



MercyFirst

hope is unstoppable

120  
YEARS

1894 - 2014



Annual  
Report  
2014



# Message from the CEO

Dear Friends:

MercyFirst is one of New York's leading not-for-profit human service agencies founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1894. Each year, we touch the lives of over 3,000 children and their families at locations in Brooklyn, Queens and throughout Long Island. Our staff of over 600 are committed professionals, which through our continuum of care, provide hope and healing to children who are struggling today, giving them the foundation for a brighter tomorrow.

I'm pleased to take a moment to reflect and share with you all the lives we have touched in the past year at MercyFirst.

- *We helped 133 families through our Preventive Services Programs, keeping 293 children safely at home with their families and out of the foster care system.*
- *We created 36 new families through the adoption of a foster child.*
- *We provided safe and loving foster homes to 718 children in our Foster Care Program.*
- *We taught 414 youth in our Residential Care Program important life skills to help better their futures.*
- *We provided sanctuary to 177 immigrant youth in our START With Hope Program.*
- *We helped 37 teenage mothers in our Mother/Baby Program become better parents to their babies.*
- *We provided scholarship assistance for 30 of our graduates to attend college or vocational school so they can be better prepared to learn the skills they need to become productive members of our community.*

These statistics are only part of the story. The real story of the past year unfolds everyday with the work done at each of our programs and with those children and families whose lives are made brighter because of what we do – families whose dreams are fulfilled, young mothers who learn to care for their babies while continuing their education, and teenagers who learn to believe in themselves despite life's hardships.

None of this would be possible without the generous support we receive from you. With your help we can continue to fulfill our Mission, to inspire hope and promote healing for children and families in need.



Gerard McCaffery  
President/CEO

## Mission

Through the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy, our Founders and Sponsors, MercyFirst inspires hope and promotes healing for children and families by providing quality human services and educational opportunities while advocating for social change.

## Executive Staff

Gerard McCaffery  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Carla DeFrancisco, CPA  
Chief Financial Officer

Jacqueline McKelvey, LMSW  
Chief Program Officer

Joanne Cordaro  
Sr. VP of Human Resources

## Senior Staff

Dawn Besemer, Psy.D.  
VP of Clinical Services

Harlean Dennis  
Sr. VP of Family Foster Care

Dr. James Horne  
Medical Director

Achim Kretschmer  
Sr. VP of Information Technology

Rebecca Marcone  
VP of Family Foster Care

Sister Maureen King, RSM  
VP of Mission Integration

Karen Peterson  
VP of Residential Programs

Dean Schnetzer  
VP of Group Homes

Kerri Sneden  
VP of Resource Development

# 120 Years of Protecting Children...



- 1894** St. Mary of the Angels Home founded in Syosset, NY by the Sisters of Mercy as a refuge for orphaned boys seeking shelter at the Convent of Mercy in Brooklyn.
- 1899** Angel Guardian Home founded by the Sisters of Mercy in Brooklyn, NY. The first residents are young orphaned girls.
- 1947** Angel Guardian inaugurates its Adoption Department.
- 1967** St. Mary's becomes incorporated as a separate child care agency and construction of cottages begins to care for older adolescent boys.

•**1974** Angel Guardian initiates one of New York's first Preventive Services programs in Fort Green, Brooklyn.

•**1975** Angel Guardian opens its first Mother/Child Residence on Clinton Avenue, Brooklyn. Three such residences operate today.



•**1976** Non-secure Detention program opens on Syosset campus. Program expands to serve a co-ed population and moves in 2011 to East Massapequa.

•**1980** St. Mary's launches Group Home program on Long Island to serve the older adolescent boys to prepare for independent living. Program is later expanded to include older adolescent girls.

•**1986** St. Mary's is selected to provide the first Preventive Services Program in Nassau County to help strengthen families and avoid the need to remove at-risk children from their home into foster care.

•**1987** Residential Treatment Facility, licensed by the NYS Office of Mental Health opens on the Syosset Campus. A Community Residence, licensed through OMH, for boys opens in 2004 in Merrick, LI.

•**1990** St. Mary's completes construction of the Thomas E. Casey Center to serve as the home for the on-grounds school operated by the NYC Department of Education, gymnasium and offices.



•**1987** Residential Treatment Facility, li-

censed by the NYS Office of Mental Health opens on the Syosset Campus. A Commu-

nity Residence, licensed through OMH, for boys opens in 2004 in Merrick, LI.

