

Mercy Works

Because of YOU! We are deeply grateful for the support of our donors, volunteers, community partners, funders and corporate sponsors. Without you, Mercy's mission to end homelessness, transform lives and advocate for real and lasting change in the social systems that perpetuate homelessness, would not be possible. Thank you.

- ✓ In the last 12 months, Mercy moved **247** people out of homelessness and into permanent housing.
- ✓ In collaboration with our partners, Mercy saved **600** households in the City of Hartford, Middlesex County, Meriden and Wallingford with Federal Stimulus Funds (HPRP: Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing).
- ✓ Mercy serves more than **5,500** unduplicated clients per year.
- ✓ **89** Housing units are currently being supported by Mercy to give people what they need to be successful in housing.
- ✓ The Friendship Center at St. Elizabeth House serves more than **82,000** meals per year.
- ✓ In 2009, Mercy's Jumpstart Program at St. Elizabeth House was able to assist **70** clients who were unemployed to get a job, and **20** clients to get a better job.

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Mercy
Mercy Housing and Shelter Corp.

Mercy Works

A Publication of Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation
Ending Homelessness in Connecticut Since 1983

Fall
2010

Preserving a National Historic Landmark -Saving a Home

On August 10th 2010, Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation celebrated the completion of the renovation of the front lawn and entrance to the historic Henry Barnard House – a National Historic Landmark – now known as St. Elizabeth House. In addition, groundbreaking took place for a new elevator tower and related improvements to be completed in the first months of 2011. The renovated entrance, front lawn and new elevator will provide much-needed handicapped accessibility to the building.

Located in what was Hartford's most fashionable neighborhood during the 19th century, the house was built in 1807, four years before Henry Barnard was born there. Barnard (1811-1900), the first U.S. Commissioner of Education and known as the "Father of American public education," almost single-handedly formulated the public school systems of Connecticut and Rhode Island which served as models for the public school systems throughout the country. A graduate of Yale and a public servant, Barnard served in the Connecticut General Assembly from 1837 – 1839 and became a strong supporter of humanitarian legislation and efforts to improve public education. Barnard continued to live and work in the house for the remainder of his life and he died there in 1900.



In 1905, the Daughters of the Holy Spirit took possession of the Barnard House and created a home for working women. In 1906 the building was expanded to include a four-floor addition of 65 rooms and became known as St. Elizabeth Home. In 1972 the building was put up for sale and leased to the Ecumenical Institute as a site for a seminary and workshops. In 1980 City Center Churches took over the facility after a period of abandonment and vandalism and The Friendship Center, a local soup kitchen, moved its operation into the basement. The Sisters of Mercy purchased St. Elizabeth House in 1983 and formed Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation.



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Mercy's Mission

Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation provides housing assistance and supportive services to persons who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Mercy works to empower its clients to become independent, so they may live and work with dignity and respect. Mercy seeks to end homelessness by advocating for changes in the social systems that perpetuate homelessness. Mercy welcomes and serves all in need, in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, who founded the organization in 1983.

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Dear Friends in Mercy,

Homelessness in this country is often viewed as a "male" problem. However, according to *Connecticut Counts 2009: Point-in-time Homeless Report*, although the vast majority of sheltered single adults were male, it was far more likely to count a female as the adult in a sheltered family.

And that's just the "sheltered" homeless population. Women and families who face homelessness tend to "double up" with friends and family, hide from threats of violence, removal of children, and disappear into the shadows. The issue of women and homelessness tends to be more of a hidden problem and the cycles of violence and addiction, the dominant concern.

According to *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, between 22% and 57% of women experiencing homelessness report that domestic or sexual violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness. Recognizing the special needs of homeless women, Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation has responded by re-tooling and adding programs.

The Transitional Living Program at St. Elizabeth House in Hartford has been reconfigured to accommodate more homeless women. The 4th floor is now exclusively devoted to women, with women-only case management and programs designed to address life skills, integrated health and wellbeing, education and jobs skills. At Shepherd Home in Middletown, a topic-driven Women's Support Group meets regularly with counselors and case managers. At Catherine's Place in Hartford, a program exclusively for homeless women in recovery, many new wellness programs are now in place including yoga, journaling, and health and self care education. Mercy's Supportive Housing Program convenes a bi-monthly women's support group to bring together ideas, success stories and intimate, soulful discussion.

