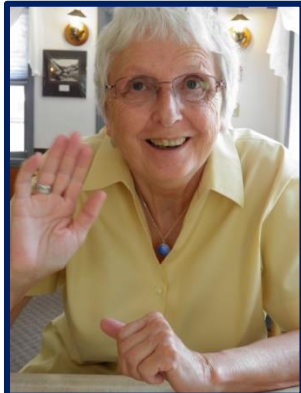


***Profile in Mercy: Ellen Vopicka***



Ellen was initially introduced to the work of Sisters of Mercy while teaching biology at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, NY over 30 year ago. She was immediately hooked by the Catherine McAuley story and the Mercy mission. She became an Associate for the order, and tries to support the mission of Mercy in any way she can.

One day while delivering can goods to a Yonkers food pantry, she found herself “enraged” with the number of hungry people in the community, particularly because of its close proximity to the affluent Westchester, NY area. Mercy College granted her a sabbatical leave to research opening a food bank in Westchester County to supply the soup kitchens and food pantries. The Food Bank was up and running within a year, but it had been naïve to believe that it would cure hunger in the county.

This knowledge was valuable to her as a Board Trustee for Mercy Center from 2002 to 2012. She also played an integral role in the capital campaign for the expansion of Sisters Academy, completed in 2010. Her “settle in and do it” mentality resulted in significant, positive changes to the Academy. She understands that education is the key to lasting, sustainable change in people’s lives. Therefore, we must, “walk with one person at a time encouraging each to see and own their brighter future as opposed to being trapped in the welfare cycle.”

For many years, Ellen also ran her family’s private foundation. The foundation was instrumental in providing funding for Mercy Center. It also assisted several other Sisters of Mercy ministries such as daycare, elder care and dental services throughout New Jersey and New York.

Ellen continues to support the Mercy Center as a weekly volunteer in the food pantry, getting back to her roots of running a successful food bank.

While she is deeply moved by all the individuals and businesses who donate food to us, we are deeply grateful for Ellen’s commitment to the mission of the Sisters of Mercy and her willingness to “live with less so that others can have more.” Thank you Ellen.

To learn about our volunteer opportunities at Mercy Center, please call (732) 774-9397 ext. 121.