•**1990** St. Mary's completes construction of the Thomas E. Casey Center to serve as



•**2000** Therapeutic Family Foster Care program opens in Brooklyn and Queens.

•**2003** Angel Guardian and St. Mary's merge to unite two of New York's leading child-welfare organizations. The merged organization is re-named MercyFirst in 2004.

•**2009** MercyFirst is awarded Sanctuary Certification to become the largest agency in the country to be certified in this trauma-informed approach to providing services to children and their families.

•**2010** Syosset Campus goes co-ed to meet the ever changing needs of abused and neglected youth.

•**2014** MercyFirst received a 3 year grant from the Federal Government to provide residential and post-release services to immigrant youth. Doing so is in keeping with our mission and the priorities of the Sisters of Mercy.





# Our Programs and Services

MercyFirst, a Sanctuary® certified agency, reaches out to children and families who have been traumatized — children growing up without parents, families on the brink of disaster, teens who have lost hope for the future. Every year we provide hope and healing to thousands of children who are struggling today, giving them the foundation for a brighter tomorrow.

## Community and Campus-Based Residential Treatment Programs

MercyFirst provides a wide array of treatment and support services to the children and adolescents in our residential group home and campus-based programs. Education, pastoral care and recreation are provided on our campus and in the community.

### Campus Programs

Our campus in Syosset provides a structured environment for teenage boys and girls who need a high level of care and support. They attend our on-campus school full-time and participate in regular recreational and social activities along with receiving the specialized treatment they need to help them become productive members of the community. An OASAS licensed substance abuse treatment clinic is operated on our campus through a co-operative agreement with Outreach.



*Students create video projects during computer class.*

### Community Group Homes

Each day our group homes in Brooklyn, Queens, Nassau and Suffolk counties provide youth with the guidance they need to become responsible and contributing members of the community, giving them the opportunity to develop important skills and learn the social behaviors necessary to succeed in independent living. Our specialized homes include Mother/Baby homes which assist teen mothers, as they learn to parent effectively.



*Visit our website to learn about becoming a Foster Parent.*

### Family Foster Care

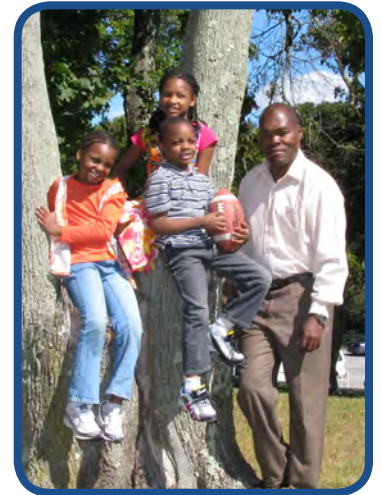
Foster families in Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island provide loving, nurturing, temporary homes for children unable to reside with their biological family because of serious allegations of abuse and neglect. MercyFirst works intensely to reunite children with their families. When this is not possible, we seek permanent homes for the children through adoption or discharge to a relative.

## Family Support Program

Everyday we work with hundreds of families and their children to support and strengthen them through our Family Support Program in Brooklyn.

## Medical and Mental Health Services

MercyFirst operates two medical clinics in Brooklyn and Syosset that are staffed by a Medical Director, Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, RN's and LPN's. Mental Health Services are provided including individual, group and family counseling, assessments, and medication management as needed.



*Keeping families together.*



*"The Arts" Mural Project*

## START With Hope

Responding to tremendous humanitarian need on our southern border, MercyFirst provides safe shelter and care to children from Central America fleeing violence, drugs and chaos to be reunited with their family in our country.

## Bridges to the Future

MercyFirst's innovative Bridges to the Future Program provides today's struggling youth with the support and skills they need for the bright future they are capable of achieving. The initiative supports our youth as they complete their education, develop workforce and daily living skills, and prepare for the future.

## Core Services

MercyFirst provides core services to our children and families, depending on the particular program that they are associated with:

Case Management and Home Visits; Substance abuse treatment; Pastoral Care; Recreation and Mentoring; Educational assistance including tutoring, college prep and financial assistance to attend college; Life Skills training including preparation for independent living, financial literacy, food preparation, etc.

