll be going home. The answer "Soon", no longer gets it. She asked me last night, "Give me an estimate". The doctors think probably another four weeks and we can make that dream come true.

As for me, I never realized how GREAT all of my friends could be. I know there is no way I could have possibly made it through this far without all of your wonderful support and prayers. There's no words to thank you all for all you have done.

Shannon's friend, Jill Stetler, is getting her a banner to hang in her room. It pretty much says it all.

"YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!!!"

Love,



Mariam Hilbert

December 20, 1985

Dear Friends,

It's been awhile since I last updated you on Shannon's progress. I'm running late as usual with all the hustle bustle of the holidays, but I still wanted to take a few minutes to let you know what's been going on since I brought her home.

We left the hospital on March 20th, a day Shannon wasn't sure was ever going to arrive. When we arrived at home, Shannon was surprised with several bouquets of flowers from well-wishers to welcome her home. We began the day by opening her Christmas gifts which I had saved because she wouldn't allow me to bring them to the hospital. The last six weeks I had tried to hang posters and cute pictures on her walls at the hospital but she would take them down and keep everything all together in the closet. I finally figured it out that she didn't want her room to look too homey and things on the wall seemed kind of permanent to her. With everything in the closet all together, she would be able to get it together real quick when it was time to go home. This made her feel more confident that she really would go home some day.

The day after we came home, Angie Caulk arrived with the gift she had promised Shannon when she was in the coma. The VCR. Shannon doesn't remember anything anyone said to her when she was in a coma, but Angie made a mistake of writing down her promise in Shannon's autograph book. ha.

Shannon continued to go to therapy at the hospital three times a week. While I was at work, Sally Stetler and Marcelle Slankard took turns staying with Shannon and transported her back and forth to the hospital. What a blessing to have such faithful friends. I really don't know what I would have done without them.

In April, I obtained a tutor for Shannon. Again we were in luck. A really great guy, Cliff Cheatham, with the Board of Education for homebound students, became her tutor. This was a real challenge because he really didn't know where to start, so he started on pretty elementary material. He visited her for about 1 ½ hour three times a week. I really wasn't interested in her earning any credits at this time--only trying to prepare her for the fall year. We were hopeful she would be able to return to school in the fall. We had become accustomed to living on hopes.

Shannon seemed to progress somewhat each time Cliff tutored her. She was doing some Algebra after about four weeks. Her lessons ended the last of May. Cliff told us she would need to take some testing with South High's school psychologist to evaluate her as to whether she would be ready to go back to regular classes. Instead of doing this then, Cliff suggested we wait until August as he felt more and more would come back to Shannon the longer we waited. He was right. Her memory kept getting better and better.

The middle of May, we had an appointment with Dr. Krupka, her neurosurgeon, and he advised us we would need to start thinking about having her surgery to elevate the depressed bone in her skull. He explained to Shannon that she would have to have half of her head shaved and that's all it took to make her fall apart. He didn't want to do this until she was more emotionally ready. We left his office with Shannon in tears. We talked about it a lot that afternoon. Since the accident, Shannon had been taking four Dilantin and four phenobarbital tablets a day, and we knew as soon as she had the surgery, there was a possibility she would be able to quit taking the pills altogether. The next day, she decided she was ready and she would rather do it as soon as possible so her hair would grow back before school started.

We saw Dr. Krupka again and he scheduled the surgery for the following week. We contacted Dr. French, as he wanted to do some cosmetic surgery on Shannon's tracheostomy scar at the same time.

A week before the surgery, Shannon had about ten kids over for pizza and movies. About 10:00 P.M. a big white limo pulled in the drive. He was right on time. All of the kids piled in and we taped a big banner the whole length of the driver's side that said, "You've come a long way, Baby". No one wanted to ride in front with the driver, so they let me go along. We drug Douglas Ave. for two hours. Needless to say, we attracted some attention.

We checked into St. Francis on June 3 and surgery was performed June 4. I was really nervous about them putting her to sleep, but everything turned out fine. The next day Shannon had a terrific shiner on her left eye. Dr. Krupka had forgotten to tell us to expect this. She still had her sense of humor. She told the nurse, "You oughta see the other guy". This time she liked her stay in the hospital because she received so much attention from the nurses. They were the same girls that had taken care of her when she was in the coma, and they could not believe how she had come around. They really enjoyed seeing her real personality and quick wit. She was dismissed after a week and we were home again. Two weeks later, Dr. Krupka ordered another EEG and there was no seizure activity, so we were able to gradually take her off the medication completely. I discussed her therapies with Dr. Krupka, as I felt she was doing so well maybe we could discontinue them. He agreed, so I bought an exercycle and a rowing machine and she worked out at home.

