

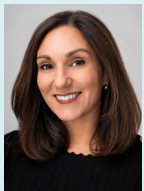


COMMUNITY BUILDING

SUMMER 2026

SHE CHOSE SAFETY. You Helped to Provide It.

CEO INSIGHTS



New Funding for Diversion Programs Matters

It probably comes as no surprise to you to learn that the leading causes of homelessness in Connecticut are directly tied to housing affordability and income instability, including expenses exceeding income, eviction, foreclosure, and families being forced to double up because they cannot afford housing on their own.

At the same time, federal cuts and uncertainty surrounding programs like SNAP, Medicaid, and housing assistance threaten to place even more pressure on already vulnerable households. When families lose access to food assistance, healthcare, or rental support, housing instability often follows quickly behind.

That is why Governor Lamont's recent announcement of \$5 million in statewide funding for homelessness diversion programs like Mercy's matters.

Funding focused on housing stabilization gives providers and communities flexibility to intervene earlier before someone loses their housing entirely, before a family enters shelter, and before a crisis becomes far more difficult and expensive to solve. Investments like this can help people stay housed, resolve short-term financial crises, and create pathways back to stability.

Continued on inside ➤

RAMONA KNEW SHE HAD TO GET OUT. Trapped in an abusive relationship, she faced not only the physical and emotional toll of the violence directed at her, but also the heartbreaking reality that her 9-year-old son, who has autism, was witnessing it all. Each day exposed him to fear, instability, and uncertainty no child should ever have to endure.



As a single mother with limited resources, Ramona made the courageous decision to leave. Taking only what she could carry, she and her son sought refuge with family members. But when that temporary arrangement came to an end, they found themselves with nowhere else to turn. For a time, they slept in their car, with Ramona doing everything she could to reassure her son that they would be okay, even when she wasn't sure herself.

Determined to build a better future for her family, Ramona searched tirelessly for an apartment. Yet soaring rental costs placed stable housing just out of reach.

That's when My Sisters' Place stepped in.

With compassionate guidance from My Sisters' Place staff and assistance through our security deposit program, Ramona was able to secure an apartment of her own. For the first time, she and her son had what every family deserves: a safe place to call home.

Today, they are settling into their new beginning. Their apartment has become more than just a roof over their heads, it is a place of healing, stability, and hope. Ramona's son now has the comfort of routine and the security of knowing where he will sleep each night. And Ramona can focus on rebuilding their lives without the constant fear of homelessness.

Because of your support, families like Ramona's can escape dangerous situations, overcome homelessness, and create brighter futures.

Thank you for making it possible for a mother and her son to find safety, stability, and the promise of a better tomorrow.

Continued from first page ♥

But we also need to be honest. The need continues to grow faster than there are the resources available to meet it.

Across Connecticut, homelessness is rising. Housing costs continue to climb. More working families, seniors, and young adults are living one unexpected bill away from losing their homes. Nonprofit providers are being asked to do more every year with systems that are already stretched thin.

The state's investment is important, and we are grateful for it. But sustained progress will require continued partnership, continued urgency, and significantly more investment in affordable housing, homelessness prevention, and supportive services.

Kara A. Capone
Chief Executive Officer



The Governor announced the release of the \$5 million from the state's Federal Cuts Responses Fund at a news conference

held at Mercy Housing's St. Elizabeth House in May. The funds will be dispersed to homelessness diversion programs across the state.



Every August, school-aged children participating in **My Sisters' Place's (MSP) Youth Program** receive backpacks filled with the supplies they need for the new school year during the annual Back-to-School Picnic. A beloved tradition at MSP, the event combines school readiness with fun, featuring games, crafts, food, and activities that help children look forward to the year ahead.

The Back-to-School Picnic also provides much-needed relief for parents and guardians. Many families served by My Sisters' Place struggle to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, and housing, making the cost of school supplies and uniforms an added financial challenge. By providing these essential items, the Youth Program helps ensure children are prepared to learn while easing the burden on their families.

One parent shared, "Thanks to My Sisters' Place, I don't have to worry about my child's uniform and backpack for the first day of school. It's my job to take care of the rest."

Another expressed gratitude for the generosity of donors who make the program possible: "You don't know the feeling of not having, and then someone helping you out. It's awesome!"

You can help make a successful school year possible for local children by purchasing an item from the Youth Program's Amazon Wish List.

Donations will be accepted through July 31.



SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT THE AMAZON WISH LIST AT <https://amzn.to/43cpDnt> TO SHOP FOR THE KIDS OF MSP.



An Evening of Hope, Community, and Lasting Impact



Mark your calendar for an unforgettable evening of community, purpose, and impact. On **Friday, October 16**, supporters of Mercy Housing and My Sisters' Place will gather for the 8th Annual Hope & Home Celebration.

