

GEORGIA RECYCLING COALITION'S SHOE RECYCLING INITIATIVE COLLECTS 50,000 PAIRS OF SHOES FOR SOLES4SOULS® INC, THE SHOE CHARITY

Soles4Souls and the Georgia Recycling Coalition recently joined forces to create one of the largest shoe recycling initiatives in the country. The Georgia Recycling Coalition (GRC) launched the program in October by placing shoe recycling bins at drop-off locations throughout the state, with Soles4Souls agreeing to collect all shoes donated to be repurposed or recycled through their organization. The GRC has collected nearly 50,000 pairs of shoes through the program.

It is estimated that nearly 300 million shoes end up in landfills every year. From there, shoes can take up to 40 years to break down and decompose. Soles4Souls and the GRC set out to provide the general public with a safe and environmentally friendly way to dispose of their old shoes while providing shoes for those who need them.

“We have a dream at Soles4Souls to prevent even one pair of shoes from making it to the landfills,” said Wayne Elsey, Founder and CEO of Soles4Souls. “Our friends at the Georgia Recycling Coalition set the precedent by teaching the public about the international need for shoes and how recycling your old shoes can essentially save someone else’s life. We need other states to follow Georgia’s lead and help make a difference,” he said. The shoe charity has distributed more than 7 million pairs of shoes to people in need worldwide. They recently committed 1.3 million pairs of shoes to the country of Haiti to help the victims of the 7.0 magnitude earthquake. More than 200 recycling drop-off locations throughout the state provided shoe bins for residents to donate unwanted shoes.

“When Soles4Souls asked the Georgia Recycling Coalition for help, I knew this compassionate reuse project was a perfect match for us,” said GRC President Joe Dunlop. “We linked our members’ recycling expertise, including logistics support from Whole Foods, with the grass-roots organizational skills of Georgia’s Keep America Beautiful affiliates, and quickly began gathering shoes. Collecting 50,000 pairs in 3 months is amazing, but we hope to continue this effort, as there is clearly more than a one-time need for shoes.” For more information on how to get involved and donate, visit www.giveshoes.org.

About Soles4Souls®

Soles4Souls is a Nashville-based charity that collects shoes from warehouses of footwear companies and the closets of people like you. We distribute these shoes, free of charge, to people in need around the world. Since 2005, Soles4Souls has given away over 7 million pairs of new and gently worn shoes (currently distributing one pair every 9 seconds). The shoes have been distributed in 125 countries, including Haiti, Kenya, Nepal and the United States. Soles4Souls is a 501(c)(3) recognized by the IRS and donating parties are eligible for tax advantages.