

the WINDOW

Issue 38, Vol. 2 · August 2023

A Message from S. Pat:

Here's a story told in the Tales of the Hasidim:

An old rabbi once asked his pupils how they could tell when the night had ended and the day had begun.

'Could it be,' asked one of the students, 'when you can see an animal in the distance and tell whether it's a sheep or a dog?'

'No,' answered the rabbi.

Another asked, 'Is it when you can look at a tree in the distance and tell whether it's a fig tree or a peach tree?'

'No,' answered the rabbi.

'Then when is it?' the pupils demanded.

'It is when you can look on the face of any man or woman and see that it is your sister or brother. Because if you cannot see this, it is still night.'

This particular story of the rabbi and his students is one of my favorites. Some may say "it's too simple an answer." But in my own life I know that sometimes my need to analyze so many possible solutions at work, or even personally, really distract me from seeing what's right in front of me. So, for instance, whether it is at our Board Retreat, which is a day we take yearly, or a day in the life of our direct care staff, or trudging through our legal systems, we need to somehow see the faces of the Mercy Haven community. These now include each of you, the persons who blessed us at our Golf Outing who might be brand new friends and new business partners. Whatever our role, we are always challenged to bring the stories of our participants in such a way that others can behold their faces.

I picked this story in light of the ongoing dilemmas we hear and read about in the media today. The world is marked by an ever-evolving landscape, presenting complex challenges such as environmental crises, homelessness, social inequalities and health emergencies which command our collective attention and action. Facing these challenges head-on creates an opportunity to make the necessary changes that will help build a brighter future. Might it all change? Might night be turned to day if we would each take the time to behold the face of another as my sister or brother? I hope so. And soon.

Mercy Haven's mission is to acknowledge the dignity and potential of people who are homeless, living with mental illness, or living in poverty by providing housing, advocacy, education and life skills development.



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BUILDING COMMUNITY SINCE 1985

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to view Event Images
on our FACEBOOK Page!



A beautiful June day greeted us for our 23rd Annual Golf Outing held at the Hamlet Golf Club in Commack. The all-day event hosted 136 golfers plus an additional 109 dinner guests and raised over \$138,000 in vital funds.

Our Tournament Sponsor was **Hendrickson Fuels**, a proud Bronze Business Partner of Mercy Haven. Special thanks, also, to our Silver Business Partner, **Flushing Bank** and Bronze Business Partners: **E.B.C., Co., Farrell Fritz, P.C., New York Community Bank, Ridgewood Savings Bank** and **South Shore University Hospital**.

Golf Chair this year was Board member, **Jim DiGiovanni**, and our **Bud Harrelson Award Honoree** was the **Family of Tony McNulty** who continue to honor the legacy of their husband, father and grandfather with over 30 years of support to Mercy Haven. Our speaker for the evening, **Daryl**, shared his story of chronic homelessness after a traumatic and career-ending car accident and medical bills. By securing stable housing with Mercy Haven during the pandemic, and with the encouragement of caring staff, he has been able to make the necessary changes to build a better life for himself.

S. Pat Griffith, Executive Director, shared warm memories of Tony McNulty and extended words of thanks to our guests and remarked, “the threat of homelessness and/or violence touches many of our families as does the challenge of living with mental illness. The journey of caring for one another still needs to be expanded.” She continues to be encouraged by the spirit of generosity which is shown in so many ways today and throughout the year.



Supportive Housing Program is Growing!

EXPANSION TO PROVIDE HOMES FOR 12 INDIVIDUALS

Mercy Haven is delighted to announce that we are a few steps closer to expanding our Supportive Housing Program. This program offers permanent housing in the community to single adults and families who are able to live with minimal supports. These housing opportunities are offered to those living with a diagnosed mental illness and families or singles who are coming from homeless shelters. Various types of housing available in this program include: multi-family and single-family homes and one, two and three-bedroom apartments across our many Long Island communities. Participants within the Supportive Housing Program, who are responsible to the terms of the rental agreement, can live in our housing for as long as they are physically able. With assistance from our staff of Housing Specialists, participants can access a variety of services that will help them to remain stable and better able to maintain their housing.