This signature event brings together community and business leaders, advocates, and friends who share a commitment to serving our most vulnerable neighbors. The evening is both a celebration of the accomplishments made by Mercy Housing and My Sisters' Place and a vital opportunity to raise the funds needed to continue this work as community needs continue to grow. Hosted at the beautiful Bristol Event Center, guests will enjoy a festive cocktail hour featuring live music, an open bar, hors d'oeuvres, and a silent auction. The celebration continues with dinner, a live auction, an exciting paddle raise, and a meaningful program all in support of our shared mission.

PROCEEDS FROM THE EVENING DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OF MERCY HOUSING AND MY SISTERS' PLACE.



TO PURCHASE TICKETS OR LEARN MORE ABOUT SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE VISIT: onecau.se/hopehome2026 or scan the QR code.



DONOR
spotlight

Aetna's Donates \$10,000 to Mercy

MERCY HOUSING & SHELTER CORPORATION (MERCY HOUSING) is proud to announce a generous \$10,000 donation from Aetna, a CVS Health company, to support the organization's residential programs, supportive services, and outreach efforts for local individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

The contribution will help **Mercy Housing** continue providing nourishing meals, safe shelter, housing assistance, case management, and critical support services designed to help some of the most vulnerable people in our community achieve long-term stability and independence.

"When people are safely housed and supported through Mercy's programs, their overall health and well-being improve dramatically, creating a pathway to stability and long-term success," explained Kara Capone, CEO of Mercy Housing. "That's why we are so incredibly grateful to Aetna for their generous support of our mission. Their donation will directly impact the lives of the individuals and families we serve by helping us provide not only housing, but also the compassionate services and supports people need to rebuild their lives. Partnerships like this make a meaningful difference in our community."

Aetna's support also reflects its ongoing commitment to the Hartford community and to investing in partnerships that strengthen the region for the long term. By backing organizations like Mercy Housing, Aetna is helping build a stronger, healthier community where more individuals and families have the opportunity to achieve stability, well-being, and hope for the future.



Aetna is proud to support Mercy Housing and the important work they do every day to help individuals and families facing homelessness. Everyone deserves the safety and stability of a place to call home, and we are honored to help Mercy continue providing housing, support, and hope to people across our community."

MARIE SPADORCIA

Vice President of Strategic Programs at Aetna and a member of the Board of Directors at Mercy Housing



HONORING THE COMMITMENT OF OUR MAJOR DONORS



Supporters of Mercy Housing and My Sisters' Place were recognized and celebrated at a special Major Donor Appreciation Reception held in June. The event took place at the Connecticut Governor's Residence, which is generously made available to nonprofit organizations, providing a beautiful setting for an evening of gratitude and reflection.

Guests enjoyed a brief program that began with welcoming remarks and heartfelt thanks from *Board Chair* Lisa Hoisl. CEO Kara Capone then shared inspiring stories and updates, highlighting the many ways donors' generosity has transformed lives and strengthened programs across both organizations.

The reception provided an opportunity to personally thank those whose significant contributions make it possible for Mercy Housing and My Sisters' Place to provide shelter, housing, support, and hope to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Their continued partnership is helping create lasting change throughout our community.

"We could not do this important work without the commitment and generosity of our donors," explained Annette Scheidecker, *Director of Development*. "We are honored that they believe in our mission and choose to support it in such a meaningful way, helping us bring hope and lasting change to those experiencing homelessness in our community."

MERCY'S HERO TEAM MAKES AN

IMPACT

MERCY HOUSING'S HERO TEAM is already seeing remarkable success in helping individuals experiencing opioid use disorder overcome housing instability and build a foundation for lasting recovery.

Part of Connecticut's HERO (Housing Empowering Recovery from Opioids) initiative, the program provides long-term housing vouchers and intensive support services to people facing both addiction and homelessness. Mercy Housing is one of only a handful of agencies selected by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) to deliver these critical services.

Through intensive case management, weekly face-to-face meetings, monthly home visits, peer mentorship, and tenancy support, Mercy Housing helps participants build the skills and stability needed to maintain independent housing and sustain recovery.

"The regular face-to-face meetings are important because they help us check an individual's baseline," explained Drew Roach, Mercy Housing's HERO Program Team Supervisor. "If they are relapsing, we can quickly connect them with the help they need while also helping them stay accountable."

Since receiving its first referrals in December, Mercy Housing has enrolled 17 participants, with approximately 90 percent either actively searching for housing or already housed.



"This is a major accomplishment. We encourage participants to do as much as they can independently so they can build confidence, strength, and self-sufficiency."

DREW ROACH

For the HERO Team, success means more than securing an apartment. Through compassion, accountability, and individualized support, they are helping people maintain sobriety, sustain housing, and reclaim their lives, proving that lasting recovery is possible with the right resources and encouragement.

(Pictured left to right) Mercy's HERO Team: Marquis Oblesby, Lolita Young and Drew Roach



IMPACTING LIVES

Affecting Change

JEROME'S STORY

JEROME'S STORY IS ONE OF STRUGGLE, DETERMINATION, AND HOPE.