Shannon's 16th birthday was coming up on August 5. She wanted to have a real bash. All of these bashes were going to force me to start taking in ironing. ha But, then who was I to argue. We arranged a big party at Fantasea Water Park, and about 45 kids attended. They all had a good time.

The time had arrived for Shannon's evaluation. We went to Mrs. Ohlemeier's home for the testing. Shannon was as cool as a cucumber. I, on the other hand, was a wreck. She tested Shannon in another room for two hours and we had to return the next day for two more hours. For everything she had been through, Mrs. Ohlemeier was amazed at how well she had done. She had tested other children with head injuries, and she explained to me that as a rule, they just don't do this well. Shannon's true grit determination was pulling her through again.

Shannon was elated that she didn't qualify for any special ed classes. We spent the next week getting ready for school.

Her subjects include, Algebra, Physical Science, Teacher's Aide, Behavioral Science, and English. Her first report card consisted of two A's and three C's. She is very involved at school. She came home one day and informed me she was going to run for Vice President of her class of 700 sophomores. We made a ton of campaign posters and she hung them all over school. She campaigned pretty hard, but victory was in sight, and she WON.

She entered an essay contest and won 2nd place and \$100 scholarship. She won 1st place in a poster contest on drug abuse. She attended a three day workshop seminar at the Garvey Center on Substance Abuse along with twenty other students from South. All schools participated in this. She really enjoyed it, and I'm sure she had plenty of input.

The Optimist Club honors students each year from each high school for overcoming a difficult situation. Shannon was chosen from South to be honored at a breakfast. She received a "Youth Achievement Award" and a check for \$50.

WOW -- What a year!!

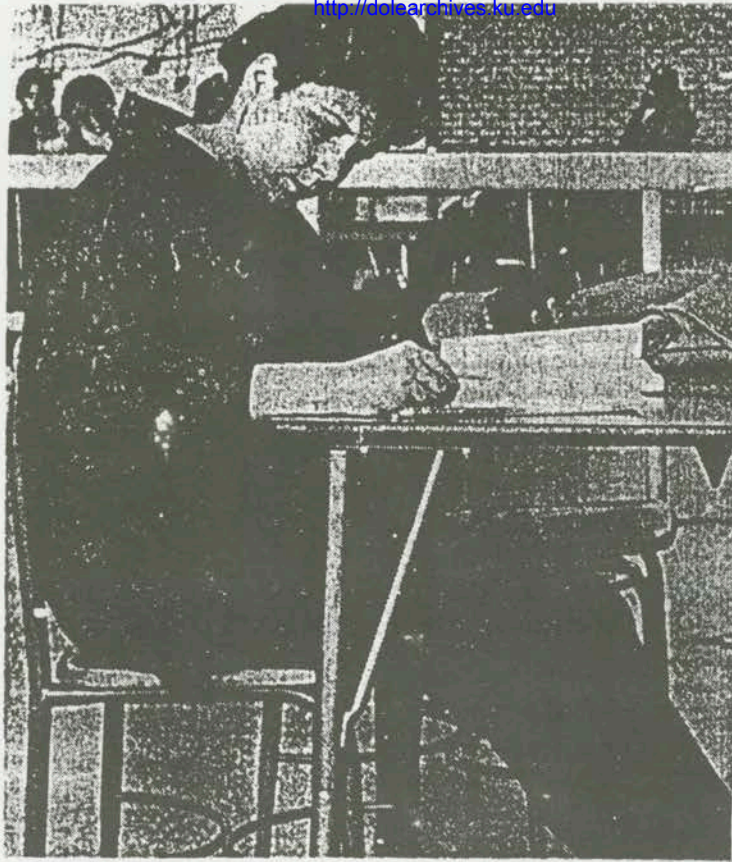
Now that the Christmas season is here, we think back at where we were last Christmas and really count our blessings, including all of our many friends and family who offered their support and love. We know we've been blessed with nothing short of a miracle.

Shannon and I want to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful new year.

Love,

Mariam

Shannon



As Shannon Hilbert, soph., sits studying now, it is difficult to remember that she was ever involved in a traumatic car accident which nearly claimed her life.

