



**Sisters of Mercy of the Americas  
Mercy Archives  
720 Heritage Center Place  
Belmont, North Carolina 28012**

## **VOLUNTEERING WITH MERCY ARCHIVES**

Mercy Heritage Center (MHC), completed in January 2011, serves as the central repository for the archival records and material cultural items of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. As a research and educational resource for the general public, its records illustrate the vibrant and relevant impact of the Sisters of Mercy on the changing needs of our times, and inspire visitors to make personal commitments to similar values.

Volunteers are invaluable to Mercy Archives as they enable us to do work that would not otherwise be possible, and often contribute specialist skills and knowledge. Working with volunteers provides an opportunity for Mercy Archives to engage on a deeper level with those whose lives have been in some way touched by Mercy, or who are interested in supporting the ongoing legacy of the Sisters of Mercy.

Mercy Archives seeks creative and dynamic individuals to become part of its volunteer team. Volunteers work directly with staff in organizing, inventorying, cataloging archival records and artifacts of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, as well as other related projects.

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MERCY ARCHIVES AND OUR VOLUNTEERS:** The relationship of a volunteer to Mercy Archives is one bound by trust, mutual understanding, and benefit; it is a 'gift' relationship, with time given freely and willingly, without expectation of financial reward by the volunteer. Neither we nor the volunteer regard the relationship as a contract of employment.

No enforceable obligation, contractual or otherwise, can be imposed on the volunteer to attend, give or be set a minimum amount of time or carry out the tasks provided. Likewise we cannot be compelled to provide regular work or benefit for any activity undertaken.

The relationship is based on the principle that volunteers add value to our work by performing a wide range of roles, and by contributing specialist skills and a flexible approach.

Although volunteers offer time freely and willing and without binding obligation, there is a presumption of mutual support and reliability.



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### **VOLUNTEER DUTIES MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:**

- Follows established archival practices to ensure appropriate acquisition, arrangement, description, preservation, and use of materials in the Mercy Heritage Center.
- Communicate regularly with assigned staff member as to concerns, issues, or ideas arising from the current project.
- Attend orientation sessions as needed and complete training readings.
- Maintain proper care and maintenance of all materials and objects handled. Assist in the creation of finding aids (indexes, catalogs, etc.).
- Re-housing, labeling, alphabetizing, and re-sleeving of documents and/or photographs.
- Prepare materials for preservation work.
- Scanning documents and/or photographs.
- Cleaning and re-housing film and other audio visual materials.
- Photocopying and filing.
- Data entry.

### **SUGGESTED QUALIFICATIONS**

#### **Competencies and Experience**

- Ability to maintain professional confidentiality when working with sensitive non-public documents.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with staff, interns and other volunteers, and to work closely with staff members.
- Interest in and ability to review and understand historical records.
- Ability to work neatly and accurately with hands (good hand-eye coordination ability).
- Ability to work collaboratively, proactively and constructively.
- Ability to think logically and methodically.
- Excellent oral and interpersonal communication skills.
- Knowledge of computer operations helpful.

#### **Preferred**

- Understanding and appreciation of the traditions and culture associated with the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas and religious life.
- Enthusiasm for history and the history of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas.
- Previous experience working in a library or archival setting.