A young father facing the growing grip of opioid addiction and the very real risk of homelessness, Jerome reached a turning point. He knew he needed help to change the course of his life. That opportunity came through the Housing Empowering Recovery from Opioids (HERO) initiative, launched by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services last August, which provides housing vouchers paired with supportive services to help individuals secure stable housing while pursuing recovery.

For Jerome, qualifying for the program meant confronting significant challenges head-on. While living in a volatile situation and on the brink of losing his housing, he made the decision to enter treatment for opioid use disorder and fully commit to his recovery. He also agreed to work closely with his Community Social Worker at Mercy Housing, a partnership he continues to honor with consistency and determination.

His progress has not gone unnoticed. Jerome secured an apartment after a successful interview with a landlord who recognized him as a responsible and promising tenant. He moved into his first apartment in June and has remained committed to his sobriety and ongoing recovery journey.

Along the way, Jerome also shared an important piece of his life: his child has been diagnosed with autism. In response, the Mercy Housing team quickly connected him with resources through the My Sisters' Place youth program, ensuring his child receives the support and services they need.

Jerome's journey is still unfolding, but each step reflects resilience and hope made possible through comprehensive support and community partnership.

Stories like Jerome's are a powerful reminder of what can happen when people have access to housing, treatment, and compassionate guidance. Because of supporters like you, Mercy Housing and My Sisters' Place are able to walk alongside individuals and families as they build healthier, more stable futures.

PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING TO OUR SPRING APPEAL BY JUNE 30TH TO HELP US FINISH OUR FISCAL YEAR STRONG.



MERCY



MSP





THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

- 1** Saint Josephine Bakhita Parish of Rocky Hill donated canned goods, pasta and pasta sauce from its annual "Souper Bowl of Caring" initiative.
- 2** Mary Onidi, a past Mercy Housing Board Member, served breakfast in the Friendship Center with a group of friends.
- 3** The Flood Law Firm collected toiletries, cleaning supplies, and nonperishable food items for My Sisters' Place during the month of March.
- 4** Students representing 13 Xaverian Brothers Sponsored Schools organized donations and prepared the Clothing Closet for Spring during their annual retreat.
- 5** Volunteers from Coopsys organized donations in the Food Pantry and served lunch in the Friendship Center.
- 6** A team from Reid and Riege, led by CHA Board Member Colin Wrinn, landscaped the grounds of the Mary Seymour Place Apartments.
- 7** KPMG held a clothing giveaway for the community and helped prepare lunch for the Friendship Center.
- 8** Sun Life Financial donated bagged lunches for the Friendship Center.
- 9** Leslie Velez from the Bernice Bags Foundation donated beautiful bags for the women of My Sisters' Place.
- 10** Aetna/CVS Health employees from as far away as Florida and Chicago worked together to swap out clothing in the Clothing Closet.
- 11-12** Volunteers from Liberty Mutual and M&T Bank teamed up to coordinate a food pantry opening and clothing giveaway.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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For more information visit
www.ctcha.org
www.mercyhousingct.org
www.sistersplacect.org

CONNECT WITH US!

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Due to space limitations we are unable to include photos of all the great support we receive. However, we are grateful to you all nonetheless.

MERCY HOUSING SELECTED AS JUNIOR LEAGUE'S *Community Partner*

After a rigorous application and review process, **Mercy Housing** is proud to announce it has been selected as the Junior League of Hartford's (JLH) newest Community Partner.

This exciting three-year partnership includes a \$20,000 annual grant, along with dedicated volunteer support from JLH members, bringing both critical funding and hands-on engagement to Mercy Housing programs serving individuals in need.

Nonprofit organizations from across the region were invited to apply for this highly competitive opportunity. After an initial review of applications, the JLH Community Partnership Committee conducted site visits to better understand each organization's impact and needs. From there, three finalists were selected to deliver fast-pitch presentations to JLH members during a March meeting. Members then voted to choose their partner, with the final announcement made at the League's annual meeting in June, where Mercy Housing was officially awarded the partnership and received its first grant installment.

"We are truly honored to have been selected," said Kathy Shaw, Chief Operating Officer of Mercy Housing. "Given the many outstanding organizations that applied, we feel incredibly grateful for the opportunity to partner with such an inspiring group of women over the next three years."



Funding from the Junior League of Hartford will directly support critical facility improvements, including the renovation of aging showers used by patrons of the Friendship Center day shelter, as well as much-needed expansion of the food pantry and clothing closet at St. Elizabeth House in Hartford. These upgrades will help Mercy Housing better serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness and housing instability.

Planning is already underway to develop meaningful volunteer opportunities for JLH members, who are eager to contribute their time and energy in support of Mercy Housing's mission.

The Junior League of Hartford is a women-led volunteer organization committed to advancing civic leadership and driving meaningful social change throughout the Greater Hartford region. Mercy Housing looks forward to a strong and impactful partnership in the years ahead.