



# Mercy Center

Empower • Enrich • Educate

**Executive Director (June 2021)**

**Mercy Center**

**Asbury Park, New Jersey**

**<https://mercycenternj.org>**

## **THE INSTITUTION**

Mercy Center, a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy founded in 1986 and located in Asbury Park, New Jersey, is a comprehensive social service and educational nonprofit organization whose mission is faith-based in the Catholic tradition. The Center operates multiple programs including the Emergency Services, the Family Resource Center and the Sisters Academy of New Jersey.

Mercy Center's Emergency Services, the inaugural program of Mercy Center, is open daily and serves over 5,000 persons every year by providing food, clothing and shelter assistance. The staff and team of over 50 volunteers maintain the pantry and provide a three-day supply of healthy balanced meals to clients based on family size, age and cooking facilities.

The Family Resource Center, a social service agency, is a "one-stop shop" for information, resources and services related to the support and preservation of families. It offers a range of cultural and relevant services such as group counseling, individual and family counseling, court advocacy, psycho-educational workshops, case management, and information and referrals to appropriate providers that help strengthen and stabilize the lives and situations of families.

Sisters Academy is a girls' middle school for grades five through eight. The Academy is committed to offering girls, from families of limited financial means in the greater Asbury Park area, a well-rounded *education of excellence*. The education provided to the students gives them access to, and success in, competitive high schools, colleges and universities. In fact, 100% of the students graduate from high school. The Academy is dedicated to creating a caring and supportive environment that promotes academic excellence, builds confidence and raises self-esteem.

## History

In 1831, Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland. Now, as then, a primary mission of the order is the care of the poor, sick and the uneducated. Mercy Center provides emergency services, family assistance, advocacy and a variety of educational services, particularly for women and children.

For more than 190 years, the Sisters of Mercy have served the poor and disadvantaged. The problems of 19th century Dublin – homelessness, hunger, healthcare, education – are not much different from the problems facing 21st century Asbury Park, New Jersey.

In 1986, the Sisters of Mercy purchased and renovated 1106 Main Street and incorporated under the title of Mercy Center Corp. In 1991, the adjacent property was purchased and after complete renovation, the building now houses the Mercy Center Family Resource Center. In 1999, another adjacent property was purchased and a new building was constructed which now houses a large food pantry, kitchen, conference room and offices where the Victims of Crime Advocates (VOCA) program is located.

In 1997, in response to the need for systemic change especially in quality education for girls, Mercy Center leased a former parish center located at 1416 Springwood Avenue in Asbury Park, and created Sisters Academy of New Jersey. This program provides wholistic educational experiences and graduate support services to students and their families. In 2009 the building and multiple adjacent properties were purchased.

Each day at Mercy Center lives are being changed with kindness, compassion and understanding from the staff and volunteers. They are committed to helping children, families and individuals overcome burdens and obstacles within an environment marked by dignity and justice. Mercy Center is a part of the community, offering programs and services to help children, families and individuals live a better life.

## Mission Statement

Mercy Center, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, provides programs and services that empower, enrich, and educate people facing socio-economic challenges to realize their full potential, with a special emphasis on women and children.

## Vision Statement

We encourage families to think differently about themselves and the world around them. We make the community an empowered place, marked with dignity and respect, by offering comprehensive services that support the emotional, physical, and financial well-being of the individuals we are privileged to serve.

For additional information, please visit their website at <https://mercycenternj.org/>.

## THE POSITION

The Executive Director represents Mercy Center to the public, leads organizational development and strategic planning, optimizes financial performance, oversees program delivery in the community, builds and maintains donor relationships and oversees personnel. The Executive Director develops organizational strategy, program implementation, best practices and supportive relationships both internally and externally, resulting in cooperative and effective collaborations that further the mission of Mercy Center.

The Executive Director of Mercy Center is appointed by the Sponsor Council of the Mid-Atlantic Community of the Sisters of Mercy upon the recommendation by the Mercy Center Board of Trustees. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Trustees.