But there is still more work to do. Through better education, more strategic collaboration with state agencies, smarter fundraising, deeper research and greater outreach, we will continue to build the pipeline of support services, transitional and permanent housing to fulfill our mission to end homelessness for all – men and women - and for good.

In Mercy,

Sister Patricia McKeon, RSM
Executive Director

Bringing People Home

Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation employs a multi-faceted strategy to fulfill its mission to end homelessness. The most successful intervention for ending chronic homelessness is permanent supportive housing, which couples permanent housing with supportive services that target the specific needs of an individual or family. All of Mercy's programs endeavor to shepherd clients through individual supportive services and into permanent housing – a place to call home.

St. Elizabeth House, 118 Main St. Hartford

Providing a variety of critical services for thousands of men, women and families each year who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, to meet their basic needs and seek support to gain self-sufficiency and independence.



Shepherd Home, 112 Bow Lane, Middletown

A residential program for 70 otherwise homeless men and women, where clients work with case managers to identify the reasons for their homelessness, set goals and seek to achieve self-sufficiency, independence and permanent housing.

Supportive Housing Services, 211 Wethersfield Ave, Hartford

Supportive housing is proven to help homeless persons including those who are "chronically homeless" find stability in a home of their own. The combination of permanent, affordable housing and supportive services works well for people who face the most complex challenges - very low incomes, serious and persistent conditions that may include substance use, mental illness, and HIV/AIDS. Supportive Housing Services provide a variety of services designed to help individuals and families be successful in their housing.



Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program - HPRP

is a program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. These stimulus dollars are used to provide flexible financial assistance and case management to eligible individuals and families who need temporary assistance to avoid eviction from their current housing or, if it cannot be avoided, to assist them in getting out of emergency shelters into permanent housing as quickly as possible. Mercy is contracted to provide these services in the City of Hartford, Middlesex County, Meriden and Wallingford.



Mercy House – A non-disclosed, permanent residential program for 9 persons with HIV/AIDS and a mental health, substance abuse or co-occurring disability that makes it difficult for them to remain connected to health care in an independent environment. Full time residential case managers are available to assist residents.

The Residence, West Hartford

A supported apartment program for 12 homeless adults with severe mental health disabilities providing housing with 24-hour staff support, meals and case management services.

Catherine's Place, Hartford

A residential program in downtown Hartford for 15 single homeless women who have a history of substance abuse. Case managers work daily with residents to help them set goals and gain the personal and vocational skills they need to obtain stable employment and permanent housing. This program is in partnership with The Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at St. Patrick-St. Anthony Parish and Alcohol and Drug Recovery Centers (ADRC).



Partner with Mercy! Mercy is doing the work in our communities that you care about and makes critical differences in the lives of hundreds of people every day. But the need continues. Join our community of donors, supporters, and volunteers in a collaborative role to eradicate homelessness in Connecticut. Each year Mercy must raise \$800,000 from individuals, faith communities, corporations and foundations to fill the funding gap to allow critical services – the meals program, case management services, job development – to continue and keep clients housed and safe.

Ways to Give: Supporting Mercy Housing and Shelter Corp. is easy! Visit www.mercyhousingct.org and click on “Donate.” Mercy has partnered with Network for Good to make on-line giving convenient and secure. Or, use the envelope provided in this newsletter. Even small gifts make a big impact.

The Annual Fund - Providing essential annual operating support to sustain Mercy’s programs and to close the gap on federal and state funding. Unrestricted gifts to Mercy’s Annual Fund are most helpful because they allow us to meet the needs where they exist at any given time.

Planned Giving - There are many ways to benefit both Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation and yourself through a professionally-crafted, well thought out planned giving program. A planned gift can give you the comfort of creating a legacy to continue your support of ending homelessness in Connecticut. Bequests are the easiest form of planned giving support, but there are other options that we invite you to explore with your counsel.

Volunteer - Our hundreds of volunteers play an enormous role in the work that we do. Their energy and commitment make many of our initiatives possible. There are several ways in which you can get involved at Mercy. Please let us know your interests and any special skills you have by calling our Volunteer Coordinator, Sister Sheila Casey at 860.808.2105. We will work with you to find the volunteer opportunity that best matches your time and interest. We look forward to teaming up with you and working together to end homelessness.

Matching Gifts – Many businesses and corporations will match an employee’s charitable gift. Please check with your human resources office to make arrangements.

