



Re-Vamped Heart for Mercy 2022 Experience Challenge was a Blast

We are excited to say, even though we did not reach our goal of raising \$20,000 during the month of July, we did raise almost \$10K thanks to some fun events held by some of our most loyal Mercy supporters. We also had a goal for this campaign to raise awareness about Mercy in Clay County to 300 new people and we exceeded that with these events! The concept behind our Experience challenge derived from the freer summer months and having your own events in support of a charity. We hope this Experience challenge will carry on over the rest of 2022 and become a fun way to fundraise for Mercy by hosting your own get togethers! If you would like to host your own event for Mercy, please contact JoLynn Carter @ jcarter@mercysupportservices.org and let us share your events! A special thank you to River Christian Church Student Ministry for their Car Wash for Mercy, to Scott Carter for hosting a Rock Night for Mercy, to Dena Collins for making "Dena walk a mile in her own shoes", and to Sophie Dentiste for hosting Mercy and Mimosas art event.



Welcome!

Happy Fall! Our recent Back-to-School Bash, at the end of July, was a strong reminder to us all that, once again, the seasons are changing quickly. Mercy was very blessed in July with so many great volunteers who stepped up and helped to raise funds and get us through a typically dry season. They did it, and the Heart for Mercy campaign was a success. Then we finished out July with a huge impact on 1,400 Clay residents who showed up in the heat for assistance, services, clothing and food, and even prayers to start a good school year. Thank you to Seeds of Love and Saved2Serve ministries for partnering with us in this momentous Back-To-School event.

And just like that, the summer is winding down. (Well for those of us in Florida we will still FEEL summer for quite some time), but the kids will be back to school, daily routines shift, and we all get into the rhythm of a new season. Sometimes change can be exciting. New opportunities, new friends and routine, and the holidays are coming.

(Continued on page 3)



Welcome, Cynthia!

Meet Cynthia, our newest Team member and new Staff Accountant bringing over 15 years of experience in finance. Cynthia has owned and operated several successful businesses here in Clay County that include a pizzeria and trucking company that her husband,

Mike still operates today. Cynthia has worked with the Clay County School Board and The Clay County Chamber of Commerce.

Cynthia is a devoted wife and mother of two teenagers. Her son, Blake, who is a 2021 graduate from Clay High, helped the Blue Devils baseball team make it to the Final Four in the State Tournament his freshman year and her daughter, Bailey, who is currently attending Clay High and helped the Blue Devils softball team make it to the Final Four in the 2022 State Tournament. When Cynthia is not calculating numbers for us, she can be found at Clay High cheering on her daughter and the softball team.

Cynthia likes spending as much time as she can with her family. She enjoys watching sports, especially her children, playing fetch with her dogs, sitting on her front porch with her husband taking about their day, and Sundays spent in church. Cynthia and her family attend Cornerstone Baptist Church in Middleburg.

We are excited about Cynthia joining the Mercy Support Services Team!

Cynthia says, “I am so blessed to be apart of such and amazing team here at Mercy Support Services. I truly believe in this organization and what it stands for. I’m speechless on the number of people Mercy Support Services has been able to help during hard times in this world through programs and collaborations with so many agencies here in Clay County and most importantly through the word and hands of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”



Ministry Partners

Wow! It has been a busy quarter for our Ministry Partners! These folks have showed up and showed out. Highpoint Community Church sent 20 volunteers to one of our group homes to do yard work and assemble dorm style furniture for our new Student Self Sufficiency Program for their annual “The Church Has Left The Building.” River Christian Church sent their youth group to us to host a car wash for our annual Heart for Mercy campaign. Christ’s Church came over and used our Mercy Village space for a field day and Elevate Life Church had a serve day at our group home laying mulch and building a fire pit.

We are so lucky to have such wonderful community partnerships! We hosted a roundtable-style Ministry Partner brunch at Mercy in July where we discussed current needs, opportunities, and outreaches; looking for ways to collaborate and better our efforts in the community.

If you are a church or faith-based nonprofit and interested in joining our Ministry Partners program, please contact Brandi Tubbs at btubbs@mercysupportservices.org or 904-297-4059.



Call Center Updates

The past quarter, Mercy's Resource & Referral Call Center has received over 600 calls. Financial and housing assistance remain the top two requested needs from our callers.

Rising costs of the most basic necessities has spiked an increase in requests for financial assistance. 45 % of our callers are seeking help with water, electric or rent. Local resources who have historically provided financial assistance have been running out of funds due to the high volume of need. We continue to feel blessed by our Ministry Partners who have entrusted us with Designated Funds to assist those who are facing extreme crisis.

