When you write an article about Riana Dozier, your hope is that you can accurately convey at least a small portion of the passion, positivity, and energy she exudes during the interview. (Somehow she makes algebra sound fun!) It almost feels like an injustice to only get to experience her personality through printed words.

Riana’s obviously in a good spot in her life. She is literally starting her career in a field—engineering—she has been consumed by since her senior year of high school at Charles A. Tindley Accelerated School in Indianapolis.

She went on to earn a degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology from the University of Dayton, graduating in the fall of 2019. But just as she was really revving up her job search in early 2020, the pandemic hit. It wasn’t until January 2021, that she finally was able to get her foot in the engineering door, when she was hired as a manufacturing engineer for Goodwill Commercial Services.

Riana is currently working at Goodwill’s facility at 413 N. Tremont Street. The plan is for her to shift to Goodwill’s new manufacturing site at 38th and Sheridan when it is completed this fall.

It will be a bit of a homecoming for her.

“I went to high school up there on 38th and Meadows—not too far from where we are building the new location,” Riana said. “And my grandparents live up on 38th and Emerson, so right up the street. I’ve been on this side of the neighborhood most of my life.”

The new facility will produce medical devices for Bloomington-based Cook Medical.

Before the building opens, Riana will be part of the team designing the setup of the production areas to maximize workflow and making sure operating instructions for machinery are accurate and in place. Once the facility is up and running, her days will be spent keeping that machinery working and tackling any issues related to productivity and worker safety and comfort.

Not surprisingly, for someone who had to delay the start of their career for almost a year, she is excited and raring to go. Add in the fact that Riana is doing a job she loves and will soon get to do it in a place that has meant so much to her, and you can understand why she is almost overflowing with passion and positivity.

“I am excited—even especially for the neighborhood,” she said. “I am excited to see it transform. I am excited to see the opportunities, and the job opportunities, that it is bringing to the people in our community. I am excited to be a part of this—from the ground up. It is a blessing.”
Bringing Opportunity Back: Cook Medical and Goodwill Indianapolis Project

North East Indianapolis has neighborhoods with some of the highest levels of unemployment and poverty in the state. To help address some of the challenges this community is facing, Cook Medical, Goodwill, The Indianapolis Foundation, IMPACT Central Indiana, and the United Northeast Community Development Corporation (UNEC) are partnering on a unique project. (Turn to the back page for more details about these organizations and their partnership on this project.)

Through this partnership, a new manufacturing facility will be built in this neighborhood and will bring 100 jobs to the community. The facility will be built on a vacant property at the northwest corner of 38th Street and Sheridan Avenue in Indianapolis.

The jobs it will bring will be higher-skilled manufacturing geared towards long-term employment and career fulfillment. The site will manufacture introducers, sheaths, drainage catheters, and needles. Employees will have access to wrap-around services and a free education. Goodwill provides a variety of resources, including mental and physical health support, substance abuse support, soft skills training, and housing stabilization. Employees will also be able to earn a high school diploma all the way up to a master’s degree at no cost to them.

Project Milestone Update

In mid-February, as part of the commitment to contracting with 100% local minority-owned construction companies, it was announced that Harmon Construction, a third-generation family-owned contractor, was named the general contractor for the Goodwill Indianapolis project. Additionally, contractors with Harmon are 97% Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and 100% XBE (any combination of Women-, Veteran-, Disability-, and Minority-owned Business Enterprises) certified by either the state of Indiana or the city of Indianapolis. (Look for more information on Harmon Construction in the next issue of this newsletter.)

Employment and Benefits

- Goodwill will employ approximately 100 employees to produce medical devices as a supplier for Cook Medical.
- Most production employees will start at $13/hour + benefits with a top wage of $20/hour + benefits. (Starting wage will increase with relevant experience.)
- Average wage for all employees is expected to be $16/hour + benefits at opening.
- Salary wage will be competitive in the industry.
- Roles range from production, team leads, quality control management and management.
- Goodwill will focus recruitment efforts on surrounding communities to maximize employment opportunities.
- Employees will have access to wrap-around services including:
  - Housing support, legal aid, mental/physical healthcare, case management services, substance abuse assistance, and soft skills training.
- Employees will have access to free education beginning at the high school level and continuing all the way up to a Master’s degree, which is the same program available to Cook Medical employees.
- Benefits include health, vision, dental, long-term and short-term disability.
- Goodwill matches 50% of 403(B) retirement contributions up to 6%.
- Goodwill provides ongoing training and development opportunities for employees to grow in their careers.

About the Facility

- Address of site: 6190 E. 38th Street.
- The 40,000 square foot facility will be a component medical device manufacturing facility, fully registered as a manufacturer with the FDA, producing introducers, sheaths, drainage catheters, and needles.
- The goal is to engage 100% local and minority owned contractors to build the facility.
- The IndyGo Purple line will serve this location.

The Challenge

- For those in leadership roles in business or government, join us in bringing back jobs and opportunity to our neighbors who need them right here in Indiana.
- This model was developed with sound business principles and community equity in mind. It is a financially sustainable model of business that can be replicated by other organizations.

We want to hear from you!

- We want to hear your feedback about this project! Please send your questions, concerns, or thoughts to community@cookmedical.com.
About Goodwill
Established in 1930, Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana has an enduring history and a thriving presence throughout the state. Goodwill changes lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through education, health, and employment.

About IMPACT Central Indiana
IMPACT Central Indiana (IMPACT) is a limited liability company created by Central Indiana Community Foundation, The Indianapolis Foundation and Hamilton County Community Foundation to facilitate social impact investments into businesses, funds, and not-for-profits that are generating positive, measurable social impact and financial returns. IMPACT makes loans, equity investments and grants that further the charitable missions of the foundations.

About the Indianapolis Foundation
The Indianapolis Foundation, founded in 1916, is a public charity and an affiliate of Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF). As Indiana's oldest and largest community foundation, The Indianapolis Foundation aims to mobilize people, ideas, and investments to make this a community where all individuals have equitable opportunity to reach their full potential—no matter place, race or identity. It awards approximately $7 million annually to support current and future community needs and is governed by a board of six publicly-appointed directors.

About United Northeast Community Development Corporation (UNEC)
UNEC is committed to enhancing the quality of life that benefits every resident, business, organization, and visitor with our Indianapolis’ Northeast community. This includes facilitating diverse housing options, serving low-income residents, enhancing neighborhood assets, developing business opportunities, and educating the community.

Financing and Ownership
▶ Cook is investing $7 million as a loan for the facility.
▶ Indianapolis Foundation is investing $4 million through IMPACT Central Indiana for the benefit of the community.
▶ New market tax credits will contribute $4 million.
▶ The facility will be owned by a newly formed 501(c)2 entity that will make distributions back to The Indianapolis Foundation, an affiliate of the Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF). Proceeds will be re-invested into the community in later years through the foundation.
  • Returns are approximately $100,000/year in the first seven years
  • Equity will build in the value of the building and real estate
▶ The facility will be leased to Goodwill of Central & Southern Indiana, a not-for-profit that changes lives every day by empowering people to increase their independence and reach their potential through access to education, healthcare, and employment.
▶ Goodwill will manufacture products exclusively as a supplier for Cook Medical by producing introducers, sheaths, drainage catheters, and needles.
▶ The Darden Group, LLC has been hired to assist with achieving 100% participation, construction training and construction hiring within the community and diversity on the project site.
▶ The Indiana University Public Policy Institute will serve as the research partner to quantify economic and social impact.

For more information about this project, visit www.38thandsheridan.com/ or email community@cookmedical.com.