This expansion would not be possible without financial help from our partners from the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the Homeless Housing and Assistance Program (HHAP) and the Office of Mental Health's Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI).

Mercy Haven has been awarded \$4,068,006 from HHAP for the purchase and rehabilitation of two locations in Nassau County.

This project will provide permanent housing for 12 individuals. The award was approved by the OTDA board this month. In alignment with the purchase and rehabilitation grant received, we are also pleased to

announce that Mercy Haven has been awarded a \$360,000 per year grant from ESSHI for the operation of this new homeless housing project. This assistance would offer permanent supportive housing for 12 chronically homeless individuals. This funding will allow us to deliver support services in conjunction with our current permanent supportive housing services designed to enhance lives and foster success. We are looking forward to working with HHAP to carry out this agreement by creating an amazing space for our participants to call home.

We are honored and grateful for the trust placed in us by the above New York State agencies. These grants not only validate our commitment to progress, they empower us to make a lasting impact in areas critical to our community's future.



Welcome!

NEW BOARD MEMBER

We are so very happy to welcome **Melissa Marius-Burke** to our Board of Directors. She is the Director, District Executive for Santander Bank in Brooklyn, with almost 20 years of

financial services experience. Melissa also has experience in community relations and volunteer recruitment. She was a Board member at Neighborhood Housing Service, CDC Brooklyn and frequently volunteers as a Financial Literacy Coach at Bethany House Nassau, Women's Shelter.

After attending our Fall Cocktail Party in 2018, Melissa and Santander Bank have been steady participants and generous sponsors of our mission.

Melissa's experience in community relations will be an invaluable resource to Mercy Haven, and as a member of the Development Committee she will be able to expand and influence our development plan. She is committed to helping individuals in their journey towards long-term recovery and looks forward to pursuing opportunities to share the good works of our agency. **Congratulations, Melissa!**

New Partnerships

PHARMACY SERVICES FOR THOSE IN OUR CARE



We are proud to announce our partnership with **Community Care Rx**, a comprehensive pharmacy offering services to long-term care facilities and other health care organizations.

For over 25 years, Community Care Rx has been committed to providing comprehensive pharmacy services, including infusion therapies, durable medical equipment, nutritional products, and specialty medications. "Our team, dedicated to patient care, strives for efficiency without compromising on patient safety. We pride ourselves on offering cost savings alongside excellent customer service to our partners and clients, a commitment that has remained constant throughout our history," says **Hossam Maksoud, CEO**.

We look forward to building a lasting relationship with Community Care Rx. Together, we aspire to continue making a positive difference in the lives of the clients we serve.

Springtime Gardening

ADDING BEAUTY TO OUR ADULT HOME AND COMMUNITY RESIDENCES

Dedicated volunteers are the backbone of any organization that aim to create positive change in society. Their selfless contributions foster a sense of social responsibility and inspire others to get involved in making a difference. Here at Mercy Haven, **Liberty Mutual Insurance** rise to the occasion, year after year.

Special thanks to our friends at Liberty, who completed 4 major projects this past May, during their "Serve With Liberty" volunteer campaign. They have been committed and faithful corporate volunteers for the past **10 years**. Beautifying our homes and keeping our gardens in shape is a gift, and for this, we are grateful.



A Community that Cares... AND SHARES!



Larry Martin, pictured with staff member, Olga.

Gifts given without an ask are the best gifts.

Our Community Food Pantry relies on regular and frequent donations. Our thanks to neighbor **Larry Martin of M. & M. Hot Bagels**, together with his staff, who makes sure to deliver surplus bagels to our pantry **DAILY** so that we may distribute them to our residents and community. We are grateful for their kindness.

A simple phone call from the Girl Scouts of Suffolk County asking: **Would Mercy Haven be interested in Girl Scout Cookies for the pantry?** Our answer?: **Of course we would!** Many thanks to the Girl Scouts for their generous donation of cookies for our pantry. We are so grateful for their consistent support.



Kelly and Leonard pictured with some of the donated Girl Scout cookies on our Pantry shelf.

Food Donations are needed and gladly accepted!

Drop-off times are Monday-Friday from 9 am to 2 pm. Please call 631-277-8300 for more information.

Tax receipts are available.

