On Thursday, July 27th, we held our 2nd Annual Yankee Event, and it was a great evening! Mercy Center supporters watched the Yankees triumph over Tampa Bay in 11 nail biting innings while enjoying food, drinks, and the amazing views of the ball field from a Party City Party suite in the stadium. Mercy Center was honored before the game with an on-field ceremony at home plate and our logo flashed on the stadium screen!

All our guests had a wonderful time. Proceeds will benefit Mercy Center programs and services. We thank all of our supporters for being part of this successful event.
FORE!!! September 15th was a beautiful day for a successful golf outing at Leewood Golf Club in Eastchester. 28 golfers teed up for 18 holes and along with our sponsors helped raise over $22,000. Next year you can plan on joining us for our first annual Mercy Center Golf and Tennis Classic!
Mercy Day

Celebrated this year on September 25th, Mercy Day is an opportunity to remember the roots of the work of mercy at Mercy Center. Participants gather to reflect on the ways in which we can give and receive mercy and compassion within our families, our neighborhoods, and in the world, both in spirit and in action.

Our name is **Mercy**
Our spirit is **Compassion**

Welcome
Community
Non-Violence
Hospitality
Respect
Justice
Light
Solidarity
Every September 26th Mercy Center supports the Annual Gladys Ricart and the Victims of Domestic Violence Walk (Brides March). Women wear a wedding dress or dress in white; men wear black. A small group from Mercy Center joins the march, while other participants and staff members provide water and encouragement as the marchers pass 145th Street and Third Avenue.

Domestic violence is an often hidden issue for some of our participants. At Mercy Center they find a safe haven and a place of support.
This year we launched a new program, Familia Adelante/Family Forward. On October 3rd, participants gathered for a kick-off orientation for this new family-strengthening collaborative project. With Mercy Center as the lead agency working with families to set and achieve goals, our partner agencies add to the resources available to our participants.

- Fiver Children’s Foundation, focusing on high school and college preparation
- Qualitas of Life Foundation, focusing on financial literacy
- Tanya Valle, focusing on mindfulness

We celebrated the final Family Development group graduation in January 2018. This completed the transition to Familia Adelante/Family Forward.

Family Development served 125 families over 12 years, a total of 544 family members. Almost all of them achieved the goals they set. Familia Adelante/Family Forward has served 40 families in its first year, a total of 183 family members, and dozens more through workshops and activities organized by our partners.

The Pascale Sykes Foundation also made it possible for us to have FA/FF business cards and a website, familiaadelante.org.
There are many ways to reaffirm that no matter a person’s circumstances, everyone has a Right to Dream.

The women of Mercy Center who attended this art workshop led by artist Maureen Bennett O’Connor began by discussing their fears but quickly moved to expressing hope for their lives and their futures.
Day of the Dead is a holiday celebrated by many in Mexico and by some Mexican-Americans living in the United States. The holiday focuses on gatherings to pray for and remember friends and family members who have died.

Mercy Center participants joined in this celebration of life with a Day of the Dead art workshop on October 27th to decorate sugar skulls. This tradition, an expressive way to honor loved ones, is one of many traditions associated with the holiday.
Sr. Simone Campbell, SSS, the Executive Director of the organization NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, visited Mercy Center on Friday, November 10th. Sr. Simone is well known as the leader of the “Nuns on the Bus” tours that focus on lobbying for economic justice, immigration reform, and voter turnout. She was looking for an opportunity to talk to some of the “real people” impacted by the issues that NETWORK addresses.

Sr. Simone’s two-hour visit included a tour of MC 145, where she observed several ESOL classes and the delightful children in our babysitting room, followed by a lengthy discussion session with Mercy Center participants and staff. Sr. Simone was very interested in learning about our participants’ lives, particularly challenges they face in the areas of housing, healthcare, food insecurity, and immigration. We all felt empowered when Sr. Simone told us that she intends to use our participants’ stories when she lobbies Congress on the legislative and budget issues affecting their lives.
THANKSGIVING
FOOD PANTRY

We received deliveries of food pantry items from several school and community food drives. The pantry has been an annual tradition for over 20 years. When it looked as if we might fall short on donated items, we put out the word and several generous donors responded.

In the end, the food pantry was a greater success than we’d dared to hope, serving 345 families. We’re grateful for the response from the larger Mercy Center community, supporting our efforts to make Thanksgiving a little less stressful for our participants who worry about having enough for their families. Fortunately, there was enough to go around.

We thank all those who contributed to the pantry... those who coordinated and donated to food and turkey drives, those who made monetary gifts, and those who volunteered their services.

THANK YOU!!!
Over 60 participants gathered on December 12 in celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a popular cultural icon, religious figure, Patroness of the Americas, and a symbol of Mother, life and hope. Participants learned more about the history behind the feast, raised their voices in traditional songs, and ended by sharing some traditional Mexican dishes. It was a vibrant and joyful gathering!
The spirit of community and joy is present throughout the year at Mercy Center, but most especially during the holidays. This time can be difficult for people who are struggling in their lives. When they are far from home and just trying to make ends meet, the holidays can sometimes cause more depression and anxiety than joy. But at Mercy Center our participants find a place filled with good and generous people who support each other. We have many Santas at Mercy Center; this year we were grateful to count our many donors, volunteers, and friends among our Santas.

Santa Claus made his usual appearance at our Community Holiday Party. This child was thrilled to meet him!
Super Bowl Raffle Event Chair, Artie Lange, outdid himself this year, selling 160 raffle tickets. Thanks to his outstanding efforts and leadership and to all our dedicated sellers and buyers, the raffle raised $50,000 which will help us to provide vital programs and services to some of New York’s most underserved residents at no cost to the participants.

