



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**New Vocational Program Receives Bikes from GSA Auction**

**(Fredericksburg, VA)** – On March 9th, Employment Resources Incorporated’s (ERI) purchased twenty- eight bicycles from NASA through the United States General Services Administration’s (GSA) online auction program for our Oberle School’s new vocational center. The bikes were purchased for the vocational center so ERI’s Gladys H. Oberle School students could learn to refurbish them. “As part of the planning process for stocking the vocational center, I enrolled in the GSA Auction program,” said Joan P. McLaughlin, ERI’s President. “When the GSA listed a quantity of bicycles for auction at the Virginia NASA location on Wallops Island, I jumped on the opportunity,” said McLaughlin. “After winning the auction bid, several employees at the Regional Office of GSA were extremely helpful in getting through the acquisition process.” ERI’s new vocational program takes bicycles that need refurbished and utilizes them as learning tools for the students enrolled in the program.

“We teach our students how to do tune-ups on bicycles through an 11-point inspection system,” said Rob Welch, ERI Director of Vocational Programs. The 11-point inspection and tune-up includes frame cleaning, chain inspection and lubrication, tire inspection or new installation of tube or tire front and rear derailleur adjustment and lube, front and rear brake inspection and adjustment, spoke inspection and adjustment, and any other maintenance needed. “One of our main concerns that our bike tune-up addresses is operational safety of the bike for the owner,” said Welch. Once the bicycles are repaired, some will be part of the school’s Interact Holiday donations. Some will be retained in the school as training material, and some will be sold for a small fee.

ERI’s vocational center also provides bicycle tune-ups for anyone in the local community at a minimal cost. “All tune-ups are done by our students but under strict supervision by our vocational staff,” Welch added. “Our staff checks each bike during the process to ensure quality work by our students and safety.”

Another facet of the vocational center’s services is lawn mower tune-ups. The tune-ups include inspection and trouble shooting of any engine problems, new spark plug, and oil change for two or four stroke engines (electric or power), rewind inspection and replacement, blade sharpening, power washing of unit and mower deck, replace filter and adjust carburetor, two test starts, and any other work needed to ensure mower safety. “We would like to encourage local residents to contact us and make arrangements to bring in their lawn mowers and weed eaters for tune-up as the spring mowing season quickly approaches,” said Welch.

Employment Resources Incorporated (ERI) is a private not-for-profit organization with offices located in Fredericksburg and Tappahannock, Virginia that serves the city of

Fredericksburg and multiple cities and counties in the region. ERI operates the Gladys H. Oberle School in Fredericksburg, an accredited private special education alternative day school for middle and high age children which includes a vocational program. Its mission is to provide youth with the education and skills they need to become successfully employed, self-sufficient and contributing members of their community. ERI also provides employment training programs and services to the adult workforce and employers in their service region.

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**PHOTO ATTACHMENT FOR STORY:**

