

COMMUNITY MATTERS

FALL 2020 NEWSLETTER

COMING TOGETHER DURING A PANDEMIC

Mercy Housing has had an outpouring of heartwarming support from community organizations, churches, volunteers, and donors like you during the pandemic. Your food and technology donations have made a big difference for residents struggling with hunger, those that are at-risk to leave their homes, and families struggling with virtual learning.

Donated food and cleaning supplies made it possible for thousands of people to live with more confidence and stability at this critical time. Residents have homes to social distance in, but our services go beyond four walls and a roof. Because of the teamwork and collective efforts of so many volunteers, we address other key issues like making sure everyone has food on the table. Over the summer, pantries were filled, meals prepared, and fridges were full. Thanks to their insight and ability to work closely with residents, food and cleaning supply delivery constantly evolves with day-to-day changes.

Thanks to donations of laptops and hot-spots Mercy Housing can better address the digital divide – disparities in access to reliable internet and devices – at communities. This has been a concern for Mercy Housing even before the pandemic. Coronavirus only exacerbated this issue, with families being forced to do school virtually from home. As soon as social distancing began, we teamed up with our partners and community leaders to make sure that residents had the access they need to education and job resources now that everything is online.

We have also received generous donations of toiletries, paper towels, antibacterial soap, toilet paper, and hand sanitizer. Fun packs of games and puzzles help residents to enjoy quiet days at home and find entertainment and learning opportunities whenever they like.

As the pandemic takes a toll, Mercy Housing has found strength and assurance facing these challenges together,



▲ San Francisco 49ers defensive end, Arik Armstead, distributes Chromebooks after making an incredible \$50,000 donation to support e-learning.

Over the spring and summer, we have received donations to close the digital divide that exists for some communities earning low incomes. Residents received...

1,929
LAPTOPS
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES



1,544
HOT-SPOTS
FOR PRE-PAID INTERNET

with supporters and residents, working toward brighter futures for all. The mercy that everyone has shared with residents keeps us full of hope. We cannot thank you enough for the essential part you have played. These are tough times, but Mercy Housing residents are staying strong. We truly value your contributions – you are making a difference in the lives of residents most affected by the pandemic. ♥

INSIDE: READ MORE STORIES ABOUT YOUR GENEROSITY

PAGE 2: Singing Songs of Solace | PAGE 3: Just Imagine Event | PAGE 6: Guardian Angel Awards

Daily, I am reminded of how much of an honor it is to serve Mercy Housing as the President & CEO. Supporters



**ISMAEL
GUERRERO**

like you are essential to our success. Together, we imagined communities that are affordable, stable, and healthy – you are helping us to make this a reality, bringing certainty to an uncertain world for families, seniors, veterans, and people with special needs that are living on extremely low incomes.

The core of our mission is housing justice, and we firmly believe that housing justice is social justice. Listening to and closely working with residents keeps us grounded to the hopes and dreams of the great people that call Mercy Housing home. We are making significant, positive change that is needed for communities to be more inclusive and equitable. Our Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion team has been doing groundbreaking work to turn conversation into action as communities across the country address systemic racism in society.

I am overjoyed by the resilience and selflessness that residents and staff continue to show during this turbulent year. The way Mercy Housing quickly evolved with the changes associated with the pandemic, reveals how dedicated we are to the people we serve. Tripling food distribution to residents over spring and summer was a breathtaking accomplishment, as residents were once again reminded that communities care about them and need them to keep neighborhoods vibrant.

You make our work possible. I thank you and Mercy Housing communities across the nation thank you, for allowing us to bring respect, justice, and mercy to the people that need it most.

Live in Hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ismael Guerrero".

Ismael Guerrero,
Mercy Housing President & CEO



SINGING SONGS OF SOLACE

Quarantine and social isolation are hard on everyone, especially seniors living with lower incomes. Feelings of loneliness and fear can hurt daily life. But Mercy Housing residents, staff, and volunteers are finding solutions. Providing residents with what they need to continue living full and productive lives requires creativity. Two caring volunteers in Aurora, IL, Caleb and Abby, heard that the seniors at Constitution House were sheltering in place, and this brother-and-sister duo wanted to bring a song to residents' hearts and a smile to their faces. If these challenging times have taught our organization anything, it's that there are people of all ages looking to help out at communities.

Caleb is 14, a gifted keyboardist while Abby, age 13, plays the violin. They provided mini concerts in the past for residents at Constitution House and were thrilled to bring their musical talents back once again. With a little help from their dad, their mobile roadshow performed twice so residents could watch and listen to joyous music. Folks sat in the parking lot, opened their windows, and viewed from balconies to enjoy the little concerts from a safe distance.