Human Resources:

SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Human Resource (HR) professionals in the nonprofit world must balance the organization's mission-driven objectives with the practical realities of managing people. Our HR Director, **Erin Galante**, along with HR Generalist, **Cindy Pfeiffer**, use their combined experience and tenure to maintain this balance.

Erin is primarily responsible for leave and benefit management, policies, procedures, compliance, employee relations issues, trainings and performance management. Cindy is responsible for recruiting, onboarding, invoice and audit management. She is the friendly face that greets you at an interview and helps welcome you to the agency.

Erin and Cindy work as a team. Erin shares, "We cross-cover and are in constant communication to ensure the best experience possible for our employees. We touch all facets of the agency and that keeps it exciting. We have a lot of knowledge about employee benefits, entitlements, leaves, training and resources. We are here to help create and develop the agency to continue to grow and help each employee reach their full potential."

When asked about the current status of employment on Long Island, specifically, and how Mercy Haven is affected, Erin states, "Unemployment remains low and it still is a job-seekers market. In turn, we have tried to look towards and have successfully

transitioned a number of our employees to upper level roles. We appreciate the hard work our employees do and always look to internal candidates for promotions and transfers. We have increased our visibility and recruitment efforts, including going to more job fairs to help find dedicated, knowledgeable, diverse people who want to join our team."

Together, they envision Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) efforts at Mercy Haven to continue with our committee and beyond. Expanding and returning to more staff engagement and appreciation now in a post-Public Health Emergency world is crucial. "We look forward to further collaboration throughout the departments," Erin states.

Mercy Haven continues to grow to meet the needs of the community, thanks to staff who are dedicated to the mission and to the people we serve. "We make every effort to remain fair, ethical and compliant to all matters concerning the agency," says Erin. "We like working for an agency whose mission we can stand behind. We work hard together to do the work that is worth doing and contributes positively to the agency."



DIVERSITY • EQUITY • INCLUSION

A Celebration of Pride



On June 28, staff gathered for an afternoon celebration of **Pride Month**, hosted by our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee.

A thorough and thought-provoking presentation on the history and current global landscape of the LGBTQ+ movement was moderated

by committee members, Nicole and Stephanie (pictured above, l-r). An open discussion followed, with questions and comments shared by all in attendance. Much was learned.

We are grateful for time spent to honor the past, celebrate the present, and envision a future where every LGBTQ+ individual can live their truth without barriers. **Many thanks to the DEI Committee for their dedication and effort.**



**For a complete list of open positions,
please visit our website:**

www.mercyhaven.org

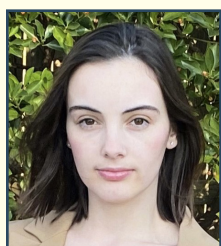
**or scan code above for quick access
to our "CAREERS" page**

The Building Blocks to Stable Housing

MERCY HAVEN'S COMMUNITY RESIDENCE PROGRAM

While Mercy Haven was established in 1985, it was in 1989 that the agency's first home, our Community Residence (CR) in West Babylon, opened to residents. In 1990, the CR's in Westbury and Bay Shore opened bringing the total number of persons in the program to 34.

Thirty-eight years later, the CR program continues to be a place where people who are living with mental illness can live in community with others on the same path to recovery.



Amanda, Supervisor
CR Westbury

We took some time to visit with Amanda, Christine and Eve, Supervisors of each of our 3 homes. They all agreed that a typical day for each resident begins with similar

expectations, including personal hygiene, laundry, maintaining a clean home, taking medications, scheduling day programming and transportation needs. "With staff assistance on their individualized service plans, each resident works at their own pace on specific goals that will help them live more independently," says Amanda.



Amanda out front with a few of our residents.



Eve, Supervisor
CR Bay Shore

"The residents help with menu planning and cooking dinner. They like to sit outside - you may even find a resident sitting in his outdoor rocking chair. They enjoy listening to music, and occasionally you might catch them dancing. They all help maintain the vegetables that we are growing here," states Christine.



Eve, with Donna, Asst. Supervisor (r),
outside with several residents.