Honorary and Memorial gifts – A thoughtful way to honor a birthday, wedding, anniversary or to memorialize a loved-one is through a gift to Mercy Housing and Shelter Corporation. We will be honored to work with you to make a gift in memory of a person or event.

To discuss these and other giving opportunities, or for more information about how you can become engaged with Mercy’s mission, please call Rochelle Simon, Director of Development, at 860.808.2036, or email rsimon@mercyhousingct.org.

Wish List

In addition to cash donations, all of Mercy’s programs rely on the support of our friends and communities to provide necessary goods for our clients. The need is always there and we hope that you’ll consider Mercy Housing and Shelter when shopping at the local market. Even a few bottles of laundry detergent or a week’s supply of personal care products for one or more of our clients can make a huge impact in their lives.

St. Elizabeth House and Friendship Center, Hartford

- Personal care items (soap, toothpaste, deodorant, razors, shampoo, feminine products, ethnic hair and skin products)
- Laundry detergent
- Bus passes
- Steel-toed work boots
- Phone cards
- Art supplies (acrylic paint, canvases, brushes, watercolors, paper, markers, etc)

Shepherd Home, Middletown

- New twin-sized bed linens, pillows, blankets
- Personal care items (soap, toothpaste, deodorant, razors, shampoo, feminine products, ethnic hair and skin products)

All Programs can ALWAYS use bus passes, phone cards and gift cards (CVS, Target, Stop & Shop, Wal-Mart, etc.) Please send gift cards directly to the attention of the Development Office at Mercy’s administrative offices.

Donations of goods to St. Elizabeth House in Hartford and Shepherd Home in Middletown may be made Monday through Saturday from 9 to 4. Donations of goods to Mercy’s Administrative Offices in Hartford may be made Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:30 pm. Please remember that bed and bath linens, socks and underwear must be new.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to renovations at St. Elizabeth House, the Friendship Center’s Community Clothes Closet is only accepting new socks and underwear until further notice.

THANK YOU!

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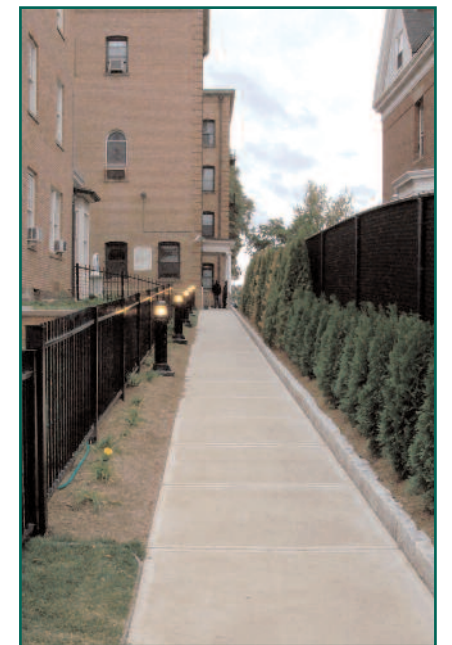
Today, through the generosity of our donors, funders and community partners, St. Elizabeth House provides a variety of critical services for thousands of men, women and families each year who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The programs at St. Elizabeth House support 58 homeless men, women, veterans, and individuals transitioning from inpatient psychiatric care back into the community through the *Transitional Living Program*, *The Women’s Program* and the *Community Health Respite Program*. Residents are also encouraged to participate in the *Jumpstart Job/Life Skills Resource Center*, a jobs program that prepares residents to overcome barriers to employment through assessment, job training and individualized employment supports.

The Friendship Center provides more than 82,000 free meals per year (two meals per day, six days per week), family services for homeless or at risk families with children, day shelter that provides showers, laundry facilities, emergency food, restrooms, clean donated clothes, telephones, and connects people to medical services, HIV/ AIDS counseling, and individual case management.

For more information about the Campaign for Mercy or the renovations at St. Elizabeth House, please contact Carl Rodenhizer, Associate Executive Director, at 860.808.2040, or crodenhizer@mercyhousingct.org.



Making Homelessness History



Front lawn and entry renovations are made possible with the generous support of the Beatrice Fox Auerbach Foundation Fund and the Thibadeau Family Fund at Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and the City of Hartford. Building renovations are made possible by Aetna Foundation, Bank of America, CT Dept. of Economic and Community Development, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, Sisters of Mercy Northeast Community, Inc., U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, and individual donors and friends of Mercy Housing and Shelter Corp.

