



VISION 2020

THE TOUCHSTONE OF TODAY
WITH FORESIGHT FOR TOMORROW





WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE MERCY CENTER AND ITS WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Of the women who have been in the Mercy Center program since 1994 and could be located:

- 96% gained employment or other income sources.
- 96% attended mental health and related counseling programs.
- 86% obtained permanent housing.
- 74% reduced debt.
- 67% completed substance abuse programs.
- "0" women and their children who graduated from Mercy Center in the last three years returned to emergency shelters.

THE CHALLENGES TO BETTER SERVING MORE WOMEN

- The Mercy Center receives 20 to 25 housing inquiries monthly. Of those 20 to 25, 13% can be accommodated.
- To achieve total life transformation, program space for education, career exploration, job readiness and counseling will be an essential part of the expanded housing project.

We were all once broken. The difference is how we collected the pieces to make us whole again. The journey is ever constant, and change is ever present.

*—Jennie Hagerty,
Executive Director*

Our Mission

Mercy Center for Women is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy and is committed to enhancing the dignity of each person it serves through the healing of body, mind and spirit.



VISION 2020 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Despite our nation's abundant blessings and opportunities, homelessness continues to be a persistent challenge to our local community.

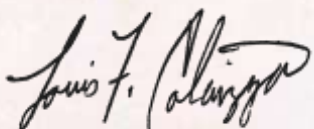
Women and their children who apply to the Mercy Center for Women's program are homeless due to domestic violence, addiction, lack of education, insufficient job skills and mental health challenges. The Mercy Center receives 20 to 25 housing inquiries monthly. Of those 20-25, 13% can be accommodated.

For 26 years, the Mercy Center, a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, has been instrumental in providing homeless women and their children a second opportunity to move forward in life. During the last three years, the Mercy Center has compiled a remarkable success record: "0" of the women who graduated from the Mercy Center returned to emergency shelters!

To meet the urgent housing and recovery needs of women and their children, the Mercy Center purchased the former Holy Rosary School in 2020. Adjacent to the current Mercy Center transitional housing facility (1039 East 27th Street), the school will be converted into 13 two-bedroom housing apartments and program space. The transitional housing program will continue to transform the lives of women and children.

The cost of the purchase, conversion and furnishing of the former school is \$2.5 million.

Women and their children who are homeless make up one of the most vulnerable populations in our community. For over a quarter century, the Mercy Center has lifted women and their children out of impossible situations and supplied them with the tools necessary for self-sufficiency and independent living. The journey of their recovery will continue in the new permanent housing facility with expanded programs.



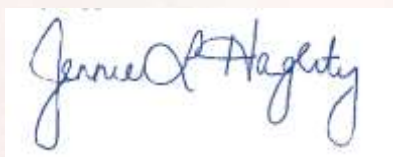
Lou Colaizzo
Campaign Chair



Lou Colaizzo



Jennie Hagerty



Executive Director

Vision 2020 Capital Campaign Cabinet

Lou Colaizzo

Campaign Chair
Senior Vice President
Erie Insurance

Pat Burns

Senior Vice President
Erie Insurance

Rob Doyle

President
Frontier Contracting

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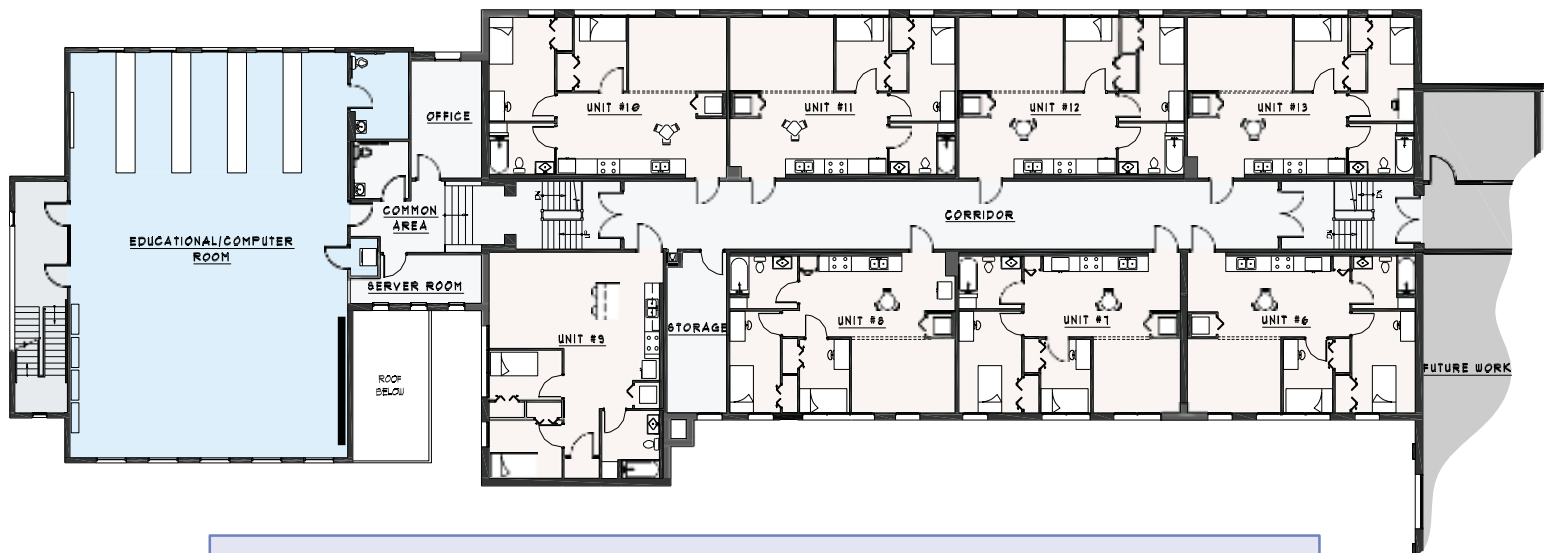
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TYPICAL
ARCHITECTURAL
RENDERING OF A TWO
BEDROOM UNIT

