

September 2021



Words of Mercy

CHANGING LIVES BUILDING FUTURES

GRAND OPENING!

And Ribbon-Cutting Celebration



After a Covid postponement, Mercy Support Services held their official Grand Opening and Ribbon-Cutting Celebration on June 24th at the new office location and property at 515 College Drive. Over 200 county and state leaders, businesses, friends and family came out to celebrate the growth and vision that this property is bringing to a reality.

The fanfare included balloon creation décor by Babes on the Block and lovely catered hors d'oeuvres by Karen's Catering; along with a ribbon-cutting of the new facility conducted by the Clay County Chamber's Executive Director, Wendell Chindra. A bronze plaque was installed on

the front, in dedication to the Legacy In Action companies for their 1.125 million-dollar sponsorship of the property. The office building is now officially the "Legacy Building"!

The 5-acre property is designated to be the location of a new 65-unit apartment complex comprised of three buildings – including a Student Self-Sufficiency Program, expansion of the current Self-Sufficiency Program and workforce housing units for qualified residents. The three year, 12 million-dollar project will become a hub of partnering services to the Clay County community.

"The Mercy Village project is a necessary expansion to meet our entire community's needs based on the projected growth for Clay County. We are elated that so many leaders and stakeholders understand and support our mission in, not just aiding, but transforming lives here in our own community. This is what it means to be the hands and feet of God", says Executive Director, R. Patrick Hayle.

THANK YOU so much to those who supported this event, including videography by Corey Hutchcraft and YUM – A Southern Market for donating the cookie jar for our drawing!

If you were unable to join us, but would like to learn more about the new facilities, contact laura.hardegree@mercysupportservices.org for a tour and more information.



The **Heart for Mercy** Campaign has become an annual viral event. This year 5 teams gathered to grow awareness of families in need and to raise much needed funds throughout July with testimonials and stories - sharing all that Mercy does in and for the Clay County community. With this campaign 32 volunteers shared Mercy's message to over 900 people. 64 people donated including 22 new donors. (See more on page 7)

A Word from Patrick



It may seem to be more of a struggle to find those quiet moments of peace in our daily routine, the silence where we hear God's voice prompting us, encouraging us and many times lifting us from the heaviness of life. But do not be troubled, this did not catch our Lord by surprise. He said in John 16:33 "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble. But take heart; I have overcome the world." The good news is, God's got this!

In this issue, we are honored to share with you testimonies of some who have come to Mercy with a very small glimmer of hope or no hope at all. How they first realize that our Mercy staff really does care and then they find that our heavenly Father cares even more. We are helping them to find Hope again.

You will read about the outpouring of love we experienced with our Grand Opening, Ribbon-Cutting ceremony, and the grand vision that God has given us for this new property and for Clay County. And, you will see the many volunteers who have come together so selflessly with their time, talent and treasure to create a new viral campaign in July, when our donations are at their lowest.

We are also introducing to you our **Heritage Partners Program** which recognizes those faithful givers in the community who want to leave a legacy. It's about a special act of worship called Estate Gifts that God is using to fuel our common desire - to share His love with the world. These supporters have a deep conviction and overflowing sense of gratitude that their lives and families are a gift from the hand of God, and God's Got This! They want to bless others beyond their lifetime and into the next generation of family and community, and they let us know that they have considered the future of Mercy in their Will.

If you have an interest in learning more about the **Heritage Partners Program**, please watch for your invitation to an event where we will have an expert available to answer questions and share more about this opportunity.

Our expectations for the Fall and 2022 are bigger than ever. But it's okay. We have a big God. And God's Got This!

May God bless you!

Patrick



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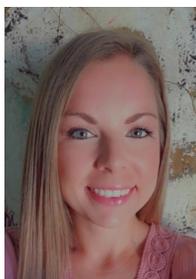
Welcoming our Newest Members of the Mercy Family!

JoLynn Carter– Assistant Development Director



JoLynn's entire life has been associated with the United States Military. Growing up as an Army brat; then marrying her Navy service member, she has moved 14 times, and has a world of experiences with different parts of the country and different walks of life. With a Marketing Degree in Business Administration, JoLynn's corporate work experience includes Media Buying, Radio Sales and being the Marketing Manager at Thrasher-Horne Center. She has volunteered for almost 30 years putting together events for various organizations including Mercy Support Services since 2015. She also continues to teach fitness classes. JoLynn feels humbled and grateful to be a part of Mercy's Christ-centered mission of helping people in need in Clay County.