Affordable housing is becoming almost impossible for families to find with fixed, little, or no income. Many have been forced to living out of their cars, staying in hotels long term or sleeping on the streets. 36 % of our callers are desperately seeking housing assistance. With limited to no funding available for housing needs, we are grateful for our partnership with the Housing & Finance Authority SHIP Program to fill the gaps with deposits, rental assistance and eviction prevention to qualified callers.

Mercy continues to strategize and meet with like-minded organizations and individuals who share the desire to develop long-term solutions for those in Clay who are circumstantially in need.

A Word From Patrick (continued from page 1)

But many here in Clay County are facing the kind of changes that rock their very core. Those changes are foundational, like finding (or keeping) affordable housing, earning enough to put food on the table, clothing the kids for school, or even keeping the family together – all can be devastating and change the circumstances many people are facing daily.

That is what our Call Center sees and hears each day. So many crises! Mercy feels this need, and that is why we are so inspired when our supporters can come together and unite, even in changing seasons, and make a difference. In this newsletter you will read more about these amazing people, and the ways they have said Yes to the calling of making a difference in the lives of others. We celebrate YOU! And look forward to the many ways we will work together this Fall and for years to come, here in Clay County!!

May God bless you!

Patrick

Programs Coach Training



Dr. Phyllis Simpson continues to enhance and focus our Program Coach model to address the current needs in our Community!

This quarter we've conducted parts one and two of our Programs Coach training, led by our Programs Associate, Dr. Phyllis Simpson. Our Program Coaches are volunteers who share the passion for seeing individuals move from crisis to self-sufficiency through a thoughtful approach developed by Dr. Simpson. This new holistic approach focuses on spiritual, mental and physical well-being.

Part one of these trainings covers what coaching is and isn't, the skills needed to be an effective coach, and what Mercy's expectations are for coaches.

The second training covers all things Mercy! "Meet The Mercy Mission," our Statement of Faith, and the new Programs Tiered Approach towards self-sufficiency.

Next quarter we plan to take a deeper dive into specific coaching skills such as effective listening, empathy, and thought-provoking questioning.



Programs Corner

It's that wonderful time of year again! The excitement of a new school year, kids eager to get back with their friends, parents ready to take a calming breath and teachers prepared to mold the minds of those who enter their classrooms. While summer has come to an end, the excitement of a brand-new year brings with it **hope**. I remember that feeling and I'll bet you do, too. And while every family experiencing crisis that crosses our threshold looks ahead with great hope to their successful graduation from our program, it's important – first – to **focus on the journey**.

“It is more important to go slow and gain the lessons you need along the journey than to rush the process and arrive at your destination empty.” I genuinely believe that's true. The process of taking a family from a state of homelessness to a sustainable degree of self-sufficiency doesn't happen overnight. Each family is given an individualized goal plan, along with the tools needed to not only work that plan, but to also have it work for them. From life skills classes and career counseling to financial coaching and supportive housing, our Programs Team pours everything they can into our families in hopes of each person walking away transformed – spiritually, mentally and financially.

While it's a separate set of goals for the Students in our Program, we work to keep them focused on the journey, too. Imagine yourself as a young adult, socially and emotionally transitioning from what has been somewhat of a routine and a protective environment to the unknown. You likely felt scared and nervous. Now imagine yourself as a young adult with all of those feelings *and* without a place to rest their head. Our House Managers are providing what every child deserves, and that is a safe, secure and loving home. They are teaching important life skills, such as time management, communication and household skills, and the importance of self-care. Our students are being prepared for a future that they had perhaps only hoped for, and we're excited to be part of their journey, too!

We are blessed to have so many supporters for Programs on this journey with us. Together we are restoring hope and dignity and a road map to those who lost their way. If you are interested in learning more about our Programs, contact Melissa Whitaker at mwhitaker@mercysupportservices.org

“Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go. They merely determine where you start.” – Nido Qubein

2022 Jack Myers Champions for Mercy Golf Tournament

Thank you to all our sponsors, donors, volunteers, staff and golfers that participated in our Annual Golf Tournament!!! We are excited to announce we exceeded our fundraising goals!

Our goals for this fun event were to have 160 golfers and net \$50,000. We had 157 golfers sign up and we ended up with \$50,387 net!!!