Caleb and Abby provided residents with more than entertainment, they offered hope, showing these seniors that their community loves them and cares about them. Residents cheered and clapped from their windows, and our office has been touched by all the calls of gratitude for the serenade.

Mercy Housing has seen so many examples of compassionate resident and community engagement during the pandemic, from concerts like these, to balcony exercise classes, and many food and supply drives. Residents regularly tell us how much they appreciate the support they receive at Mercy Housing, and your gifts make it all possible. ♥

just imagine.

Mercy Housing thanks everyone that attended and supported our Just Imagine virtual gala on September 10. Residents, donors, staff, and supporters like you truly make an impact by supporting the Just Imagine Fund. Together, we raised over \$650,000. We cannot thank you enough for supporting the people and communities that need it most.

These donations have touched the lives of thousands of families, seniors, veterans, and people with special needs – the wonderful people that call Mercy Housing home. Your support continues to help people to pursue the kind of life they want for themselves, people like Seeta.

During the event, Seeta, a resident at Mercy Housing, was interviewed by our new President & CEO Ismael Guerrero. After losing her father in a civil war, Seeta and her family moved to Colorado from the Ivory Coast. They found refuge at Grace Apartments, a loving community specially created to serve immigrants and refugees. Mercy Housing has been her home and helped her find a sense of place for many years.

Seeta is an ambitious college student at Metropolitan State University of Denver, studying to be a social worker, in hope of helping communities. She is a bright and powerful example of what imagining a better future looks like when someone has more than four walls and a roof – they have a loving and supporting home. With a passion for social justice and activism, her charisma and drive are giving others the chance to imagine a better world. ♥

► Seeta was grateful to have Mercy Housing during many challenging transitions in her life.

The power and strength of your impact will be felt for generations to come through our Resident Services programming. This year's fund will:

- Increase resident participation in Mercy Housing's industry leading Resident Services
- Strengthen resident and community engagement to address critical issues
- Train frontline, onsite Property Management and Resident Services staff in innovative approaches to community building
- Grow a sense of connectedness, neighborliness, and overall wellbeing
- Further trauma-sensitive best practice techniques for onsite staff
- Broaden a values-based culture of respect, justice, and mercy amongst staff, residents, and partners
- Listen to residents to bring their voices to the forefront to measure Mercy Housing's effectiveness, and build data-driven industry leadership in affordable housing



If you missed the event and would like to watch the video, visit mercyhousing.org/events/just-imagine-2020



▲ Adrian is one of the Mercy Housing residents who is grateful for the over 100 grants Mercy Housing has received from Wells Fargo, so he can have an affordable place to call home.

PARTNERING TO BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

WELLS FARGO | wellsfargo.com

**WELLS
FARGO**

Partnerships are absolutely essential to Mercy Housing's mission. During our Just Imagine celebration, we celebrated our collaboration with Wells Fargo and thanked them for their incredible support.

Wells Fargo & Company is a diversified community-based financial services company that serves one in three households in the U.S. and is a top community lending and investment provider in support of the development of multi-family homes. Founded in 1852 with its headquarters in San Francisco, Wells Fargo's vision is to satisfy its customers' financial needs and help them succeed financially.

In 2019, the Wells Fargo Foundation launched a new philanthropic strategy anchored around unlocking economic opportunity for people and communities by addressing housing affordability, small business growth and financial health, investing \$455 million in grants to national and community-based nonprofits. This includes a \$1 billion philanthropic commitment to address housing affordability solutions by 2025.

Wells Fargo and Mercy Housing's relationship dates back to 1994, uniting both organizations with a shared vision to create powerful change in which everyone can have an affordable place to call home.

With more than 100 grants made in the past decade, Wells Fargo's support has impacted each one of Mercy Housing's five regional business centers, across the country. Wells Fargo is particularly proud to support the construction of Sunnydale Block 6 in San Francisco, a six-story building that will provide 167 permanently affordable homes. In collaboration with Mercy Housing, the re-envisioned Sunnydale neighborhood will be affordable for up to 1,700 low- and middle-income families. Mercy Housing recognizes Wells Fargo for its leadership in support of inclusive, equitable, and mixed-income communities across the nation. ♥

COMMONSPIRIT HEALTH | commonspirit.org

CommonSpirit 

CommonSpirit Health is a nonprofit, Catholic health system dedicated to advancing health for all people and was created in February 2019 through the alignment of Catholic Health Initiatives and Dignity Health. CommonSpirit is committed to creating healthier communities, delivering exceptional patient care, and ensuring that every person has access to quality health

care. With a team of approximately 150,000 employees and 25,000 physicians and advanced practice clinicians, CommonSpirit Health operates 137 hospitals and more than 1000 care sites across 21 states. Before their alignment, the organizations worked with Mercy Housing for decades on dozens of individual projects and through the Strategic Healthcare Partnership alliance. The ▶▶▶