Brandi Tubbs– Development Associate



Born and raised in Clay County, Brandi has a passion for helping others which led her to pursue a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Florida. As a single mother working her way through school, she has become a "jack of all trades" but says she has found her purpose here at Mercy. Our newest addition to the Mercy team, Brandi is excited to develop our volunteer program, ministry partners, social media, and donor management system. Brandi also serves at Highpoint Community Church as assistant worship leader and spends the remainder of her free time on the football field with her son.

Mercy Support Services 8th Annual Night of Hope

You won't want to miss Mercy Support Services 8th Annual Night of Hope. The Sinatra-themed event will be held at Sullivan Hall in Fleming Island on Thursday, October 7, 2021, from 6-9 PM at Sullivan Hall (Sacred Heart Catholic Church). Proceeds from the Night of Hope directly benefit families and children in Clay County receiving support from Mercy Support Services.

The evening will include dinner, entertainment, live and silent auctions, a cork pull, and more. Honorary Chair will be Jim Horne and Emcees for the evening will be Travis and Jessica Cummings. The Title Sponsor for this event is Odessa Realty Investments.

Individual seat tickets and table sponsorship are now available for Mercy Support Services Night of Hope and can be purchased online at www.MercySupportServices.org or by phone at 904.297.4052 ext. 2. Tickets for Night of Hope are \$150 per person and seating is limited. Most Sponsorship Packages include seating for the event.

To find out more about Mercy Support Services, the Night of Hope 2021 or to donate or become a sponsor, visit mercysupportservices.org or contact Jeff Boyer at 904.518.1276 or Jeff.Boyer@MercySupportServices.org.



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June 17, 2021 Grand Opening Photos



THANK YOU!!

To over 200 local residents, county and state leaders, stakeholders, and businesses who attended our Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting! You made this such a special event!

Couldn't Attend?

Call 904-297-4052 to schedule a tour and learn more about our services or visit mercysupportservices.org



Empowering Others for a Sustainable, Independent Future!



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Testimonies

"I was living in a hotel with a family of 4. They helped us get an apartment and kept checking on us. And they also helped get daycare for my granddaughter."

"The day that I called Mercy Services they responded immediately. My dilemma actually started before the pandemic shut down. The agency went back to where I began to fall short and picked up my broken pieces and put my life back together."

"I felt lost and didn't know where to go for help. The continuous support I get from the ladies and the feeling of being part of a new family - Mercy Support has been a true blessing in my life. I don't know where I would be without God, sending Mercy Support to me. They are always there when I need them and all the staff is friendly, willing to pray and provide wisdom and help when needed."



In July, Mercy hosted our first ever focus group for our Ministry Partners Program. Board member and research expert, Nancy Ulrich, led the group of eight churches of all denominations.

Pastor Robert Bass from Celebration Church said this program is exactly what we need right now in our community, "uniting the body of Christ."

The Ministry Partners Program is an initiative of Mercy Support Services to encourage and recruit churches and other faith-based ministries in Clay County to build a strong community partnership to address the needs of families and individuals who have come on hard times due to unfortunate circumstances.

If you'd like to be a part of this program, please contact Brandi Tubbs at btubbs@mercysupportservices.org or (904) 297-4059.



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Mercy Village Update

It is my pleasure to give the Mercy community an update on the progress made toward the Capital Campaign.



As you may have already heard, the theme for the Capital Campaign will be “Forward in Faith”. This reflects the amazing progress that we have experienced in the last ten years – and in particular the last eighteen months – as we have gone forward with plans, expansions, and visions for the future on our faith that we are doing God’s work for His people.

I am thrilled to be able to announce that John Thrasher and Jim Horne have agreed to co-chair the campaign. Both well-known names in Clay and distinguished throughout the state, they are totally committed to the creation of Mercy Village. There aren’t two better qualified people to lead us in our efforts.