God blessed us with a beautiful day and everyone had a wonderful time! If you weren't able to be a part of this year's Tournament, but would like to participate next year, please contact JoLynn Carter at jcarter@mercysupportservices.org.



SAVE THE DATE!
April 28, 2023
Eagle Landing Golf Club

Ways to Support Mercy

Shop & Support Mercy!

Hagan ACE Hardware

Both locations are hosting a
Round Up - October 17-23.
 Asking their customers to round up to the nearest dollar
 for Mercy Support Services.

1022 Blanding Blvd, Orange Park, FL
 1305 N Orange Ave, Green Cove Springs, FL

amazonsmile

You shop. Amazon gives.

Don't forget! When you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon donates
 0.5% of your eligible purchases - at no cost to you.

AmazonSmile offers the same products, same low prices, and same
 services as the Amazon you know.

Just select Mercy Support Services as your favorite charity. It's that
 easy!



**2nd Saturday of
 every Month**

**Portion of
 Proceeds
 support Mercy!**

MENU

- Baby Back Rib Basket
- Pulled Pork Sandwich
- Pair of Sliders (pulled pork)
- Skinny (pulled pork & coleslaw)
- The Bubba (pulled pork and sausage link)
- Soda, Water, Coleslaw

If interested in full slabs of ribs or whole Boston butts,
 they need to be pre-ordered the week prior to event.

Portion of proceeds donated to Mercy Support Services.



**Welcome, Eternal
 Redeemer Church
 to Mercy's
 Sanctuary!**

Welcome to Eternal
 Redeemer Fellowship
 Church (The ER) where
 Jesus is Lord!

We are excited that you
 may consider visiting us
 in-person or online!

We are located inside of
 the Mercy Support
 Services building.

515 College Drive,
 Middleburg, Florida
 32068

Corporate Service:
 9:15am (in-person
 service)

9:30am (online service
 begins)

Please visit our website
 for more information:
eternalredeemer.org



College Drive Initiative Updates

We had an excellent turnout for our Food Truck Nights at St. Johns River State College. We found through our Deliberative Dialogues that the community really wanted to make this happen and it was totally validated through such high participation. We look forward to the Kick-Off of our Fall Food Truck Nights on September 23, 2022.

We have had many “Helping Highway” Happenings over the past few months as well:

- Clay Youth Connection that meets at Mercy Support Services devised a wonderful County wide Day Camp list that was very well received throughout the County which greatly expanded the summer activities of our youth.
- Clay County Veteran Services moved into their new offices located at 420 College Drive Suite 107 next door to the Veteran Affairs Office and the VA Outpatient Clinic.
- Clay County Community and Social Services Department also relocated to 420 College Drive Suite 107. Other services at this location also include Volunteer Services, Community Paramedicine Program and the Clay County Grants Department.
- Pace Center for Girls celebrated the graduation of their Class of 2022 and they are looking forward to moving into their state-of-the-art facility on College Drive this September.
- Impact Clay Professional Center opened at 151 College Drive. The facility offers affordable rents to Non-Profits and other “helping entities”. It also offers the use of their Conference Room and the ability to foster collaboration among the many helping Professionals throughout our County.
- Clay County Back To School Bash held at Mercy Support Services was a very big success with 600 backpacks given to students along with clothing, haircuts, bicycles and immunizations.

There are more great things to come in the very near future for the CDI , such as the Ground Breaking for Mercy Village and The Way Free Medical Clinic! And, the Thrasher-Horne Center also has a fantastic lineup for their 2022-2023 Season.

Please join our email list to receive ongoing updates! collegedriveinitiative@gmail.com

UPCOMING events

CDI Food Truck Night
September 23, 6-8 PM
St. Johns River State College

Night of Hope Gala
October 20, 6-9 PM
St. Catherine’s Catholic Church

Volunteer Appreciation BBQ
November 4
Mercy Support Services

2023 Golf Tournament
April 28
Eagle Landing Golf Club

DO MORE GOOD WITH YOUR RETIREMENT ASSETS

Many donors think their capacity for generosity matches the number in their bank account, but experts have found that 90% of a person’s wealth is typically held in non-cash assets. Giving retirement assets to charity could help:

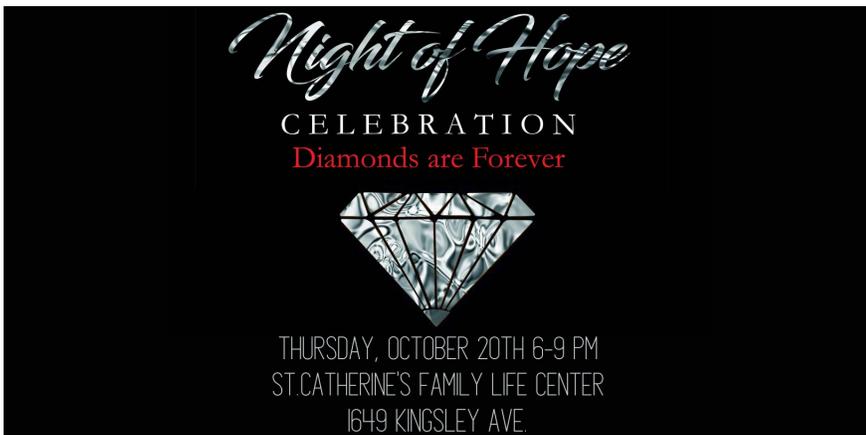
- Decrease the tax burden on your heirs.
- Meet IRA required minimum distributions.
- Increase your impact.
- Change lives.



Request our bulletin entitled “Tap into Iceberg-Sized Generosity” to learn more.



Reply with the enclosed envelope or contact JoLynn Carter at (904) 505-9969 or jcarter@mercysupportservices.org. Visit christianwill.org/mercysupport to bless your family with an up-to-date will.



SAVE THE DATE!

Don your best James Bond attire and prepare to complete this most important mission at St. Catherine's Catholic Church in the new Family Life Center on October 20th, 2022!

We are especially grateful to our Title Sponsor for this event, Odessa Realty Investments and welcome our Honorary Chair, Sheriff Michelle Cook, and Emcees, Travis and Jessica Cummings.

The evening will include dinner, entertainment, live and silent auctions, casino-style games, a best dressed contest and more. VIP hour will be from 5-6 PM for select sponsorship levels.

Proceeds from the Night of Hope directly benefit families and children in Clay County. Your sponsorship and involvement will help us continue critical programs that help displaced families and those in crisis rise to a level of self-sufficiency.

Tickets and Sponsorship Packages are available for this event. Individual tickets for Night of Hope are \$150 per person and seating is limited. Most Sponsorship Packages include seating for the event.

On behalf of our organization, thank you for your interest and support. We look forward to an unprecedented evening for all!

Interested in being a sponsor for the Night of Hope 2022? Contact JoLynn Carter at 904.505-9969 or email jcarter@mercysupportservices.org

Clay County Sheriff Michelle Cook, Honorary Chair

Dr. Bob Cowie, Board Chair

R. Patrick Hayle, Executive Director

Andrea Fogarty, Event Coordinator

Travis & Jessica Cummings, Emcees and Auctioneers

Thank You to our Diamond Sponsor

Odessa Realty Investments



Citygate Network Annual Conference and Exposition
San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter • June 1-4, 2022

This summer we were extremely excited to send Melissa, Programs Director and Brandi, Development Associate to the annual Citygate Network Conference in San Antonio!

The Citygate Network seeks to move people in desperate situations and destitute conditions from human suffering to human flourishing through the process of gospel-powered life transformation. Mercy Support Services has been a member since 2012.

Melissa and Brandi spent five days in seminars and break out sessions learning about capital campaign strategies, unity and diversity, social media techniques, transformational programming, and mental health counseling, as well as connecting with other nonprofits from all over the world.

This year's conference theme was ***Building and Maintaining Bridges***. John Ashmen, Citygate Network President says, "The troubled waters of fear, confusion and dissension too often separate Christ followers who should be in fellowship; they separate groups that should be working together to make a difference in society; and they separate neighbors who need to find common ground if conversations about Christ are going to happen. But in Him, we can bridge our differences."



We are already looking forward to next year's Conference!



Back to School Bash was an OVERWHELMING SUCCESS!

Seeds Of Love Ministry and Saved 2 Serve once again brought a huge blessing to Clay County students with their annual Back to School Outreach hosted by Mercy. It was estimated that 1,400 citizens attended! 600 backpacks and 800 sets of kids clothing were given out, along with groceries, hair cuts, bicycles, blessing bags filled with toiletries and other essentials, hot lunch, and so much more. Numerous organizations came together to put this on, hence the slogan, “Many Parts, One Body.” Thank you to all the amazing volunteers and donors who made this event happen as well! With people starting to line up just before sunrise, we realize the huge need in Clay County for these kinds of events. If your church or organization would like to be involved next year, we would love to collaborate with you!



CONNECT WITH US!



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