

# Mercy Matters

I will always have a special place in my heart for everyone who makes up the Mercy Home family, including our dedicated staff, residents, valued partners and friends. Through it all, your generosity and support have played an invaluable role at Mercy Home during these challenging times.

Our team of superheroes have embodied Mercy Home's core values throughout this past year. Despite uncertainty, they brought compassion and care with them to work every day and always did their best to brighten the lives of people in their care.

When programs and activities were paused in response to stay-at-home orders and health guidelines, our team worked together to transition to virtual programming to keep our residents safe and engaged. Although sometimes difficult for them to understand, our residents have shown incredible adaptability and resilience during this unprecedented time. They have thrived during the virtual sessions of their programs, made special memories while inside their residences, and have welcomed opportunities to connect with new friends.

As we move forward, Mercy Home has been blessed with funding that will allow us to implement and boost initiatives that support the health and wellness of people in our care. Thanks to a \$750,000 grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, Mercy Home will launch a "Telehealth HEAL" program and fund the installation of specialized communications hardware and software for remote health monitoring. We will also be able to expand our Creative Arts Therapy program and implement a "Just Imagine! Therapeutic Health," to harness music therapy, yoga/movement, therapy, drama therapy, arts therapy, and mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) for the people in our care. The grant will also bolster medical services to support women and men with intellectual and developmental disabilities as they age in place safely with grace and dignity.



L-R Janice Aris with Father Michael Perry and Father Tom Ahern

Just one year after the virus began to take its toll on our world, we are proud to share that Mercy Home residents and staff have been vaccinated for COVID-19. Each day we continue to push forward and grow more hopeful, and I am confident that this spring and summer will continue to bring many blessings, laughter, and joy to Mercy Home.

We've been challenged together but have learned many important lessons about generosity, kindness, and the strength of our team. As we move forward, we thank you for all the support we have received during one of the most difficult periods in our organization's history.

Visit [mercyhomeny.org](https://mercyhomeny.org) to learn more about us and the find ways to get involved.

*Janice Aris*

Janice Aris, Executive Director

# Doing Our Part to Stop the Spread of COVID-19

“Oh, that was easy!” exclaimed a Mercy Home staff member after receiving their first dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

Last month, the first floor buzzed with residents and staff as they awaited their vaccine appointment. After a difficult year in which friends, family members, residents, and colleagues were lost to COVID-19, a sense of relief was visible on many faces.

Our first vaccine event was a tremendous success. From organizing to ensuring the vaccination process was completed safely, we are so proud of the work our staff did from start to finish. Thanks to our team and our friends at Precision LTC Pharmacy, Mercy Home staff members and residents were vaccinated for COVID-19.

One year ago, we were all just learning about the virus. Times were uncertain and a vaccine felt like it could be worlds away. Now as we see more New Yorkers and all people with intellectual and developmental



disabilities become eligible for the vaccine, we feel hope. What seemed like the impossible last March is now becoming a reality, and we are moving closer to being together again.

Members of the intellectual and developmental disability community are more susceptible to contracting COVID-19, and our staff of never stopped their duties and continued to bring care and compassion to work with them every day during this pandemic. Getting vaccinated is a crucial way to keep them safe and protect our Mercy Home family.

If you have not been vaccinated for COVID-19, we encourage you and anyone you know who is eligible to consider getting the vaccine. The more people get vaccinated, the sooner we can get back to doing what we love and being together.

## A Friend Away From Home

“His face lit up like a Christmas tree,” exclaimed Yvette Wilson, one of Mercy Home’s residence managers. “I’m so happy that even with all this, he was able to make a new friend that he really gets along with.”

Yvette is describing the impact of Mercy Home’s virtual Pen Pal Project, a new volunteer initiative that began during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Pen Pal Project connects residents with volunteers so they can bond over mutual interests and build long-lasting relationships during one-on-one sessions through Zoom. Volunteers are encouraged to take a brief survey detailing their interests, skills, and hobbies and are then paired with residents who are the best match.

After months of being home, Jahlel felt increasingly dispirited and was missing his day habilitation programs and interactions with people outside of his residence. He missed the activities he did and laughing with his friends, most of which he has not seen in nearly a year.

With the introduction of the Pen Pal Project, Jahlel and other residents like him have been able to connect with volunteers and discuss mutual interests such as music, sports, and hobbies. Jahlel along with Elliot, one of the first volunteers to be onboarded for the program, developed a

strong connection surrounding art and their mutual love of collectible toy cars. After several weeks of discussing their car obsession, Elliot surprised Jahlel by mailing him a gift of a toy car for his collection.

The Pen Pal Project helps to create a space for residents to safely engage with people outside their homes,

while promoting community inclusiveness in a new and unique format. The Project also creates an amazing opportunity for those in the program to be engaged outside their daily programming routines.

