



Mercy
First
hope is unstoppable



Thank you to our Holiday Gift Drive Donors

A very special thank you to our holiday gift drive donors. Because of your generosity, we provided every child and teen at MercyFirst with toys and gifts this holiday season! Click [here](#) to view photos of our amazing donors!



YouthWell Pilot Program - *Aiming to improve health services for young adults transitioning out of foster care*

MercyFirst is excited to announce our selection as one of three Foster Care Agencies to participate in a first-of-its-kind, public-private partnership with Northwell Health, NYC Administration for Children's Services, and the Center for Fair Futures to provide youth transitioning out of foster care with easier access to medical and behavioral health care.



"MercyFirst is committed to the wellbeing of youth transitioning out of foster care and Northwell Health's YouthWell pilot program is an excellent way to ensure they begin their journey into adulthood in good health," said Renee Skolaski, MercyFirst President & CEO. "We are grateful to Northwell Health for helping young adults during an already challenging transition by providing access to quality care and helping them to navigate our complicated health care system, and we are honored to join ACS, the Center for Fair Futures and our peer agencies in bringing this important program to our youth across Queens."

Read the full press release [here](#).



MercyFirst Board Trustee Scott Gildea Takes the Plunge

Way to go MercyFirst Board Member, Scott Gildea! On New Year's Day Scott completed his 12th Polar Bear Plunge for MercyFirst, raising over \$15,000! Thank you to everyone who supported Scott as he took the plunge into the chilly waters at Coney Island.

"Supper with the Sisters"

MercyFirst Executive Team hosted the 2nd Annual Christmas Supper with the Sisters, a holiday potluck with homemade dishes provided by staff. This growing tradition expressed "Hospitality" and gratitude to Sisters of Mercy from near and far. It was a special and festive night that included sharing stories, breaking bread, and playing Christmas games.



Front Row (L-R): Sister Eileen Trainor, Sister Regina Williams, Katya Lanfant, Rich Olownia **Middle Row (L-R):** Floaria Ladja, Sister Sheila Tynan, Sister Lee Guirrerri, Sister Margaret Dempsey, Sister Theresa Kelly, Sister Seton Agovino, Sister Ellen Smith
Back Row (L-R): Madeline Martinez, Maureen Houston, Joanne Cordaro, Sister Maureen King, Renee Skolaski, Sister Sean Foley, Sr. Maureen Jessnik, Seven Laracuente, Sister May Cronin, Sister Margaret Ann Hartigan, Sister Alicia Zapata, Sister Julie Upton, Achim Kretschmer

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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.



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