▶▶▶ shared belief that homes and neighborhoods are more than shelter—that they should cultivate belonging and stability—and the belief that housing is essential for health and human dignity continue with CommonSpirit. The health system's Community Investment Program provides capital, in the form of below market rate loans,

to institutions and organizations that support the factors for health such as affordable housing, development of health clinics, and social services. Since 1990, the program has approved approximately \$300 million in community investments, 45 percent of which have been for housing. ♥

U.S. BANK | usbank.com



At U.S. Bank, we believe that everyone deserves a safe, affordable place to live. Housing is an important foundation for financial stability that helps remove disparities, so everyone can achieve what's possible. With \$12.7 billion in Low Income Housing Tax Credits committed as of Aug. 31, 2020, U.S. Bancorp Community Development Corporation, a subsidiary of U.S. Bank, provides innovative financing solutions for community development projects across the country using state

and federally sponsored tax credit programs. USBCDC's commitment provide capital investment to areas that need it the most have contributed to the construction of more than 78,600 affordable housing units and \$4.4 billion in community lending. Our products and services have also helped to create new jobs, rehabilitate historic buildings, develop renewable energy facilities, and generate commercial economic activity in underserved communities. ♥

NATIONAL EQUITY FUND | nationalequityfund.org



National Equity Fund is a nonprofit Chicago-based affiliate of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation and a leading syndicate of Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Since inception, they have played an integral role in creating affordable housing options, revitalizing

communities and strengthening local economies. With investments totaling more than \$13.3 billion in 2,494 LIHTC developments, they have created 158,907 affordable homes for low-income families and individuals. ♥

COHNREZNICK | cohnreznick.com



CohnReznick LLP provides clients with forward thinking advice that helps them navigate complex business and financial issues. With more than 2,500 employees nationwide, they provide the resources, technical skills and deep industry knowledge to help them succeed. Creating

opportunities for our communities is not just a goal for CohnReznick. It's a core component of their mission statement. Whether it's conducting charitable giving programs in neighborhoods or supporting national charities in fulfilling their missions, CohnReznick is active. ♥

PEACEHEALTH | peacehealth.org



PeaceHealth, based in Vancouver, Wash., is a not-for-profit Catholic health system offering care to communities in Washington, Oregon, and Alaska. PeaceHealth has approximately 16,000 caregivers, a medical group practice with nearly 1,100 providers, 10 medical centers and nearly 170 clinics serving both urban and rural communities throughout the Northwest. In 1890, the Sisters of St. Joseph

of Peace founded what has become PeaceHealth. The Sisters shared expertise and transferred wisdom from one medical center to another, always finding the best way to serve the unmet need for healthcare in their communities. Today, PeaceHealth is the legacy of the founding Sisters and continues with a spirit of respect, stewardship, collaboration and social justice in fulfilling its mission. ♥

SISTERS OF BON SECOURS | bonsecours.us



Through the love of God present in the Sisters of Bon Secours, they are called by God and sent by the Church to help people to wholeness; to alleviate human suffering of all forms, especially in the poor and dying; to help others to an awareness of the redemptive meaning of suffering

and death - and to an awareness of their relationship with God by...reproducing in ourselves Christ healing... Christ consoling...Christ loving...Christ always aware of the needs of others. ♥



▶ Sister
Diane
Hejna,
CSJ



▶ Sister
Linda
Werthman,
RSM

▶ Sister
Barbara
Busch, SC



▶ Sister
Patricia
McDermott,
RSM



▶ Sister
Rose Marie
Jasiniski

GUARDIAN ANGEL AWARDEES

We are proud to honor the Sisters above on Mercy Housing's board with the Guardian Angel award. They have had a long history guiding Mercy Housing to success and their contributions to our mission have been monumental. These inspirational women and their ministries have shown exemplary care, are driven by mercy, and boldly seek justice for communities in need.

We recognized with gratitude, unwavering and inspiring commitment from:

- Sister Barbara Busch, SC
- Sister Diane Hejna, CSJ
- Sister Rose Marie Jasiniski
- Sister Patricia McDermott, RSM
- Sister Linda Werthman, RSM

We recognize the many congregations of Catholic women religious. Women who have followed their passion for social justice and fierce advocacy on behalf of those in need. Women whose service has forever changed countless areas including, education, housing, and healthcare.