The drawing was held at Mercy Center 145 on Tuesday evening, January 9th.

On behalf of all of us at Mercy Center, thank you to all of our supporters!
DOMINICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Participants gathered on February 27 for a celebration of Dominican Republic Independence Day. People from several countries joined our "amigos Dominicanos" to learn a bit of history and share some of the rich culture. And there was great food and music, of course!
International Women's Day (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. Women gathered at Mercy Center to learn more about these achievements and about the history of the day. They also shared items they’d brought to represent their cultures, and each woman received a flower. This was followed by a delicious meal.
Mercy Center celebrated its *Transforming Lives* Gala on March 15, 2018 at 583 Park Avenue.

Emceed by NY1’s Frank DiLella, the event was dedicated to the memory of founder Sister Mary Ann Dirr, RSM and supported our work with immigrants and new Americans.

The event raised almost $360,000!

**HONOREES**
- James E. Corcoran
- Mary A. Davey
- Sean J. Davey
- Leticia R. Gonzalez, MD

**HONORARY CO-CHAIRS**
- Stephen S. Coats
- Shari Fallek Coats
- George E. Grace

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS**
- Simpson, Thacher & Gallagher LLP
- Steve and Shari Coats
- Heisman Trophy Trust, James Corcoran
- Fiduciary Trust
- John Freeman
- Kaplan & Company, LLP
- Joan Kedziora
- Vinson & Elkins LLP
The “Living Mercy” gathering is an opportunity to celebrate the spirit of mercy. This year we gathered April 24th, just days after Earth Day. We combined the themes of “Mercy” and “Care for our Common Home”. As we become more aware of the impact we have on our environment, we are reminded that we should include the whole of creation in our circle of mercy.

The group shared thoughts and ideas about how we can better care for the earth.
Over 50 women attended our Women's Health Fair on May 18th and eight different organizations presented their services. They provided valuable information about women’s health along with pamphlets, flyers and give-a-ways. We thank everyone for helping Mercy Center keep our women informed and healthier with this event!
Artist Maureen Bennett O'Conner led an art workshop for Mercy Center participants on May 22. Participants were asked to focus on the essence of who they are within as they look beyond, to where they have come from and the physical place where they are now. Creatively the participants focused on the theme of manifesting HOME within. After an introduction to symmetry, participants created a “home-centered” ephemeral art composition using fresh organic matter. Then they drew and painted mandalas. Mandala in Sanskrit means circle. It originates from the spiritual symbol in Buddhism and Hinduism representing the universe. The results were stunning!
Family weekends go back to Mercy Center’s earliest years and are now one of the most eagerly anticipated components of the Familia Adelante/Family Forward program. This year 14 families with 37 children were able to participate. The combination of educational, recreational, and bonding activities at the spectacularly beautiful Empowerment Center in Goshen, NY is enriching on every level.
ESOL END-OF-YEAR CEREMONIES

Our talented students created a display of writings and artwork based on a movie they watched in class, “Brooklyn”, a story about an Irish immigrant’s experience. We don’t have any Irish immigrants in ESOL classes, but our students were still able to relate to many elements of the story.

ESOL classes ended for the program year on June 22nd with a closing ceremony. Many of the classes prepared presentations through which students displayed their new and improved English language skills along with their gratitude for the opportunity to learn.

This year we enrolled 1,107 students, a phenomenal 31% increase over last fiscal year!
Those who came to know and love Sister Mary Ann remember her as a true woman of Mercy. She was an advocate for those less fortunate, the poor, the disenfranchised, those victimized by violence, immigrants in a foreign land – women, families, anyone and everyone in need.

In spite of illnesses over the years, Sister Mary Ann remained strong and continued to be active in her work as an educator and counselor. After teaching Mathematics in high school and college, Sister Mary Ann became a pastoral associate at St. Pius V Parish in the South Bronx. In 1990 she became a counselor for the mothers of the children in the parish school, and this was the beginning of Mercy Center.

She made it her life’s mission to help women recognize the power they have to change their lives. In establishing Mercy Center, she found the ways to make this happen, creating programs and providing services to those who needed them. It brought her great joy to see the growth and strength of so many women over the years. Those who began working with Sister Mary Ann, and those who continue her work today, are living tributes to her commitment to and solidarity with the Sisters of Mercy.

The strong sense of community that exists at Mercy Center today is built on the foundation Sister Mary Ann laid and nurtured for almost thirty years. Working with so many volunteers, donors and funders, Sister Mary Ann knew how to get the job done. Her leadership of the capital campaign and subsequent building of Mercy Center enabled her work with immigrants to be continued a few blocks from the school where it all began. That work continues today with the same spirit and dedication that has become her legacy.

Sister Mary Ann Dirr, RSM, founder of Mercy Center, passed away on February 1, 2018.
JOIN US AT YANKEE STADIUM!

Wednesday, August 29
6:00 pm
Yankee Stadium Suite 4
Bronx, New York

Guest Price: $200
(includes full menu and VIP entrance to the box)

Sponsor Price: $500
(includes 2 premier seats, all guest amenities, and parking pass)

We'll be in the deluxe Party City Party Suite #4, with great seats overlooking the first base line and some of the best views in Yankee Stadium. Full menu includes food, wine, beer and soft drinks.

NEW THIS YEAR:
A silent auction of sports memorabilia!
SAVE THE DATE!

Mercy Center’s
Golf and Tennis Classic

Friday, September 14, 2018
Leewood Golf Club
One Leewood Drive, Eastchester, NY