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## **Calidad Industries Celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness Month**

### ***2011 Open House Celebrates Decades of Training and Employing Workers with Significant Disabilities***

**OAKLAND, California** — Calidad Industries announced its official theme for October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): ***"Investing in Workers With Significant DisAbilities: Empowering People, Creating Hope."*** This theme educates the public about workers with disabilities, illustrating that workers with disabilities represent a diverse and vibrant talent pool of qualified workers for hire.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a national celebration sponsored by the federal government's AbilityOne Program. NDEAM's focus is to emphasize the need for successful employment of workers with significant disabilities. Calidad is planning a series of events, including an Open House and site visits, to raise public awareness and showcase the skills and talents of workers with disabilities. This year's Open House will be celebrated at the Calidad corporate offices on Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>.

"Calidad provides vocational training and employment through the AbilityOne Program and in the past 21 years helped thousands of people with disabilities gain the skills and experience they need to sustain employment. Calidad has not done this alone, however, and we appreciate our community and government partners," said John B. Latchford, CEO of Calidad Industries and Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay. "We are opening our doors to the community, as we have done in the last few years, to celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month with our current and potential new partners."

Public Law 176, enacted by Congress in 1945, designated the first week in October each year as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." President Harry S. Truman designated the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities to carry out the Act. In 1962, the word "physically" was removed from the celebration's name to acknowledge the employment needs of all Americans with disabilities. Congress expanded the week to a month in 1988 and changed its name to "National Disability Awareness Month," which eventually evolved to its current name.

The Labor Department's Office of Disability Employment Policy took over responsibility for National Disability Employment Awareness Month in 2001.

Calidad Industries is a 501(c)3 nonprofit affiliate of Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay. The agency operates Federal AbilityOne contracts that employ people with significant disabilities. Currently Calidad Industries operates food service, janitorial, and maintenance contracts at federal sites in the Bay Area, including the Oakland Federal Building, Coast Guard Island, Dublin Parks Installation, and Naval Reserve sites in Alameda and San Jose. As an affiliate of Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay, Calidad participants also have access to Goodwill's workforce development services to help them gain competitive employment. Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay operates 26 retail stores, and the proceeds from the resale of donated items support Goodwill's workforce development programs to help those facing barriers to employment, such as homelessness, limited education and language skills, history of incarceration, lack of work experience, and disabilities. During 2010, Goodwill and Calidad served 4,070 individuals and families in the East Bay and placed 565 people into competitive jobs. As with all of the agency's funds, for every \$1 spent, 93 cents goes directly to support job training, placement, and support service programs.

Please note that the Open House is not intended for those seeking employment with Calidad. All job applicants must follow normal submission requirements, and no applications will be accepted or reviewed at this event. If you would like to attend the event, please contact Cheryl Sudduth via email at [csudduth@eastbaygoodwill.org](mailto:csudduth@eastbaygoodwill.org) or call (510) 698-7200.

For more information about our work in the community, please visit us at [www.calidadindustries.org](http://www.calidadindustries.org) or contact Kimberly Scrafano at (510) 698-7223.