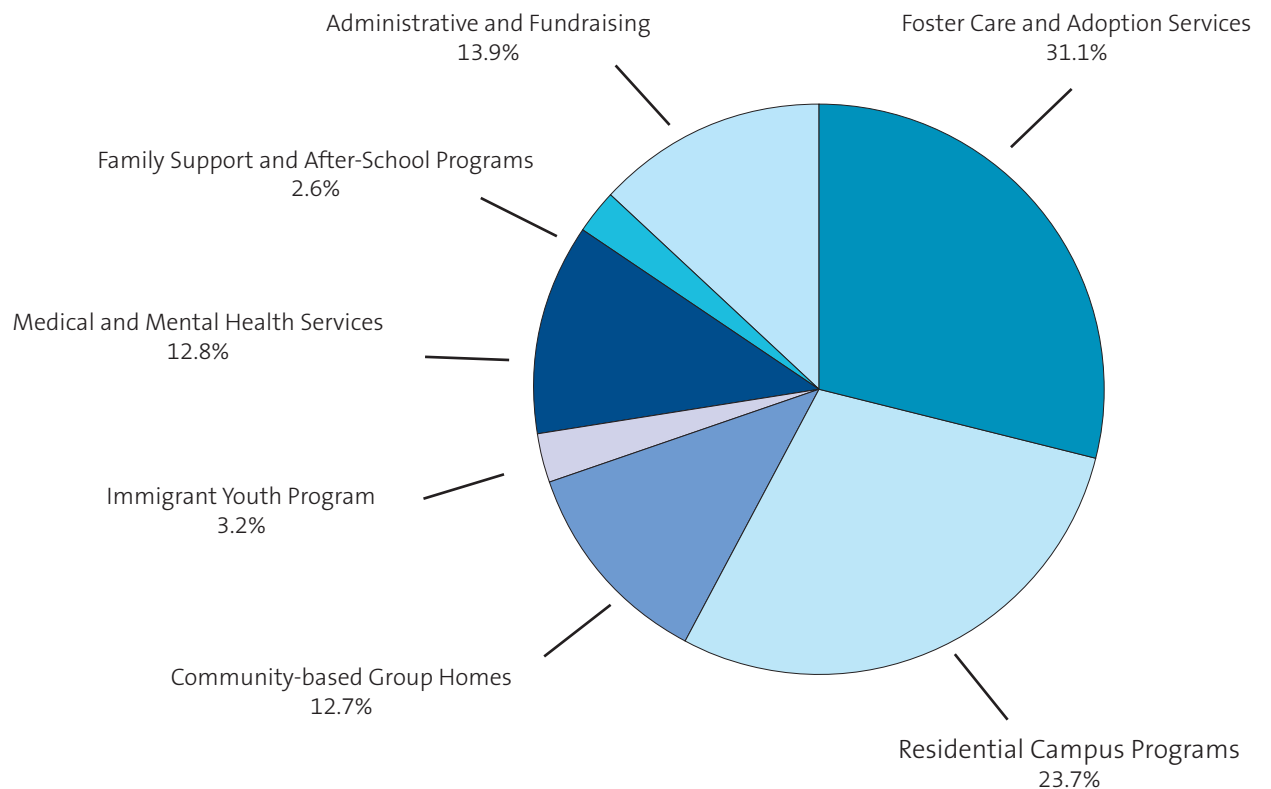


*2014 Scholarship Recipients.*

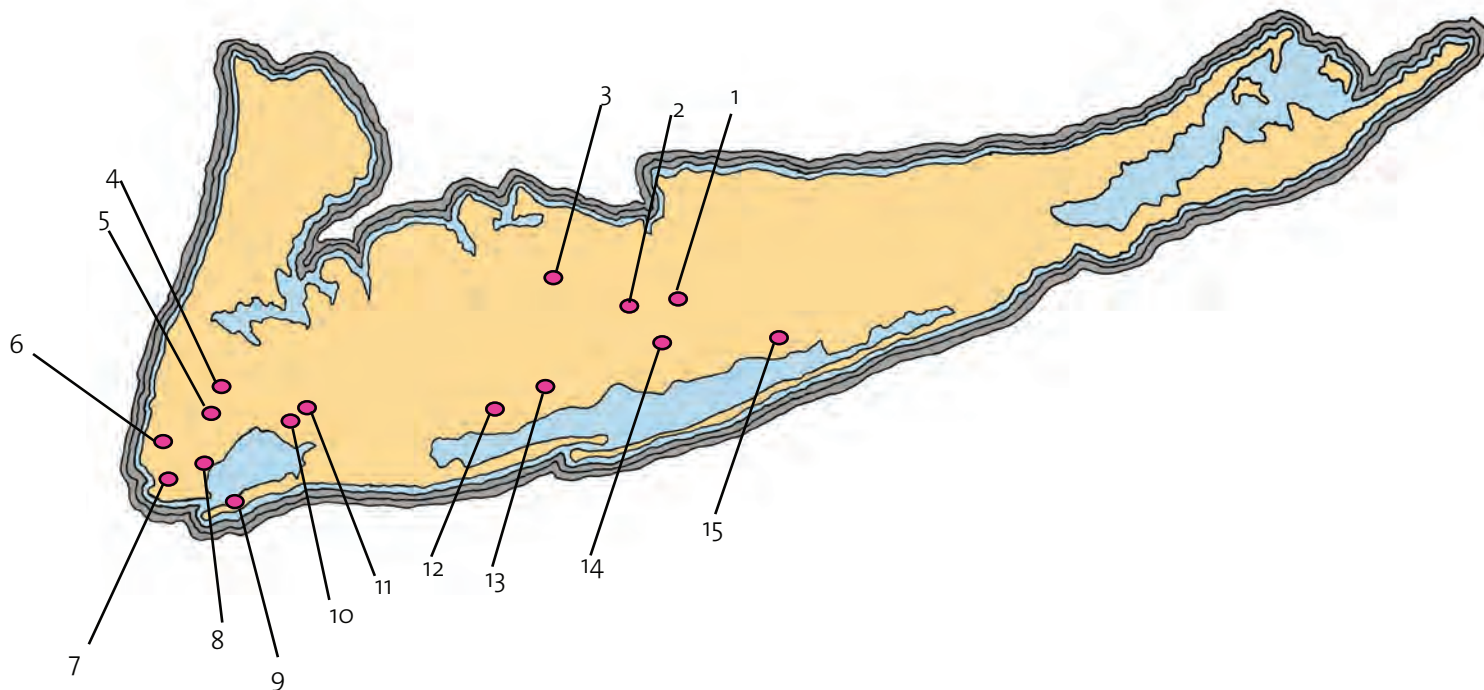
## 2014 Financial Report

<b>Program Government Support</b>	<b>\$41,143,673</b>
<b>Support and Non-Operating Revenues</b>	
Grants	135,600
Donations	750,997
Special Events	228,015
Other	14,960
Total Support and Non-Operating Revenues	<u>1,129,572</u>
<b>Total Support and Revenues</b>	<b><u>\$42,273,245</u></b>
<b>Program Expenses</b>	
Foster Care and Adoption Services	\$13,191,907
Residential Campus Programs	10,085,311
Community-based Group Homes	5,386,443
Immigrant Youth Program	1,378,267
Medical and Mental Health Services	5,421,703
Family Support and After-School Programs	1,102,295
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b><u>36,565,926</u></b>
Administrative and Fundraising Expenses	5,890,595
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$42,456,521</u></b>

### Agency Expenses



# Locations



1. **Brentwood Group Home**  
Brentwood, NY
2. **Deer Park Residence**  
**Mother/Baby**  
Deer Park, NY
3. **St. Mary's Campus**  
**Administrative Offices &**  
**Residential Programs**  
525 Convent Road  
Syosset, NY 11791
4. **McAuley Residence**  
**Mother/Baby**  
Brooklyn, NY
5. **Virginia Residence**  
**Youth Reception Center**  
Brooklyn, NY  
*(Spring 2015)*
6. **The Montague Center**  
**Family Foster Care**  
186 Montague Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11201
7. **Angel Guardian Campus**  
**Family Foster Care**  
6301 12th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11219
8. **The Gerard C. Durr Center**  
**Preventive Services**  
333 Avenue X  
Brooklyn, NY 11223
9. **Rockaway Park**  
**Family Foster Care**  
230 Beach 102 Street  
Rockaway Park, NY 11694
10. **Manning Residence**  
**Mother/Baby**  
So. Ozone Park, NY
11. **St. Albans Residence**  
**Mother/Baby**  
St. Albans, NY  
*(Spring 2015)*
12. **Merrick House**  
**Community Residence**  
Merrick, NY
13. **East Massapequa Group Home**  
East Massapequa, NY
14. **Baywood Group Home**  
Bay Shore, NY
15. **Brightwaters Group Home**  
Brightwaters, NY



# 2013-2014 Donors

reflects donations made between 7/1/13 - 12/31/14

## INDIVIDUALS

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## Under \$150

An additional 536 gifts were received between \$1 and \$150.

