

Mercy Works

Volume 3 • Number 2

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas – Northeast Community • Committed to Compassionate Service



Dear Friends in Mercy:

As we begin our third year as a unified Northeast Community, 830 Sisters of Mercy, 390 Mercy Associates and countless partners in ministry continue to bring Mercy to your community. Our collective strength allows Mercy – and you – to make a difference in our local area, our region and beyond.

Through our partnership with caring individuals like you, thousands of people in need have learned to provide for their futures, receiving the care and tools they need to heal and grow.

Individual relationships remain our central focus. The Mercy spirit of hospitality – warmth, kindness, and compassion for a friend or stranger – aims to build trusting relationships. With every unique Mercy program in the areas of education, healthcare, human services and spiritual care, we find that lasting, positive changes are continually inspired by the influence of individual attention.

Your generosity and compassion enables the Mercy Northeast Community to put the individual first. We celebrate your connection to Mercy!

Sincerely in Mercy,

Ellen Kurtz, RSM, President
Mercy Northeast Community

Northeast grant provides *Learning for Life*

Stephanie Schelhamer begins reading from her book: “I chose a butterfly for the cover of my story because butterflies transform, and so do I.” Stephanie, who manages life from a wheelchair and has speech difficulties and health challenges, is an active participant at Re-Focus, an organization in Providence, Rhode Island, that serves adults with differing physical and developmental needs. Her book, *Stephanie’s Story*, is the result of her involvement with Learning for Life, a literacy project supported by the Mercy Northeast Ministry Grant Fund. When Stephanie is finished reading, she says, “This book is pretty good if I do say so myself!”

Participants often express how Learning for Life has helped them learn more than just reading or writing. “My tutor meets me at Dunkin’ Donuts,” says Gloria. “So I get free coffee,” she jokes. One-on-one tutoring sessions are held in settings like libraries or coffee shops so project members can also learn to negotiate life skills such as handling money or using the computer.

Learning for Life is just one of the critical programs that Re-Focus offers to individuals who reside in a variety of supportive living programs and in the organization’s 14 group homes. Chris, another participant, has been writing science fiction since he was 10 years old, and speaks animatedly about how his tutor helps him to organize his ideas and plan story projects. Chris also works as a receptionist at Re-Focus. “I’ve been called Fort Knox,” he says proudly.

Continued on page 2



Gloria Smith, right, a member of Learning for Life literacy project, with care coordinator, Jeanine Lyles

Just because you're handicapped, that's not an ace in the hole to get taken care of. You have to work hard to know yourself and your needs... Then there's all the work in dealing with the pain and the people who don't see that you're really a real person in there.

I don't complain; but, sometimes I have to cry on someone's shoulder. That's when a kind voice is such a big help. I get my troubles out, then I hear a kind voice, and then my troubles pass.

— Excerpt from *Stephanie's Story*



Stephanie Schelhamer with *Stephanie's Story*. Her book resulted from a literacy project supported by donors who give to the Mercy Northeast Ministry Fund.

The ease with which the participants share their stories with visitors is a testament to the success of Re-Focus and the safe, trusting setting offered there. This environment has been encouraged and modeled by Sister Christine Kavanaugh, executive director since 1992. Sister Chris explains: "By valuing and encouraging each person's unique talents and strengths, clients are challenged and empowered to reach their fullest potential." For more information about programs and services of Re-Focus, please visit www.refocusinc.org.

Celebrating Mercy

Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri presented Marie Langlois with the Governor's Award for Service to Rhode Island at "A Celebration of Mercy" in Providence on May 8. Thanks to the hard work of the event committee chaired by NBC10's Lisa Churchville, the event grossed over \$95,000 in cash, pledges, and in-kind services. All proceeds raised from "A Celebration of Mercy" support the Mercy Northeast Ministry Fund.

Marie Langlois has a long history of philanthropy in the state of Rhode Island. A graduate of Brown University and Harvard, Marie shares her time and expertise with Rhode Island Philharmonic Orchestra, St. Sebastian's Church, Miriam Hospital, Tockwotton Home, Champlin Foundation, Brown University, Rhode Island Foundation Investment and WNRI. She co-founded Phoenix Investment Management Company, now Washington Trust Investors, which has \$1.3 billion under management.



Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri chats with Mercy Northeast Community President Sister Ellen Kurtz

Sister Irene Nerney, left, with Marie Langlois, recipient of the Governor's Award at A Celebration of Mercy event in Providence, Rhode Island



Giving stock makes 'cents'

A little planning before the year ends could help you save taxes and perhaps give a little more to the Mercy Northeast Annual Fund. By transferring appreciated stock instead of making a cash gift, you not only receive a charitable deduction, you save paying the capital gains tax on the stock.

Here's how it works: Let's say that many years ago you purchased 10 shares at \$30 per share and now they are worth \$100 per share or \$1000. Ordinarily, you would write a check for \$1000 donation, and itemize the deduction on your tax return. The after-tax cost of this gift at a 25 percent tax rate would be \$750 (\$1000-\$250). But, if you transferred the \$1000 in stock, not only do you receive the tax deduction, you'll save paying the 15 percent capital gains fee on the \$700 in appreciation.

A gift of stock can keep your cash flow intact, and by supporting Mercy you will help people in need overcome obstacles so they may live full and dignified lives.

The Sisters of Mercy – Northeast Community does not provide financial advice, and encourages you to consult your financial advisor about stock transfers. If you or your advisor would like more information, please contact Trish Sweeney at (802) 865-6835 Ext. 136, or tsweeney@mercyne.org.

Mercy WORKS

COMMITTED TO COMPASSIONATE SERVICE

ELLEN KURTZ, RSM
PRESIDENT OF THE NORTHEAST COMMUNITY

EDITORIAL BOARD:
GERRY P. SULLIVAN, DIRECTOR

MERCY NORTHEAST DEVELOPMENT TEAM:
IRENE NERNEY, RSM;
TRISH SWEENEY; AND DOREEN TUCKER

CONSULTANT: ANNE VACCAREST, RSM
CONSULTANT, DESIGNER: CHLOE VAN AKEN

15 HIGHLAND VIEW ROAD
CUMBERLAND, RI 02864-1124
PHONE: (401) 333-6333
FAX: (401) 333-6450

Mercy Care: healing, health and wholeness

While providing immediate or long-term healthcare, the Mercy legacy of care is to attend to the personal needs of the individual. With holistic attention to the body, mind and spirit, Mercy provides the means for healing, health and wholeness.