The Pen Pal Project is a great opportunity for both volunteers and residents!



Jahlel opening a gift from friend and Pen Pal Project volunteer, Elliot

# 2020 In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we reflect on the lives and legacies of staff members and residents who were taken too soon in 2020. Those who knew them best, shared their memories and kind words of the dearly departed.

## Residents

### Anthony Dorsey

Anthony came to Mercy Home in the early 80's. Anthony was a gentle giant, he was quiet, loved water and roller-skating. Anthony enjoyed swimming and looked forward to going to the pool. As we mourn Anthony's passing, we will remember the impact he made on the lives of those he encountered.



### Lawrence "Larry" Goer

Larry was amazing, he was sweet and full-on energy. Staff remembered Larry as a cool guy with a lot of style and loved to get dressed up. Larry spent the majority of his life at Mercy Home. Larry will be deeply missed by everyone here at Mercy Home, especially his housemates and the staff who lovingly cared for him throughout the years.



### Beatriz "Bibi" Caballero

Bibi had been with Mercy Home for over 40 years and was known as our biggest champion. She was in attendance for any and every activity and function hosted by Mercy Home. She was extremely close with her siblings and loved her family. As the daughter of a professional dancer, Bibi inherited a love for dance, which she enjoyed showing off at events. Very friendly, super stylish, and extremely loyal to the staff in her residence, Bibi was a bright beacon of Mercy Home. Her energy, light and love will continue to live on.



### Renée Bogart

Renee had an amazing zest for life and was the light of her residence. Popular and very well-known everywhere she went, Renee made a name for herself in her community and could befriend anyone that she met. Remembered as a bit of a fashionista by those who knew her best, Renee was known for her large selection of stylish pocketbooks and had to always have the trendiest bags in her collection and on her. Bubbly and high-spirited, Renee could brighten up everyone's day with her dynamic sense of humor. She touched many lives and was loved like family by her housemates and those who provided her care. She will be missed, but never forgotten.



## Mercy Home Caregivers

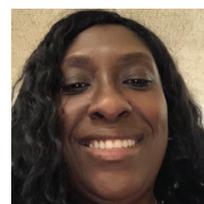
### Lesline Harris

Lesline was a direct support professional at one of Mercy Home's residences in Brooklyn, and was as dedicated to those she supported. Staff recall her favorite quote by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way," as a testament of who she was and how she approached her work and her relationships with others. Lesline will be remembered for her dedication and devotion by her colleagues and the individuals she helped care for.



### Estelle Mallika-Arachchige

Estelle was a compassionate, hard-working, and thoughtful direct support professional who loved her work and would show up each day with a bright smile, ready to assist those in need of her support. She was thoughtful, kind-hearted, and a vocal advocate for the vulnerable men with development disabilities she worked with.



### Shateek McAllister

Shateek was a friendly member of Mercy Home's staff who got along with everyone. She could always light up the overnight shift with her loud and lively hello. Each year, Shateek volunteered to go on vacation with the individuals that she worked with. Her memory and kind spirit will continue to live on at Mercy Home.



### Sr. Catherine "Kay" Crumlish

We were very saddened by the loss of Sister Catherine "Kay" Crumlish last January 2020. Sister Kay touched many lives during her 35 years of service at Mercy Home, 20 of those years were spent as Executive Director.

A mentor whose love, devotion, and infectious laughter inspired those who looked to follow in her footsteps to achieve humility, strength, and unwavering faith. As a mother figure, she adored and was adored by our residents, caring for them from childhood to adulthood with mother-like gentle kindness, compassion, and unconditional love where she was committed to empowering those who are marginalized and with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, and other developmental disabilities. Sister Kay touched many lives, and Kay spoke of learning from the residents themselves. We will continue to honor Sr. Kay's legacy and memory.



**I have fought the good fight.**  
**I have finished the race.**  
**I have kept the faith.**

2 Timothy 4:7

# Spotlight On QIDPs At Mercy Home

As an essential service provider, Mercy Home employs a wide range of essential workers who play a vital role in providing services and daily programming for the people we support. From Direct Support Professionals and nurses, to Behavioral Specialists and Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professionals (QIDPs) our staff provides essential support and programming for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

We recently chatted with Jeffrey Sealy, Director of Psychological Services, about the addition of two QIDPs to our team of superheroes and how their role is important for the services we provide at Mercy Home and our overall mission.

## What are QIDPs?

Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professionals are responsible for monitoring and developing activity plans in residential programs. They promote collaboration between residence managers, nurses, and behavioral specialist IDT teams to monitor quality of service and encourage communication between various departments that provide services to the people in our care.