(Photo by Terry Sanders)

THE TORCH
Friday, Jan. 24, 1986

FEATURES 5

Trauma has happy ending

Friends, family play large roles in Hilbert's recovery

by Madlyn Byrd
Editorials Editor

On Nov. 17, 1984, Shannon Hilbert, soph., was in a two-car crash on the corner of Pawnee and Everett, just two blocks away from her home. She was a passenger in the back seat along with one other passenger and a driver.

ing walking and talking," said Shannon.

The first week at St. Joseph, Shannon learned how to feed herself, drink from a glass, brush her teeth, comb her hair, and spray perfume. She was in a wheelchair even though she could stand up and was learning to walk.

Shannon's mother was sur-

regular school or need special classes. From this evaluation, it was determined she could return to South for her sophomore year once again.

Shannon said, "I love school and I'm more involved now. I don't know what I'd do if I were disabled."

Shannon is concerned with other young drivers. "I wish

After graduating from high school, I entered Friends University to pursue a degree in Human Services. The first semester was not too hard for me as I took the basic courses and it was like a repeat of high school. As time went on, tougher classes made college very difficult for me and there was a lot of reading. My short term memory problem began to come into play. I struggled through two years at Friends and earned 40 credit hours. My counselor at Friends and the Dean advised me to check into some vocational schools as they felt I was wasting a lot of money at Friends since the tuition was so high. I thought my world had come to an end, but I was determined. I checked into classes at WSU. It would be easier there, I thought. I had a lot of problems there also when it came to timed tests. I sought help from Handicapped Services at WSU. They were very helpful, but still I wasn't able to conquer college level work. In desperation I contacted the Wichita Head Injury Association and obtained some information from them regarding head injuries. I began attending their monthly meetings. I realized I was not alone. There are a lot of people out there who experience the same feelings as I do. I feel like this is when I began to deal with my problem.

Handicapped Services at WSU suggested I contact my counselor at St. Joe Rehab regarding help from SRS. Barney Hoss set up a meeting with a Voc Rehab Counselor to see if I was eligible to receive their services. I went through extensive testing, both physical and psychological. Then I was sent to the Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation Center in Salina, Ks. for two weeks. I felt like this was wasted time as I was extremely discouraged when I left there. I was told I would only be able to perform menial tasks. I knew I was slower than I used to be since I had tried working at a grocery store as a checker during college and I just wasn't fast enough, so I was terminated.

I was in my SRS counselor's office one day and I overheard a lady in the waiting room talking about a program called Gateway. She was explaining how they helped people with traumatic brain injuries. I had heard about this program through the support group. I asked the lady how I could get into the program. She explained my Voc Rehab counselor would need to refer me. I asked my counselor about this and he was hesitant and said he would give it some thought. Actually my counselor at SRS was a very negative person and if I hadn't had my determination he could have completely destroyed my self esteem. I kept insisting that he refer me to Gateway. It was July, 1991 when I went to KVRRC in Salina. He finally agreed to refer me to the Gateway program in September (I think just to shut me up) ha.

I began the Gateway program on September 9, 1991 and went in with a great attitude. I can't say enough good things about

this wonderful program. They do a complete assessment of your individual case. The caseworkers are compassionate caring people. They have support group meetings twice a month. By November I was ready to be assigned a job coach from Goodwill/Easter Seals. Now it was time to do my Guided Occupational Trial with two non-profit agencies. I asked if I could set up an office for the Wichita Chapter of the Head Injury Association. They were going to do this as they had office space available in the same building as Gateway occupied. They were delighted that I wanted to do this. I got busy and acquired a copier, telephones, and several other supplies from Larry Fugate as a donation. I donated the typewriter. I catalogued the books, pamphlets and brochures and entered them into the computer. I organized a volunteer list to work in the office. I sent out public service announcements to television and radio stations, and contacted the newspapers statewide. WE ARE ON THE MAP!!!!!!!

My second guided occupational trial was carried out at the American Cancer Society for two weeks. I did several clerical duties there.

My job coach had been with me on both my assignments. Now she was looking for a permanent job for me. On December 17, 1991, she had scheduled an interview for me with Koch Industries Personnel department. Teresa, my job coach, told me she felt confident I could go to the interview alone. She really made me feel like I was a worthwhile person and my confidence soared. She said, "I know you can do it Shannon". I went to the interview and was told they would let me know. On December 23, I received a call from Koch Personnel telling me they wanted me to come to work on January 6, that is, if I was still interested in the job. What a Christmas present!!