In addition, we have committed support and endorsements from the following: Senator Jennifer and Rob Bradley, Representative Sam Garrison, Former Representative Travis Cummings, all five Clay County Commissioners, Sheriff Michelle Cook, and Superintendent David Broskie. With the continued support of our churches and businesses we are poised to collectively enhance life in Clay by doubling the capacity of our self-sufficiency program, instituting our Student Self-Sufficiency Program, and providing affordable housing for seniors, veterans, and lower income workforce.

Even though all of our current and emeriti directors will be active in the campaign, board member Rick Wood has agreed to continue to oversee the day-to-day details when construction begins. Rick, a well-known and very respected developer in Northeast Florida, has been instrumental in looking out for our best interests during the civil engineering and permitting that at the time of this writing is just about complete. We could not have gotten this far, this fast, without his help and expertise, and we are most appreciative of the time he has already put into Mercy Village.

It also needs to be mentioned that we are very blessed to have the greatest team at Mercy Support Services. From our CEO, Patrick, down to our newest hires JoLynn Carter and Brandi Tubbs, each and every one of them don’t just work at Mercy – they have been called to join in what we are doing for others. Even though they spend long hours listening to the hardships that our clients face which would become disheartening and depressing to most, they cheerfully face their duties and perform above expectations. They are as excited as any of us to see the capital campaign begin and ultimately see Mercy Village become a reality.

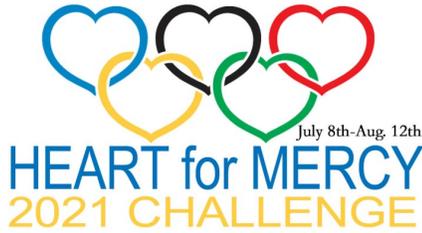
Final editing of our campaign printed materials, a PSA announcement and informational video is almost complete. I look forward to announcing the “Forward in Faith” campaign kick-off and seeing you there. Please continue to keep Mercy Village in your thoughts and prayers and spread the word of the good work we are accomplishing with your help and the blessing of the Lord.



Bob
Dr. Robert Cowie
Chair, Board of Directors
Mercy Support Services



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(cont. from front cover) The Finale on August 12 awarded Gold Medal gifts for three categories: the team that raised the most

money, the team that had the most contributors, and the donor that gave the largest gift.

The goal of this campaign was to reach 300 new people and share what Mercy Support Services does in our community, as well as to raise \$20,000.

The teams reached over 900 people and raised \$18,765!



We would like to give a HUGE THANKS to all our volunteers, board members and staff for helping raise awareness and funds and for Having a Heart for Mercy!

God is Good!

Creating A Lasting Legacy In Your Community- Become a Heritage Partner

Through the past year, we have come together as a community to help others and discovered that by caring for others Together, we can make a lasting impact. By becoming a Heritage Partner today you can ensure your vision of caring will continue for future generations by adding a planning strategy that guides your gift options, making the most of your giving opportunities.



You can designate a legacy or bequest- a sum of money, shares, bonds, jewelry and other possessions, life insurance policies and real estate property designated in your Will to your choice of persons, organizations, or charities like Mercy Support Services.

Leaving a bequest to Mercy Support Services is a significant way to share your heart for Mercy by paying it forward, while greatly helping us to prepare our programs and meet future needs.

“This simple act of worship establishes a legacy of charitable giving throughout your family and community for generations to come.”

There are many different ways to set up a legacy, based on your personal situation. If you are interested in learning more about how you can make a lasting impact for generations through designating a gift in your will, please contact Patrick Hayle at

info@mercysupportservices.org or call (904) 297-4052



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Calendar of Upcoming Events

8th Annual Gala- The Night of Hope: The Best is Yet to Come

Thursday, October 7, 2021

6-9 PM

Sullivan Hall at Sacred Heart Church

7190 US-17 S., Fleming Island, FL

Behind Sacred Heart Church

Volunteer Appreciation BBQ Jamboree

Friday, November 5, 2021

5 PM

Mercy Support Services



CONTACT US

(904) 297-4052

info@mercysupportservices.org

MISSION STATEMENT

Mercy Support Services is a Christ-centered organization that serves the people of Clay County who are circumstantially in need by providing services that guide them to self-sufficiency through an active network of compassionate-hearted people and organizations.



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