## What do QIDPs do?

QIDPs are responsible for integrating and monitoring each individual's active treatment plan by using our documentation and information management system. They also write the "staff action plan," which outlines the goals the men, women, and children in our care are working on. These goals can be cognitive, such as learning how to improve math or reading skills, or behavioral such as teaching money management or independent living skills. By monitoring these plans, QIDPs and other staff can identify the strengths

and weaknesses of the goals and adjust them to assist in the progress of each person we support.

While their routine may vary day-to-day, QIDPs consistently submit weekly billing for the programs they oversee, write progress notes throughout the month for billing purposes, collaborate with case managers to make sure the goals for the individuals are attainable, and confirm that staff are trained to ensure goals are being executed correctly.

## Why are QIDPs vital to Mercy Home?

With the assistance of the QIDPs, Mercy Home has been able to create plans to keep our residents engaged during a time that is difficult for many of them to understand. The COVID-19 pandemic paused many of our day habilitation services, which required quick thinking and proactive strategizing to compensate for the absence of day programs. The plans created by QIDPs helped Mercy Home develop activity schedules for residents, create programs that keep them stimulated and active in the community near their homes, and gave staff the opportunity to implement fun and creative activities based on the goals and interest levels in the homes.

## Why are their services important?

QIDPs strengthen our existing team and ensure that support services for the individuals in our care are operable and well maintained, and that individual goals and plans can be modified as needed. Their contributions allow Mercy Home to monitor activities and the progress of each person we support.

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## A Blossoming Flower

With buds on the trees, sunnier days, and lighter evenings ahead comes a new spirit of optimism.

Just like the plants and flowers in our gardens we have had to weather a tough season. And just like our flowers, we can grow even stronger as we enter the spring. Each day that we progress, we are reminded of the challenges and losses we faced in 2020 as well as the blessings that lie ahead of us this year. With summer just around the corner, we look forward to continuing our outdoor activities and enjoying nature with the people in our care.

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While everyone has had to stay physically apart, weekly virtual sessions have brought everyone together. Throughout the winter, we were united by planting and raising indoor flowering bulbs. The facilities crew delivered amaryllis and paperwhite bulbs along with other supplies to the residences, and the managers, direct support professionals, and support programs team worked together to ensure that everyone was able to plant these beautiful flowers together through the Zoom room. We all shared the experience of watching these stunning and showy flowers bloom throughout the cold of winter.

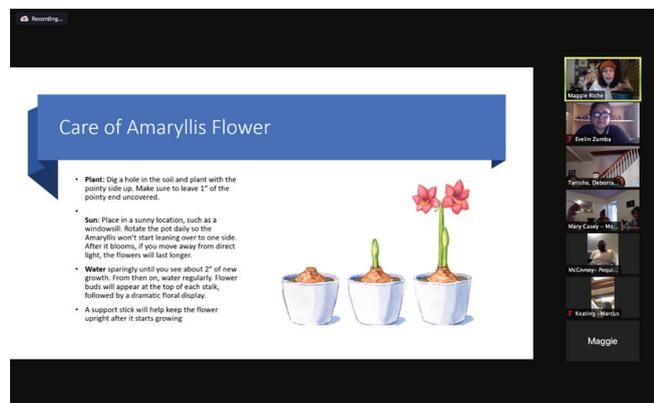


While we wait for it to be warm enough to start planting outside, our residents and respite participants have also been participating in virtual “Adventures in Nature,” sessions where they learn about gardening and ecology. Brittany, in our adult respite group, has particularly thrived in these sessions, and greatly enjoys learning and sharing information about the world’s amazing plants and animals. As someone who was always keen to share information she found online, it has been beautiful seeing her bloom in our Zoom room.

Our “Nutrition from the Ground Up” and “Nutrition & More” virtual sessions have encouraged residents to find nutritious ways to cook with the food that they grow. We are excited to share that the residents at Mary Casey VIPs have been given a brand-new air fryer for their commitment to creating beautiful art recipes. We cannot wait to see what masterpieces they create with their new equipment! Joseph’s residence was also recognized for actively participating in the virtual nutrition sessions held in 2020 and assisting with the maintenance of Mercy Home’s green house, which allows us to continue growing nutritious plants and vegetables throughout the year.



Participants in Mercy Home’s Plant-Grow-Give program have been having fun preparing for spring. In weekly virtual sessions, residents have selected seeds for growing in our gardens, including vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers. On the day they selected herb seeds, they even got to enjoy a virtual tea party of mint and chamomile tea together! At Addeo Residence, Tanisha is really excited to grow brussel sprouts, while Deborah can’t wait to see the blooming flowers of candy-cane striped zinnias. Just like a flower blossoming after a tough winter, Mercy Home is opening with renewed growth and strength.