OUR DIGNITY AWARDEE

Mercy Housing presented our former longtime President & CEO Jane Graf with the Dignity Award. "In honor of a lifetime commitment of advocating for healthy communities and dignity for all people." ♥



A DONATION TO MERCY HOUSING TRANSFORMS LIVES

When you donate a tax-deductible gift to the nonprofit organization Mercy Housing, you partner with us in achieving our mission of transforming lives and neighborhoods through affordable housing and supportive programs. Your support

will help families in need and those with special needs, support seniors and give new hope to people experiencing homelessness. Consider Mercy Housing when you plan on your end of year gift this year. There are many ways to help!

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS YOU CAN HELP

DONATE ONLINE

Make an individual, one-time, or monthly charitable donation by completing our simple and secure online donation form.

mercyhousing.org/donate

DONATE BY MAIL

To give by mail, send a check to:

**Mercy Housing
Philanthropy
1600 Broadway, Suite 2000
Denver, CO 80202**

GIFTS OF STOCK, MUTUAL FUNDS, OR WIRE TRANSFERS

The dream of a safe, affordable home can become a reality for struggling families. A gift of stock to Mercy Housing ensures that families, seniors and people with special needs can live in hope for a better future. Gifts of appreciated stock allow donors to bypass capital gains taxes and receive a charitable tax deduction. Learn more on our site!

PLANNED GIVING

A planned gift to Mercy Housing in your estate or long-term financial plans ensures families, seniors, and individuals with special needs will have access to affordable, program-enriched housing for years to come. For more information please contact Debi Colias, at debra.colias@mercyhousing.org.

WORKPLACE GIVING

Workplace Giving enables federal, state and private sector employees to support Mercy Housing through employer-provided giving programs. These programs allow individuals to donate to a charity through payroll deductions on a weekly, monthly or bimonthly basis. Charitable contributions to Mercy Housing are considered tax-deductible gifts.

Check with your Human Resources department to find out about your company's Workplace Giving Program. If your company does not have a program, please email gifts@mercyhousing.org and we will gladly speak to them on your behalf.

CROWDFUNDING

If you want to encourage your friends and family to donate to a cause you care about you can set up your own fundraiser for Mercy Housing on easy-to-use crowdfunding platforms! These giving options are great for people who already have accounts with these well known fundraising platforms.

GoFundMe – Donate directly or start a campaign

JustGiving – Donate directly or fundraise for Mercy Housing

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Several organizations help you give back to Mercy Housing, such as:

AmazonSmile

Tobi

RoundUp & Donate App

Whatever donation method you choose, when you give to seniors, donate to families, assist the homeless and help people with disabilities, you're creating change and inspiring hope for a better tomorrow. ♥



mercy
HOUSING

Live in Hope
mercyhousing.org



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[instagram.com
/mercyhousing](https://instagram.com/mercyhousing)



[twitter.com
/mercyhousing](https://twitter.com/mercyhousing)



[youtube.com
/mercyhousing](https://youtube.com/mercyhousing)

YOU CAN HELP A FAMILY THAT'S STRUGGLING TO FIND A HOME

Imagine not knowing where you will sleep tomorrow. For too many Americans struggling to get by, they put their health and safety at risk just to keep a roof over their heads. While unemployment is at an all-time high, homelessness grows.

Today, for your gift of \$50 to the Just Imagine Fund, a family will avoid homelessness, and instead have a stable, affordable home at Mercy Housing where they can achieve their dreams.

Now more than ever, there are people that need you.

Through the Just Imagine Fund, you can give a family the chance to live in a stable, healthy, and affordable community – a community with quality services that can give them the skills they need to build a better life.

Because of you, they can have a home with supportive staff to guide and counsel them, with many opportunities to explore new possibilities like practical skills and education.

All it takes is \$50 to join your neighbors in the fight against the affordable housing crisis. You can save lives and keep a family off the streets in a home that provides much needed services.

By giving to Mercy Housing, you are not only giving a home, you are giving a family options. You are opening up their imaginations for what is possible. **Don't we all deserve a safe, affordable home and a supportive community to achieve our dreams?**

Thank you in advance for your gift.

Live in hope

P.S. Imagine a better world where people have housing and the support they need. You can help a family that's struggling to find a home for a gift of \$50 today.



YES! I want to provide a home and support for a family experiencing homelessness, with my gift of:

☐ \$250

☐ \$100

☒ \$50

☐ \$25

☐ Other: \$

**Give
Online Today
at
mercyhousing.org/just-imagine**

HELP MAKE A LASTING IMPACT

When you make a planned gift to Mercy Housing in your estate or long-term financial plans, you help ensure that we'll be here – committed to providing affordable, program-enriched housing to families, seniors, and people with special needs – for many years to come.

For more information about the many ways you can further your financial goals and help families in need through thoughtful gift planning, please contact Debi Colias, at Debra.colias@mercyhousing.org

 **mercy**HOUSING