## Specific Responsibilities

### *Strategic Vision and Leadership*

- In collaboration with Program Directors and the Board of Trustees, develops appropriate goals and strategies to advance the mission of Mercy Center ensuring the strategic plan is translated into goals and objectives for staff.
- Collaborate with all program directors to ensure a strong integration of all Mercy Center programs in its strategic plan.
- Initiate and maintain strong and open dialogue with the Board of Trustees, his/her direct reports.
- Maintain communication and dialogue with the Sisters of Mercy through its Director of Mission and Sponsorship and in accord with policies and procedures established by the Sisters of Mercy.
- Determine optimal organizational structure, integrating the programs of Emergency Services, Family Resource Center and Sisters Academy of New Jersey to improve communication and the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization as a whole.
- Direct supervision of Director of Family Services, Principal, Director of Development, Director of Finance, and Administrative Assistant.
- Exemplify Mercy values and spirituality while promoting a culture of inclusion and diversity that supports the social and emotional wellness of all constituents including students, families, faculty, and staff.

### *Institutional Advancement/Financial Management*

- In conjunction with the Board of Trustees and the Director of Development, the Executive Director is responsible for developing and overseeing appropriate fundraising and financial strategies, assuring the sustainability of Mercy Center.
- Take initiative in seeking additional funding sources, contracts, and other sources of agency income on an ongoing basis.
- Cultivate relationships with volunteers, donors, foundations and corporate sponsors.
- Develop, submit, implement and monitor grant application from appropriate federal, state, county and private entities.
- Oversee all publications, newsletters and formal correspondence and reports concerning Mercy Center and its three programs.

- Prepare, implement and oversee annual budget of Mercy Center in conjunction with all program directors, Director of Finance, Board Finance Committee and Trustees.
- Ensure that solid planning, budgeting and reporting systems are in place to accurately assess, manage, and project the financial health of the agency.
- Administer the agency on a day-to-day basis consistent with the annual approved budget, supervising all financial and personnel affairs of Mercy Center.
- Oversee the fiscal accountability of the agency to all its funding and contracting sources, providing reports as required by each funding source.

### ***Operations/Program Administration***

- Attract and retain appropriate staff overseeing recruiting, training, professional development and staff evaluation.
- Provide initial orientation and ongoing development to ensure an understanding of the mission of Mercy Center and its relationship to the mission of the Sisters of Mercy.
- Create an environment in which professional development is encouraged and supported for all staff.
- Oversee all programming of Mercy Center, developing and utilizing appropriate operating systems and resources that facilitate the effective operation of the organization.
- Supervise Program Directors and Principal of Sisters Academy, delegating appropriately and meeting regularly to review goals and evaluate performance.
- Maintain a strong working relationship with all staff with open communication, respect and trust.
- Develop reasonable workloads for all personnel and provide supervision and evaluation to ensure quality performance and achievement of the agency's mission, goals, and objectives.
- Provide for general maintenance and upkeep of all buildings and grounds of Mercy Center.
- Use agency data and input from staff, Board, and community resources for the purpose of identifying unmet needs within the community.
- Recommend programs to the Board for approval along with a plan for each, indicating the agency's ability to deliver and financially sustain the service and show how the program is consistent with Mercy Center's Core Values and the Critical Concerns and Mission of the Sisters of Mercy.
- Ensure that monitoring of programs meets all standards and agreements and is consistent with the agency's vision, mission and values.

### ***Community Relations***

- Act as an ambassador to represent Mercy Center's vision and mission, serving as the face of the organization providing leadership in developing the agency's public profile and communicating its mission and services to the community.
- Serve as the liaison between Mercy Center and the state, county and local governments, Board of Trustees, staff and the public.
- Develop relationships with the local media and serve as Mercy Center's primary contact to market programs and build additional community support.
- Act as the recognized spokesperson for Mercy Center and its programs, interfacing with the human services network.