FLOOR PLAN (WITH EDUCATIONAL/COMPUTER ROOM)



PROJECT COSTS

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| • Purchase of the school: | \$300,000 |
| • Conversion and construction costs & fees: | \$2,106,200 |
| • Security system, signage, furnishings & appliances: | \$95,400 |
| • Total cost: | \$2,501,600 |

THE MERCY CENTER RESTORES HOPE AND CHANGES LIVES

Rhonda's story

A few short weeks after Rhonda (not her real name) moved into the MCW (in 2014), the Center's clients, staff members and their families boarded a school bus and went Christmas caroling through several brightly lit neighborhoods. As Rhonda stood in front of one beautifully decorated home singing *Silent Night, Holy Night*, she remarked, "I've been in prison since 1987. I haven't seen any Christmas lights in 27 years. You have no idea how much this means to me to be able to sit on a bus laughing, singing, and looking at all the beautiful decorations."

Rhonda's introduction to drug addiction began with smoking marijuana, progressed through purchasing illegal prescription drugs on the street, and finally to cocaine use. As her addiction took control of her life, she robbed to support her habit. She was arrested and sentenced to 7 1/2 to 15 years in prison for crimes committed in Erie, and 20 to 40 years for robbery of a jewelry store. After her release from prison, she went to Pittsburgh for a violence prevention program, and then was paroled to Erie, her hometown.

Shortly after her arrival back in Erie, Rhonda happened to walk past the MCW. She called and spoke with the director of client services and began a new life filled with hope for the future. She moved into the Center shortly thereafter and began a year of healing. She participated in all the classes and activities, developed deep friendships with the other residents, and obtained a job in housekeeping.

She moved into her own apartment a year later. "The Mercy Center was a blessing. They gave me everything I needed to make a fresh start...furniture, food and help to find an apartment. The staff went above and beyond to see that my change was genuine." Now a member of the MCW's Aftercare Program including follow-up visits from her case manager, Rhonda stops in at the MCW for some good conversation and to volunteer her services as needed.





MERCY CENTER FOR WOMEN

1039 East 27th Street • Erie, PA 16504

www.mcwerie.org • (814) 455-4577

THE MERCY CENTER RESTORES HOPE AND CHANGES LIVES

Lona's story

Lona (not her real name) grew up suffering from social anxiety and describes herself as a lost kid, always looking for love. Family get-togethers always included plenty of alcohol, and Lona started to drink at age 13. In high school, she followed the wrong crowd. All her boyfriends did cocaine and drank alcohol. She has battled depression since her early teen years and self-medicated with alcohol and drugs. She quit school and went to work.

Over the next couple years, Lona worked at a few jobs, never for very long. After losing yet another job, one by one her utilities were shut off due to non-payment. She continued to live in the house with her two preschoolers with no electricity, water, or heat. She stole formula to feed her babies, but always had money for beer.

Eventually a neighbor called the Office of Children & Youth (OCY), and Lona lost custody of her two preschool children. OCY told Lona her only hope of regaining custody was to enter the MCW program and to get her life together. Lona arrived at the door of the MCW with nothing but the clothes on her back. She and her case manager began the hard work of overcoming years of poor decisions and addiction. She committed herself to the MCW programs and worked closely with the child specialist to learn how to parent her children and eventually regained custody of them.

Lona's father moved in with her family as his health failed, and Lona cared for him until he died a year later. Caring for her dad made her come face-to-face with the end result of alcohol addiction. This realization was traumatizing, but helpful to her continued recovery from her own alcoholism. She now works at a long-term care facility as an assistant caregiver and enjoys the interaction with Alzheimer's patients. One of Lona's future goals is to work at Mercy Center for Women as a house manager where she can help other women as she was helped.