I began work on January 6, with Teresa by my side for two weeks. It varies how long it is necessary for the job coach to remain with the person, but Teresa felt I was ready to be on my own. But I knew if I needed her, she was just a phone call away. I work in Koch Materials Department and I am the mail distribution specialist. I handle all the incoming invoices for the accounting department. I am also in charge of the supplies for the department. I handle the bills of lading, and various other duties.

Gateway is still a very big part of my life and I hope it always will be. I co-lead the support group meetings every two weeks. I feel like my input is valuable at the meeting since I know where they are coming from.

In August, 1991 Marianne Denning, leader of Job Club at Gateway asked me if I would like to be on the Board of Directors at the Independent Living Center of SouthCentral Kansas, Inc.

Marianne is the President of ILC, and I was thrilled at the chance. I was elected to the Board in September. I have organized a social group called LIFE (Living Independently For Equality) and we meet monthly at ILC. The only requirement is that you have some type of disability. We have elderly people from retirement centers, people from Institute of Logopedics (now called Heartspring), Wichita Services for the Blind, and lots of word of mouth.

Vera Clem, co-founder of Wichita Head Injury Association asked me to be on a panel on KNSS Radio 1240 regarding Head Injury. This was in March, 1992. I was on the panel along with a nurse from Wesley Hospital and Vera. The program was on for an hour and we took calls from listeners.

On October, 1992, I was honored at the Goodwill Industries/ Easter Seals banquet and the Olive Tree. They surprised me with an award as Graduate of the Year. I was so thrilled. There were more than 250 people attending. Clyde Bailey is on the Board of Directors for Goodwill Industries. He and I were old friends as he had sponsored me for an award from the Optimist Club when I was a sophomore in high school. It was an award for overcoming a difficult situation.

As Graduate of the Year, I was later asked to be on the Easter Seals Telethon on March 6 and 7. They also asked me if I would be interested in being a chairman of a VIP panel for the telethon. I agreed to do both. Channel 12 scheduled a film shoot on March 3 at my office. This was exciting. I could hardly wait. I contacted all of my panel members to be sure they would be there on the 7th. My panel of eight plus me raised \$6500.00 for Easter Seals. It made me feel so good to know that I had helped to make others dreams come true.

Goodwill has entered an essay I wrote to the National Easter Seals Association. If I am selected, I will go to Washington D.C. to accept the award.

Life has been so good the past two years. I want to spread the word about all of the options available to people. They need to know they are not alone.

Essay Winners

10/23/86

How does saying no to alcohol/drugs and saying yes to life benefit the individual and the community?

More than 80 Wichita-area students answered this question — posed by a Wichita coalition called Agencies for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment — with poems and essays. Nine were picked as the best by judges from the coalition and co-sponsor Southwestern Bell Telephone Co. A complete list of 30 prize winners appears in the People column in today's Neighbors. Here are the winning comments:



Shannon Hilbert, 2321 Lotus, daughter of Marlam Hilbert and Larry Hilbert, both of Wichita. South High junior, president of SADD, Teen Challenge, youth achievement award. Winner of \$100 savings bond.

You Only Live Once

I can relate to the phrase "You only live once" in a way a lot of people cannot. Having been in a serious automobile accident almost two years ago makes me look at life in a whole new way. It also makes me much more cautious of who I get into a car with. I'm much more observant of how safely a person drives.

Through much hard work and determination during four months in the hospital, two of which I was in a coma, I was able to learn to walk and talk again. I was fortunate not to have suffered any permanent brain damage, and through much patient tutoring, I was able to return to South High nine months later to start my sophomore year once again.

The accident I was involved in was not alcohol-related. However, whenever I hear of a person involved in an accident caused by driving while drinking, it makes me shudder.

During my sophomore year, I was president of

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GIA FAX # 301-530-1516

FAX MESSAGE

Date: 4-16 Time: 10:10
From: MARIANNE NASH
To: ALEXANDER VACHON
Company: SENATOR DOLE'S OFFICE
Fax #: 202 224 6721
Number of Attachments: 1 Response Required: Yes ☒ No ☐

Message: _____

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April 16, 1993

The Honorable Robert J. Dole
U. S. Senate
SH-141 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-3601

ATTN: MR. ALEXANDER VACHON

Dear Mr. Vachon:

I have received word that Senator Kassebaum would like to meet with Shannon Hilbert, our 1993 National Graduate of the Year, at approximately 3:30 on Monday, May 3, 1993. Congressman Dan Glickman has also expressed interest in meeting Shannon at 4:30 that day.