- Seek opportunities to present information about the agency to relevant constituencies, attending public functions, meeting with donors, and speaking before various organizations on behalf of Mercy Center.
- Act with sensitivity to the needs and values of diverse cultural groups in the community.
- Develop and maintain collaborative, positive relationships with the many groups in the community that support or are involved in the organization or its mission.

### ***Academic Oversight***

- Encourage and support an environment and culture for 21st Century teaching and learning to flourish within Sisters Academy.
- Collaborate with the Principal of Sisters Academy to ensure that programs and policies of the school accomplish the school’s mission and philosophy.
- Help to create a visible profile and strong identity to assist Sisters Academy in building enrollment and attracting ongoing support.

### ***Regulatory Compliance***

- Ensure that Mercy Center is in compliance with all laws, both federal and state, and guidelines governing nonprofit organizations and policies and procedures of the Sisters of Mercy for their sponsored ministries.
- Develop, implement and update policies and procedures, as necessary.
- Ensure Employee Guidelines are updated and reviewed by an attorney for compliance with all current laws on a regular basis.

### ***Board Relations***

- Maintain a strong working relationship with the Board characterized by open communication, respect and trust.
- Provide regular reports on all programs and other agency activities and finances related to goals and strategies, as approved in the strategic plan or other board decisions.
- Attend all Board and Board Committee meetings, keeping the Board well informed about agency activities and providing regular reports including an annual report.
- Serve as an ex officio member of all Committees.
- Establish appropriate systems for dialogue and communication between the Board and staff.

## **THE CANDIDATE**

The Executive Director must have a commitment to Mercy Center culture and practices, the value of staff development, the improvement of health and social service programs in the larger community, and to inter-agency cooperation in meeting the needs of families and individuals in Asbury Park and surrounding areas. Demonstrated experience as a compassionate leader who is not afraid to make tough decisions and provides direct and timely responses is essential. The new Executive Director will be a visionary leader with a kind and nurturing spirit, while being accessible to constituents and effectively collaborating with the Mercy Center community. The successful candidate will be an outstanding communicator who clarifies goals, builds teams, and cultivates trust while at the same time demands accountability.

## Qualifications

- An appreciation and passion for the mission of Mercy Center with a deep-rooted commitment to Mercy core values.
- Faith-guided, visionary, and strategic leader with an institution-building mindset and a servant leadership style.
- Knowledge of or appreciation for the Catholic faith; willingness to develop further understanding of the Catholic and Mercy tradition that guides Mercy Center's mission.
- Minimum of five (5) years of increasingly responsible administrative and management experience in nonprofit, social service, or educational organizations preferred.
- Working knowledge of the State of New Jersey welfare and social service systems preferred.
- Demonstrated organizational and supervisory skills that will motivate and inspire staff while setting high expectations and professional direction.
- Proven success in leading teams, setting priorities and implementing a strategic vision.
- Strong interpersonal skills, drive, and integrity with demonstrated ability to build, foster, and maintain positive relationships with both internal and external constituencies, including staff, board members, donors, volunteers, students, families and clients.
- Experience in fundraising with the ability to formulate and execute development strategies that will enhance revenue while fostering strong partnerships with external partners and community members.
- Track record of experiences that include knowledge of strategies and best practices; proven effective in managing a multi-site and multi-program organization an asset.
- Proven experience implementing and evaluating a wide array of social service programs.
- General financial management ability including budget preparation, audit review and implementation and execution of a strong organizational financial policy.
- Superior communication skills to express, orally and in writing, Mercy Center's mission, vision, and goals with clarity, passion and persuasion.
- Self-confidence, humility, integrity, warmth, and a flexible personal style.
- Master's degree in Social Work, Social Services Administration or related field required.
- Bilingual candidate would be a plus.
- Limited regional travel required; must be available to attend events after work hours or on weekends as needed.

**For inquiries, nominations, and applications, please contact:**

**Cathy McGeever, Managing Partner**

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