



(Left to Right) **Malika Foreman**, **Brandon Young**, **Danielle Metcalf**, **Dwain Johnson**

### Outstanding Staff Honored with ACS Excellence in Practice Award

Four MercyFirst staff were recognized by Administration for Children's Services (ACS) Commissioner Jess Dannhauser with the ACS Excellence in Practice Award at the March 15 Foster Care Agency Meeting. The award honors the outstanding work being done by staff at ACS provider agencies and we are so proud of their amazing accomplishments. Congratulations to our awesome team!

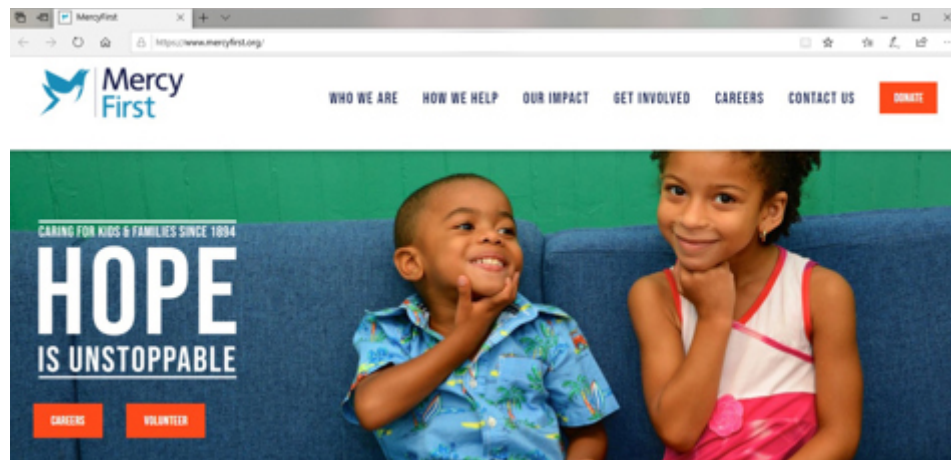
- **Malika Foreman**, Director, Family Foster Care
- **Dwain Johnson**, Administrator on Duty, Virginia Youth Reception Center
- **Danielle Metcalf**, Director, Prenatal, Postpartum, Parenting (PPP) Program
- **Brandon Young**, Administrator on Duty, Virginia Youth Reception Center



### START with Hope Program Welcomes Children from Afghanistan

MercyFirst's **S.T.A.R.T. (Safe Transition and Reunification Track) with Hope** program continues to expand, most recently welcoming unaccompanied immigrant children from Afghanistan. Our staff prioritized learning about and understanding Afghan culture so that we ensure these children, who have experienced atrocities in their war-torn country, receive culturally-sensitive care while they are with us at MercyFirst.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Immigration is a Critical Concern of the Sisters of Mercy. Believing firmly in the dignity of every person, Sisters of Mercy work for just and humane immigration laws in the U.S., address policies that push people to flee their countries, and examine the global impact of immigration.



## NEW LOOK! NEW WEBSITE!

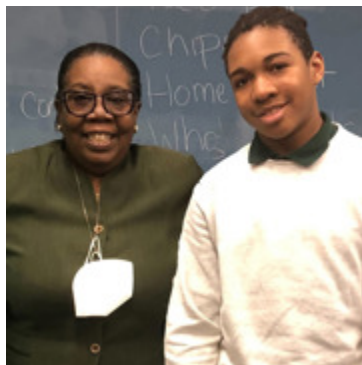
We invite you to check out our new [website](#)! It's filled with great information about [our programs](#), [success stories](#) from our children and families and a variety of ways for you to [get involved](#).



(l-r) President/CEO Renée Skolaski and Chief Quality Officer Mary Jane Dessables

### In the News: Mary Jane Dessables, Chief Quality Officer

Check out this great news article featuring MercyFirst's new Chief Quality Officer, **Mary Jane Dessables**! Mary Jane began her career in the field of child and family welfare as a group home social worker over 20 years ago, and today she oversees MercyFirst's Performance & Quality Improvement Department. She joins us from the Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies (COFCCA), the principal representative for not-for-profit organizations providing foster care, adoption, family preservation, and juvenile justice services in New York State. Welcome Mary Jane!!! Read the full article [here](#).



### Always Preparing Youth for Success

MercyFirst Assistant Director of Human Resources, **Jesstine Baskerville** (left), recently volunteered her time to help our youth prepare for successful job interviews. Jesstine produced a guide of interview tips, conducted mock interviews with the teens and also spoke to them about how to handle the disappointing news if they don't get the job they wanted. We are so thankful to have wonderful staff members that can share their knowledge and experience with our youth, and help them prepare for a bright future!



### Save the Date: 'Fore the Kids' Golf Outing

Join us on Monday, May 16, 2022 for our annual Golf Outing, 'Fore the Kids' at the beautiful Brookville Country Club. Funds raised will help MercyFirst provide children and families in need with safe opportunities for hope, healing and a brighter future. There are many ways to participate, sponsor and support our important work through this event. Visit [www.mercyfirst.org/golf](http://www.mercyfirst.org/golf)

[Make a Donation Today](#)

**ABOUT MERCYFIRST:** Rooted in a legacy of mercy spanning more than a century, MercyFirst inspires hope and promotes healing for the most vulnerable children and families in New York City and across Long Island. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1894, today MercyFirst offers a range of innovative programs and services that provide stability and support and help individuals and communities thrive.