## Please Note...

The names listed in the Annual Report have supported our work through financial contributions. We sincerely hope that this list is complete, but if we have inadvertently omitted your name, please bring it to our attention. We are grateful for every one of our supporters!

**In the past year, over 100 Mentors, Individual and Group Volunteers provided an array of activities and services for our youth. Positive and consistent relationships are formed between the Volunteers, Mentor and the youth. The support and skills learned are incredibly valuable to our youth while they are at MercyFirst and once they transition out of foster care.**

## Volunteer Spotlight

**Kimco Realty Corporation** is a real estate investment trust headquartered in New Hyde Park, NY. In 2012 employees began hosting monthly game nights for the youth in our Residential Programs consisting of basketball, video games and pizza!

**Delta Sigma Theta Nassau Alumnae Chapter** began volunteering with MercyFirst in 2010. Over the years, the Chapter has facilitated career, money management, self-esteem, and college workshops for youth. Delta Sigma Theta Nassau Alumnae Chapter also awards eligible youth with scholarships for college and vocational school.

**Shelter Rock Church** provides inspirational and recreational activities for MercyFirst youth. The group donates school supplies, holiday baskets, gift cards, and luncheons for our teens.

**A Young Mother's D.R.E.A.M.** is a non profit organization that assists teen mothers in completing their education through a mentoring program. Since 2011 the organization has offered workshops focused on self-esteem, education, employment as well as recreational activities.

**Junket Inc.** is a mentoring group for youth involved in the foster care system created to assist them as they transition into independent living. The goals of the group, which began working with MercyFirst in 2011, include involving them in activities within the community, and using their acquired skills to initiate and sustain a community-based project of their choosing.

# 2013-2014 Donors

*reflects donations made between 7/1/13 - 12/31/14*

## ORGANIZATIONS

### \$100,000 +

Estate of Agnes Trill Funk  
The RTS Family Foundation

### \$25,000 - \$99,999

Ridgewood Savings Bank  
SHI  
Sisters of Mercy, Mid-Atlantic  
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The Angel Guardian Guild  
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Hewlett-Packard  
HP  
HP Storage  
Italian American Spirit, Inc.  
Modern Communications  
National Christian Founda-  
tion, South Florida  
NetApp  
Nutanix  
Oracle  
Pine Hollow Charity Fund, Inc.  
Price Waterhouse Coopers, LLC  
Schroder Investment  
Management NA  
Shadow Financial Systems, Inc.  
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The Tony Randall Theatrical  
Fund, Inc.  
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### Up to \$499

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Vietnam War Veterans  
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# Board of Trustees, Leadership Council

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## Leadership Council

*The Leadership Council is comprised of leaders from the business and public sectors, along with individuals from the community who are committed to aiding MercyFirst and supporting the agency's mission through fundraising, community support and public awareness activities. The Leadership Council also includes former members of the Board of Trustees who want to stay involved with MercyFirst and support its mission.*

John P. Birmingham, Attorney, Former Board Member of MercyFirst

Campbell Brown, Journalist, Former CNN Anchor

Craig Cordell, National Technology Executive

Dr. Richard P. Dina, Long Island Center for Nonprofit Leadership, Adelphi University - Senior Adviser/Consultant

Robert Flicker, C & B Consulting - Managing Director, A division of Gallagher Benefit Services

Sister Sean Foley, RSM, Glencara, Inc. - Psychotherapy and Management Consultant, Former CEO and Board Member of MercyFirst

Sister Lenore Guirrieri, RSM, Sisters of Mercy Convent, Whitestone - Administrator, Former Board Member of MercyFirst

William Hogan, Webhouse, Inc. - President

Lewis Johnson, Siwel Consulting, Inc. - President

John Koehler, The Koehler Organization, Project Manager

Elizabeth McCarthy, Sheltering Arms - Executive Director

James Sirignano, Actifio - Senior Account Executive



#### **Accreditations**

Council on Accreditation

Sanctuary® Institute

American Psychological Association

#### **Affiliations**

American Association of Children's Residential Centers

Child Welfare League of America

Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies

Health and Welfare Council of Long Island

Human Services Council

Long Islanders for Families and Youth

New York State Coalition for Children's Mental Health Services

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