Would it be possible for Senator Dole to meet Shannon at 2:30 on Monday, May 3?

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

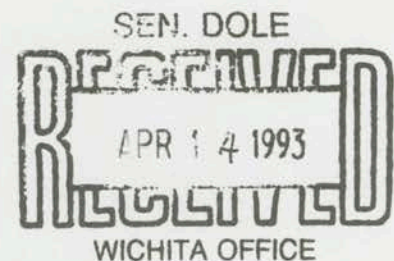


Marianne M. Nash
Communications Assistant



**Goodwill Industries
Easter Seal Society of Kansas, Inc.**

P.O. Box 8169
Wichita, Kansas 67208-0169
316 744-9291
FAX 316 744-1428



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 13, 1993

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Marie Mareda, President
Emily Compton, Director/Dev.
316/744-9291

NATIONAL HONOR RECEIVED BY GOODWILL
INDUSTRIES EASTER SEAL SOCIETY'S CLIENT

This week, Goodwill Industries of America, in Bethesda, Maryland, selected Shannon Hilbert as their National Graduate of the Year for her outstanding achievement in overcoming barriers to attaining and maintaining employment. This is the third time since 1988 that a client of Goodwill Industries Easter Seal Society of Kansas, Inc., has been selected for national honors.

The Graduate of the Year award is given annually to a person with disabilities or other special needs who has completed a Goodwill Industries program of vocational rehabilitation and has progressed to successful employment with an employer other than Goodwill.

On November 17, 1984, Shannon Hilbert, 15, was nearly killed in a car accident. She was seriously injured with a traumatic brain injury and lapsed into a coma for two months.

Friends and family rallied around playing music in her room, putting perfume under her nose, trying to bring her out of the coma. She opened her eyes two months later, but was unable to speak.

- more -

Located at 3636 N. Oliver • Wichita, KS

Shannon was immediately put into physical therapy that continued for four months. She was released from the hospital and returned home in March, 1985, a very changed young woman with permanent brain injury that has resulted in short-term memory problems, impulsiveness and difficulty in paying attention to details.

Shannon had to relearn all of her academic skills, including math and reading. As a determined person she regained her skills rapidly and was able to return to school as a sophomore. Shannon was elected Vice President of her sophomore class and President of SADD (Students Against Drunk Drivers). She was also honored by the Optimist Club for overcoming a difficult situation.

After graduating from high school, Shannon attempted college credits at Friends University and Wichita State University. After two difficult semesters Shannon was referred to the Kansas Vocational Rehabilitation Department, a division of Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services.

It was at this point Shannon heard of Goodwill Industries Easter Seal Society and the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation of Kansas' joint training program for persons with traumatic brain injuries, the only program of its kind in Kansas. With the help of an employment training specialist (ETS) from Goodwill Industries Easter Seal, Shannon obtained employment at Koch Industries as a Mail Distribution Specialist in the accounting department. Her ETS taught her the skills she needed to be successful on the job. As Shannon gained confidence and

- more -

knowledge of her job her ETS faded from the picture, allowing Shannon to work on her own. Shannon has been working at Koch Industries without an ETS since late, 1991, and was selected in 1992 as our local Goodwill Industries Easter Seal's "Graduate of the Year."

"I had virtually no hope of getting employment in the working world until I went to Goodwill Industries Easter Seal," said Hilbert. "Through Goodwill, I have been given the opportunity to grow personally and professionally. The past two years have been a dream come true."

Her name and story was submitted to Goodwill Industries of America, along with 155 other people with disabilities from across the United States, for Goodwill Industries of America's top honors.

As recipient of Goodwill's notional Graduate of the Year award, Shannon will be honored with an all expense paid trip to Washington, D. C., May 2-8, 1993, and will be presented with her award in June at the National Goodwill Industries of America meeting in Fort Worth, Texas.

"Shannon's progress in our program has been remarkable. With her determination and assistance from Goodwill Industries Easter Seal Society of Kansas, I know Shannon will accomplish everything she sets out to do", said Marie Mareda, Goodwill President.