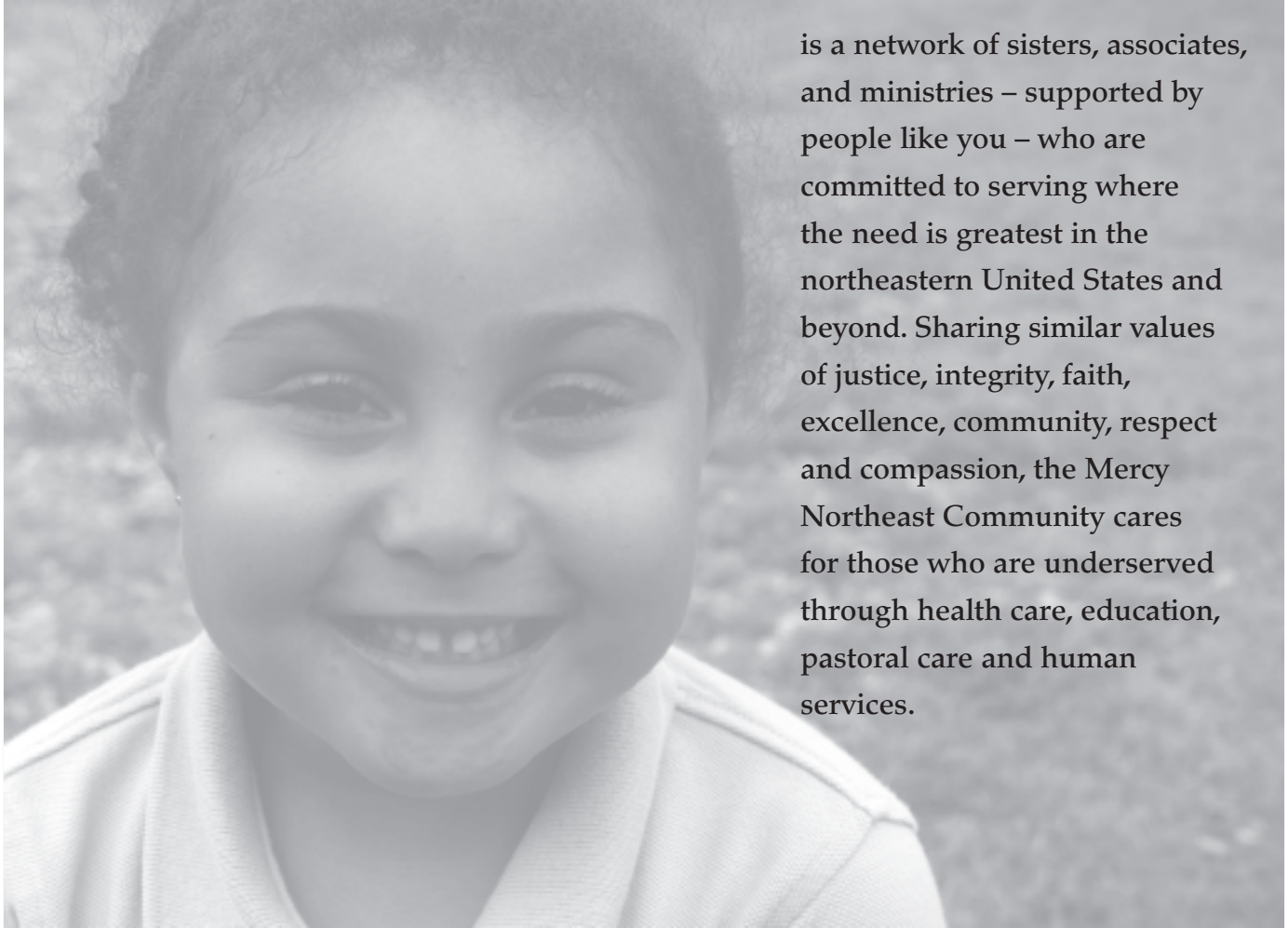
Sister Kathy McInnis, director of pastoral care, and Sister Rosemary Burnham, activities director, speak of a "third family" philosophy at work in the Warde Health Center, an elder care facility with 36 assisted living and 28 private nursing beds. Sister Rosemary explains: "We recognize that in many cases our residents didn't ask to be here, yet here they are. After the family they're born into, and having families of their own, we aim to become their third family." Esther Iannalfo, a center resident for the past six months, wholeheartedly agrees. "I recently decided that I love it here. I had a nice life, and now this is my family."

This spirit of comfort and unity at Warde Health Center, a sponsored ministry of the Northeast Community, is typical of the Mercy approach to health care. Residents, visitors and staff members come to appreciate the center's deep commitment to individual care and to a high quality of life for the residents. A resident's daily activities can include not only physical therapy, but also spiritual and educational activities, as well as a dose of fun. Sister Kathy says emphatically, "We bring our residents here to live." For more information on Warde Health Center, please contact Administrator Susan Denopoulos at (603) 890-1290.



Sister Kathleen McInnis, standing, left, and Sister Rosemary Burnham with Esther Iannalfo, a resident of Warde Health Center in Windham, New Hampshire

The Sisters of Mercy – Northeast Community



is a network of sisters, associates, and ministries – supported by people like you – who are committed to serving where the need is greatest in the northeastern United States and beyond. Sharing similar values of justice, integrity, faith, excellence, community, respect and compassion, the Mercy Northeast Community cares for those who are underserved through health care, education, pastoral care and human services.

How your support makes a difference

Your generosity advances the work and well-being of the Sisters of Mercy – Northeast Community in the following ways:

- ▶ The Mercy Northeast Ministry and Educational Assistance Funds provide grants to ministries where one or more Sisters of Mercy work to serve those who are poor. For the 2008-2009 year, \$725,000 in grants and scholarships are at work in 41 institutions in Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, New York and beyond.
- ▶ Gifts of general support to the Mercy Northeast Community help to underwrite the ministry work of individual sisters by assisting with the expenses of everyday living, such as housing, transportation and healthcare. Financial support is also provided as needed to Mercy Northeast sponsored ministries.
- ▶ Many donors have graciously said “thank you” to the sisters for their legacy of care by giving generously to the Mercy Northeast Community Retirement Fund. Your gifts provide for the healthcare and living expenses of our retired sisters, most of whom volunteer for community service and/or for the Mercy ministry of prayer.

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 203
Albany, NY

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas –
Northeast Community
15 Highland View Road
Cumberland, RI 02864-1124