Photos: Cover - Before and after: Completed front lawn renovations to St. Elizabeth House. Portrait of Henry Barnard. Above, elevator tower construction; Ground breaking for elevator. Pictured left to right: Paul Campanelli, PAC Group; Carolyn Carlson, HUD Hartford; Elmer Fitch, Resident; Anthony Matta, City of Hartford; Gary Racine, HUD Hartford; St. Patricia McKeon, Executive Director. Renovations completed to side entrance. Photos by Nick Lacy.

Thank You To Mercy's Volunteers

"All laugh and play together, not one cold, stiff soul appears. From the day they enter, reserve of any ungracious kind leaves them."

- Catherine McAuley, Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy (1778 - 1841)

Day of Caring, September 3, 2010.



(Front row, left to right) Liz Pellici, Subu Boyinapalli, Matt Richard, James Ferrara, Karen Piacentini, Elisa Crockett. (From 2nd row, left to right) Michael Nigro, Jeanne Beatty, Abby Bosacker, Joan Roby, Lisa Rooney, Liz Stewart, Sister Sheila Casey, Volunteer Coordinator. (Back row, left to right) Larry Wright, Ryan McClung, Lynn Kerr, Chimere Cooke, Tikisha Morris, Rochelle Simon, Director of Development; Cliff Johnson, Director of Facilities; Ron Gagnon, Maintenance supervisor.

Trinity College DO IT Day



Trinity College Students volunteer at the Friendship Center on September 11, 2010. (Left to right) Shoki Mapokgole, Stephani Roman, John H. Montalvo, Sophie Starchman.



Travelers Volunteers

Financial Management Leadership Development Program Participants Haytham Zohny and Alina Lyangucova, from Travelers volunteer in the Friendship Center at St. Elizabeth House serving lunch in July. Not pictured is Volunteer Michael He, also from the FMLDP at Travelers.

Photos by Nick Lacy

"I Am So Blessed"

"Drugs and alcohol are an equal opportunity destroyer," says Julie, a resident at Shepherd Home, Mercy's transitional housing facility in Middletown. "But, here at Shepherd, if I feel uneasy about my recovery in any way I can get immediate help."

Julie, a 44 year old, educated, middle class woman from a rural Connecticut town, found herself using again after 18 years of sobriety and living in a hallway with a man who beat her nearly every day. Julie's story speaks to the unique issues that homeless women often face – a cycle of abuse and addiction that feed each other through a need to use and a need for safety.

"I was clean and sober for 18 years after becoming addicted to cocaine in my late teens. I stopped using, went to college and even got a master's degree in social work. But, I ended up relapsing after all that time because of the stress of a divorce from an abusive man, then being a single parent raising three children, running a household and trying to make ends meet. I did everything a respectable person was supposed to do: I owned a home and a car and went to work every day. I was doing pretty well, but then it all came crashing down." Julie had to sell her house and her youngest son went to live with his father. "It was then that I relapsed."

Julie soon found herself homeless and in another abusive relationship. "We were living in a hallway. It was scary and dangerous and all the while sleeping by my side was the guy who was beating me. He was also very addicted." Julie, "took the beatings" for about a year until she decided to stop using and get help. She took her last beating on December 31, 2009. She fled to a hospital where staff was able to find her a 60-day bed in a domestic violence shelter. She then was referred to Shepherd Home. "I am putting together a lot of wreckage right now. I am just at the beginning. But, if it weren't for the shelter and now for Shepherd, I'd probably still be out there in that hallway. For the first time in a long time I feel hopeful about my future. I feel so blessed to be able to get up in the morning and feel safe, to take a shower and to have clean clothes."

Julie is connected to a 12-step program and goes to meetings seven days per week. She receives counseling and medical care and is slowly reconnecting with her children and now, four grandchildren. Julie participates in a women's group at Shepherd that specifically addresses the different life issues that affect women: domestic violence, self esteem and relationship issues. "I feel very stable right now and the most important thing for me is to stay focused on recovery. The people at Shepherd help me to do that and I know that they truly care about me and my recovery."

Julie's hopes for the future include getting back into social work and focusing on addiction services. "I've been there and done that. Maybe my experiences can help someone else move into recovery and safety and stay there."



"But, if it weren't for the shelter and now for Shepherd, I'd probably still be out there in that hallway."

Thank You For Making Dreams Come True!

The 18th Annual Dreams Can Come True Benefit Gala | October 29, 2010 | The Bond Ball Room, Hartford

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