



# Mercy Center

## Annual Report 2023-2024

*We strive to alleviate poverty in the Greater Asbury Park Area.*

Dear Friends,

2023 was an incredible year for Mercy Center and the community we serve. As we highlight our impact, we reflect on the year's many challenges while keeping a laser focus on our goal of ending generational poverty in the Greater Asbury Park area.

Our efforts saw new records this year. The pantry is a key component to our success. If your family is hungry, you cannot think about anything else. Asbury Park remains a food desert and with the closure of other local pantries, we saw record numbers of people served with a related increase in the total number of meals delivered. To provide variety to our shoppers, we expanded our reach to retail outlets in the area. And, to serve the need, we attracted a record number of volunteers. We simply could not meet the demand without the help of others.

Next, our Family Resource Center continues to provide holistic services to families so each individual can live full and satisfying lives. To do this, we have social workers and advocates who speak English, Creole, Spanish and Arabic. We have expanded our reach to Youth in our public and private schools. We have partnered with a record number of churches and faith based ministries in our effort to address the alarming rise in violence against women. And, we await final certification to become the first agency authorized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to provide immigration services in Monmouth County. In addition to Immigration services, we have won grants to provide housing, food stamps and free tax preparation for our neighbors.

Finally, the only way to truly end generational poverty is to ensure an education of excellence for our children. Sisters Academy saw its second successful year of offering a Fourth Grade and next year will add a new teacher to accommodate the increasing enrollment demand for our faith-based private, independent education for middle school girls that is tuition free.

I am inspired every day by the commitment and passion of our Board of Trustees, partner agencies, donors, volunteers, and dedicated staff who carry out critical work for our neighbors in need. Only through deep connections with our community partners, and support from our donors, can we truly address the root cause of generational poverty.

Warm regards,

Kim Guadagno  
Executive Director

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# Mercy Center by the Numbers

2023-2024

**1.6 million** meals served by Mercy Center

**95,000**

people served by the Pantry

**1.9 million**

pounds of food and essential items distributed

**13,903**

volunteer hours

**\$396,623**

saved by the value of our volunteers hours



**408,470**

pounds of food waste saved from landfills

**Over \$300,000** in specific assistance to victims of crime

**1,608**

people served by the SNAP advocate

**7,320**

times direct services were provided to underserved families and children by the Family Resource Center

**40%**

increase in enrollment at Sisters Academy

**\$1,938**

average refund and savings to tax payers through our free tax preparations

**479**

times immigration services were provided

**477**

survivors and children of domestic and sexual violence helped

**100%**

of Sisters Academy graduates received scholarships for high school