We hope to see you on May 13th at “Power Your Flower with Mercy Home and Flower Bodega”, a fun and highly personalized virtual floral design workshop. All guests will receive a delivery of fresh flowers and a custom gift.

Visit <https://bit.ly/3fKPN95> to get your ticket and support Plant-Grow-Give.

# Mercy Home Happenings



Plant Grow Give participant planting their beautiful fall flowers.



Panelists discussing the healing power of art therapy during our virtual #AbilityOverDisability Art Show



Celebrating Halloween in style



Baking a pumpkin bundt cake to welcome the fall season



Mary Casey residents spreading Christmas cheer



Learning about plants and herbs during a virtual Plant Grow Give tea party



Celebrating St. Patrick's Day

## You're a blessing!

Your generosity and spirit of giving has meant the world to the Mercy Home family and dedicated staff members who have been working tirelessly to keep our residents safe and protected during these unprecedented times. Your support during this challenging period has allowed us to find new and creative ways to keep our staff and residents safe, and the children, women and men we care for engaged. Thank you for your support!

- Anonymous
- Pauline Blake
- John and Kathleen Brophy
- Eileen Crumlish
- Cypress Hills Cemetery
- Micheline Desvallons
- Ferne Farber
- Fellone Accordino Family Trust
- Maureen Finley
- FSC Foundation-Christian Brothers Services
- Henry E. Niles Foundation
- Knights of Columbus Hudson Council #3701
- Thomas and Allison Kurian
- James Legg

- Robert McCarthy
- Joseph McDermott
- Justine McGrory
- The McKeen Fund
- The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- NFP Corporate Services
- Ridgewood Savings Bank
- Rose M. Badgeley Charitable Trust
- RSM US Foundation
- Santulli Family Foundation
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- Jim Slattery
- Robert Sorge
- Studio One

- The Future's Project
- The Hyde and Watson Foundation
- The Jack Fanning Memorial Foundation
- Mike Tibaldi
- Anna Tufano
- Vertical Hold Productions LLC
- Volunteer Services for Children, Inc.
- Richard Warren
- Stephen Warren
- Celeste Wasielewski
- The Weiss Family

\*Donors contributed a minimum donation of \$500.00 or more from July 1, 2021 to date. We strive to be as inclusive as possible and apologize in advance for any omission.

# Kindness in Action

The outpouring of support we have received during the COVID-19 pandemic has been outstanding. We would like to take a moment to highlight the community members and institutions who have provided gifts and supplies to Mercy Home this season.

We are incredibly grateful for your kindness!

St Anselm Roman Catholic Church  
St. Helen's Roman Catholic Church

St. Luke's Church, Whitestone  
Our Lady of Peace Roman Catholic Church

SAVE THE DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2021 AT 6:30 PM

## Flower Power

Join us on May 13th from 6:30-7:30PM for a private virtual floral arrangement workshop led by Aurea Sanabria Molaei of Flower Bodega to help raise money for Plant-Grow-Give horticultural therapy and organic farming project. Sponsors and ticket buyers will receive a gift from Mercy Home, fresh florals, a vase, and tools so that you can create along with us. Tickets are limited and must be purchased by May 6th.

For more information, please email [hstewart@mercyhomeny.org](mailto:hstewart@mercyhomeny.org).



## Ways to Support

### Donate

Mercy Home is able to support our amazing programs and services through the donations of friends and supporters like you. Contributions help improve the quality of life for our residents. You can support Creative Arts Therapy, Plant-Grow-Give, Melodic Soul, or our Gifted Artists Programs in a variety of ways. If you would like to become a donor, please contact Helen Stewart, Director of Development at [hstewart@mercyhomeny.org](mailto:hstewart@mercyhomeny.org) or via phone at 718.832.1075 x 121

### Securities

Appreciated stock gifts can reduce your tax liability while providing flexible funding for our programs. Please contact us for details on how to make a gift of stock or securities.

### Workplace Giving

Double the impact of your gift through your employer's matching gifts program. If you have any questions, please contact us at [info@mercyhomeny.org](mailto:info@mercyhomeny.org).

### Donor Advised Funds

If you have set aside money for charitable giving through a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) or other charitable giving account, we will gladly accept grants from these accounts. You can also choose to have any remaining DAF funds distributed after your lifetime by naming Mercy Home as a beneficiary of all or a portion of the remaining funds. Email [hstewart@mercyhomeny.org](mailto:hstewart@mercyhomeny.org) for more info.

### Planned Giving

A charitable bequest is a wonderful way to leave a lasting legacy that benefits children, youth, and adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. You may name Mercy Home for Children in your will, including our tax identification number (11-1666227), leaving either cash or securities. A planned gift can also significantly reduce taxes, but it is best to discuss these benefits with your financial advisor.

To make a donation, visit our website at [mercyhomeny.org](http://mercyhomeny.org).



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