While it may seem challenging to keep track of varying schedules for 10-12 people at one time, Eve says this is not the most challenging part of her job. "Challenges can be the frustration in knowing their potential, seeing them reach it and then seeing them lose it due to self-limiting choices. From that point, getting them back on track can be difficult. Eventually, most will make the effort and become successful again," Christine adds, "The most challenging part of caring for an individual is the motivation needed for each one to work on themselves and not to focus on what others in the house are doing."

The goal of the Community Residence program, which is licensed by the Office of Mental Health, is to help people develop the skills necessary to live in the community more independently within two years. "The most rewarding part of my job as Supervisor," says Amanda, "is working with staff to help each individual resident overcome various challenges they may face while living within the community residence." Eve states, "Watching them become more proactive in various areas of their lives is rewarding. Many residents regain an interest in returning to school. Some regain driving privileges, and some just begin to engage in healthier activities. It is nice to see those positive changes."



Christine, Supervisor
CR West Babylon

The impact Amanda, Christine, Eve and their staff have on each resident is evident when progress is made and independence achieved, both within and outside of the community residence. **Thank you for your unwavering dedication, enthusiasm, and the positive energy you bring to our team.**



Christine, sitting on the steps
with residents.



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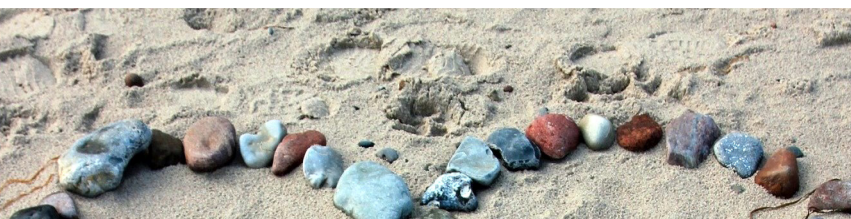
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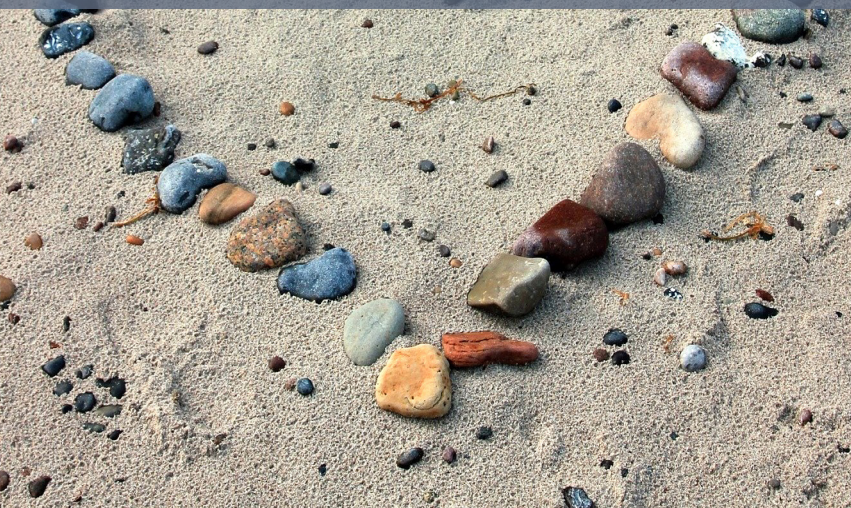
AUGUST 30TH

10 AM - 2 PM



*"Volunteers do not necessarily have
the time, they just have the heart."*

- Elizabeth Andrew



*Have Fun -
Make a Difference!*

TO VOLUNTEER

Contact Heidi Haller at 631-277-8300
or hhaller@mercyhaven.com

Our Volunteer Program is growing!
We are seeking both individuals and groups
interested in helping.

AREAS OF INTEREST INCLUDE:

Gardening/Beautification - Many Locations

Clerical Assistance - Many Locations

Enrichment Classes - Share Your Hobbies or Talents!

Special Events Committees -

Call now to Join our Cocktail Party Planning Committee!

+ So Much More!

We would love to hear from you - Call Today!

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www.mercyhaven.org



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Our Cocktail Party Event Committee is now in Formation!
CALL HEIDI TO JOIN! 631-277-8300

Save THE Date

MERCY HAVEN'S FALL COCKTAIL PARTY

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 5TH 2023

CAPTAIN BILL'S • BAY SHORE, NY

