



For Immediate Release

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Mercy Retirement and Care Center Launches ‘Moving Mercy Forward’ Capital Campaign to Raise \$5 Million for Mercy Campus Revitalization

High-level Donors Include: CommonSpirit Health, The Carl Gellert & Celia Berta Gellert Foundation, George P. Sabatte, John B. Sabatte, Robert Grassilli, Denise K. Allen and Mark Hayes, The Edward and Elizabeth Kozel Foundation, The Lawrence and Emily Mannion Trust, Christine Whelan, and Sisters of Mercy West Mid-West Community.

June 1, 2021, Oakland, CA – Mercy Retirement and Care Center has publicly announced a capital campaign that will provide \$5 million in funds to enhance its Oakland campus and elevate the holistic wellness of those who call Mercy home, and those who care for them. Revitalization efforts include (but are not limited to): an enlarged chapel increasing residents’ accessibility to worship; renovated assisted living bathrooms to enhance residents’ privacy and dignity; and new community spaces such as a library, art center, theater, wellness center, and bistro where residents can safely gather and do the things they love.

As of **June 1**, *Mercy Moving Forward* campaign (www.mercyretirementcenter.org/project) has received more than \$4 million via 99 gifts and pledges from individuals, families, foundations, and religious orders. The first capital campaign in more than 30 years, Mercy has already achieved 80% of the \$5 million goal. Additionally, a generous foundation has pledged a “capstone” \$500K grant when the campaign reaches \$4.5 million. The committee Co-Chair is **Christine Whelan**, Mercy Board Chair and Trustee of both the University of San Francisco and the Carl Gellert & Celia Berta Gellert Foundation, and **James Wood**, Principal at Law Offices of James Wood. **Bishop Emeritus John S. Cummins** is the Honorary Campaign Chair. The Campaign Executive Committee is comprised of Oakland-area leaders **Steven Powers Burke**, Attorney at Law; **Michael Ney**, Ney Mediations; **Edward Watson**, Watson & Machado LLP; and **Sister Phyllis Hughes**, RSM, DrPH. The committee anticipates raising the remaining campaign funds by the end of 2021.

“I’ve been a volunteer at Mercy for 17 years and am incredibly proud of the physical changes we’re making to increase residents’ enjoyment of their Mercy home,” said Christine Whelan, Mercy Board Chair and Campaign Co-Chair. *“The new Library, Art Studio, Wellness Center and Outdoor Patio - just a few of the remarkable new and timely amenities - are terrific resources to help residents safely gather and do the things they love. My family and I are committed to Mercy’s success and I am so impressed and proud to have been part of this historic renovation project on behalf of residents.”*

To date, **CommonSpirit Health** is the campaign’s lead donor, very generously pledging \$1,000,000 to the campaign. The **Carl Gellert & Celia Berta Gellert Foundation** generously pledged \$500,000 very early in the campaign.

Similarly, other top donors committing generous six figure gifts for the project are: George P. Sabatte, John B. Sabatte, Robert Grassilli, Denise K. Allen and Mark Hayes, the Edward and Elizabeth Kozel Foundation, the Lawrence and Emily Mannion Trust, Christine Whelan, and other anonymous

Campaign Pledges:	
○	\$1,000,000 (1)
○	\$250k+ (4)
○	\$100k-\$249k (6)
○	\$50k-\$99k (11)
○	\$10k-\$49k (23)
○	\$1k-\$9k (30)

donors.

“As a Catholic Oakland native, the residents and dedicated Mercy staff have had a great impact on my life,” said James Wood, Campaign Co-Chair. *“I remember as a child visiting retired religious and being impressed with the embrace of the Mercy Community. Decades later, I’ve been privileged to work on the Mercy Revitalization Project which I know will continue to provide the highest level of care for the people of Mercy for many years to come.”*

“At the heart of Mercy is our 160 residents and 170 team members. The pandemic hit about a year into construction of Mercy’s Repositioning Project, and it has been a blessing to see that the Project includes key elements needed for senior living in a post-COVID era,” said Adriene Iverson, President & CEO of Elder Care Alliance and Mercy Retirement and Care Center. *“The Project has always been about accessibility, sustainability and quality of life, and the new gathering and outdoor spaces support environmental wellness, connection and community. Now more than ever we see the importance of aging in place that fosters purpose and social connectedness. I am so grateful for everyone who has stepped up to support our residents through the Moving Mercy Forward campaign. We have accomplished so much together and look forward to the continuation of Mercy’s legacy for decades to come.”*

The field of elder care is at a critical juncture serving the Silent Generation while preparing for the Baby Boomers who will push the need for senior living to unprecedented levels. Further, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable elders has highlighted the importance of holistic care. Approaching Mercy’s 150th anniversary in 2022, the *Moving Mercy Forward* campaign will optimize Mercy’s 114-year-old, five-acre Oakland campus for the enjoyment of residents, families, and care team members for decades to come.

“As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Mercy Revitalization Project will allow us to focus on the holistic wellness of Mercy residents – physical protection, social connection, and activities that promote intellectual, spiritual, and vocational engagement,” said Tamra Marie Tsanos, Mercy’s Executive Director. *“What I like most about the campus-wide revitalization is that each piece reinforces our vision to facilitate real, human connections that dispel feelings of isolation. Through genuine connection, Mercy becomes a true home for our residents, and their final years are filled with joy, dignity, and friendship.”*

Campus revitalizations will not only support residents social, emotional, and spiritual needs, but will also expand Mercy’s ability to serve as an anchor institution in Oakland’s Fruitvale neighborhood. Mercy’s community involvement and care for seniors and vulnerable populations extends well beyond campus borders through programs such as Mercy Brown Bag Program. Notably, Mercy Brown Bag Program provides nutritious food and social connection to more than 8,000 Alameda County low-income, food insecure seniors. In 2020 Mercy Brown Bag Program was in high demand due to COVID-19 impacts on seniors and made 117,000 home deliveries of grocery bags stuffed with more than 2.3 million pounds of food.

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ABOUT MERCY RETIREMENT & CARE CENTER

Established in 1872 by the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Retirement and Care Center was founded on a deep sense of faith, dignity, and compassion. In 1907 senior care services relocated from San Francisco to the present five-acre Oakland campus. Since then, more than 10,000 residents have passed through Mercy’s doors. Via a scholarship type program, Mercy provides care for residents who have outlived their resources. Mercy is the sole Catholic retirement home in the Oakland diocese. Beautifully renovated apartments are now open in Mercy’s Assisted Living Tower.