



SISTERS OF MERCY DENISE ALLEN JUSTICE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Inspired by the life of Jesus and by our founder Catherine McAuley, the Sisters of Mercy envision a just world for people who are poor, sick and uneducated. The Sisters of Mercy are women of faith who commit our lives to God and our resources to serve, advocate and pray for those in need around the world.

Denise Allen was a Mercy Associate from California with a connection to Mercy for over 30 years and a passion for social justice. After becoming acquainted with Sisters of Mercy through her work in the healthcare system, Denise was called to become a Mercy Associate. In addition to her career in finance, she served on the boards of many non-profit organizations.

Some of Denise's main concerns included the environment, care of the elderly, non-violence and support of women. Denise passed away in July 2020. Her legacy of promoting justice in our world will carry on with the Sisters of Mercy Denise Allen Justice Internship Program created in her honor.

Background

At the 2017 Chapter, Sisters of Mercy, made a recommitment stating, "the God of Mercy, Wisdom and Mystery is calling us, as Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, an international and intercultural community, to deepen our relationship with God and one another, and to **intensify our work in communion with others who seek a more just and inclusive world. We recognize a yearning for oneness** in all of creation, in all peoples and within our Institute. Our suffering world calls us to **speak and act with integrity and clear intention.**"

We believe the launching of an internship named in honor of valued Mercy Associate Denise Allen and focused on the work of our Justice Team provides a new opportunity in this call to new consciousness. Engaging the skills and talents of young people who themselves are seeking a more just and inclusive world, will expand the capacity of Mercy's Justice team to educate, transform and advocate on the personal, communal and societal level.

All of the Sisters of Mercy and Associates are called to embrace our Critical Concerns through a lens of nonviolence, and the Justice Team holds a specific responsibility for providing resources, advocating for systemic change and directly engaging with those who are most impacted by injustices.



Denise began her career in 1979 with Arthur Anderson & Co. and became a CPA. In 1989 she was hired by Catholic Healthcare West (CHW) to serve as their VP of Finance in the Sacramento region. She was later promoted to VP of Care Management and Integration for their regional five-hospital system.

While in the executive role, she established the first clinical service lines and led a major restructuring of operations that resulted in operational standardization and significant cost savings. It was in Sacramento that she met Sister Sheila Devereux, RSM who became her mentor and friend, motivating her to join the Sisters of Mercy Associates.

She was ultimately promoted to join the CHW San Francisco corporate office team to establish a management department leading the 41 hospital system's establishment of common clinical quality and patient experience improvement efforts.

In 1998, she left CHW to become a partner in the Triage Consulting Group, a firm of over 300 consultants who identified and collected over of 1 billion dollars in hospital underpayments by health insurance companies.

After retiring in 2009, she served pro bono on a multitude of non-profit boards and other philanthropic entities.

The ***Sisters of Mercy Denise Allen Justice Internship Program*** will identify the intersection of individual skills and interests of the young people serving as interns and the needs of the Justice Team to provide concrete professional experience and further address the critical concerns as identified in the 2017 Chapter Recommitment statement:

- to grow in our personal practice of nonviolence and peacemaking, actively collaborate with communities and organizations that foster peace and nonviolence and work to change violent systems and structures
- to work zealously toward the sustainability of all life by caring for Earth's ecosystems, addressing global climate change, advocating for the fundamental right to clean water and committing ourselves to an integral "ecological conversion"
- to continue our commitment to eliminate personal, communal and institutional racism while working to dismantle structures, policies and processes that oppress
- to advocate for the intrinsic value of women's lives and to promote equality of women in Church and society
- to act in solidarity with migrants, immigrants, refugees and victims of human trafficking, seeking with them a more just and inclusive world



She was also deeply concerned with protecting women and children from domestic and sexual violence, serving as an advisory member of Future Without Violence where she sponsored a fellowship to help create public policy in this area. Denise worked to create more compassionate care for the elderly as a board member of Eldercare Alliance. To give disadvantaged girls better opportunities she served as a board member of Mercy High School and personally sponsored 6 young girls through Children's International in India.

Additionally, she helped the Sisters of Mercy in Omaha by serving as a board member, using her business acumen and vision to better outcomes.

Denise had a zest for travel and visited more than 30 countries on 5 continents. Through her travels she felt compelled to help others in need.

Currently, projects are being developed through her estate in her honor in LEWA, a Kenya conservancy, to educate young women and help them develop careers in conservation management. Her estate is also funding a digital literacy program for a group of girls in Kenya who are at high risk of dropping out of school.

In India, with the help of Children's International, the estate is funding a youth resource center to help underprivileged youths learn job and trade skills to help support and improve their lives.

Denise supported Sisters of Mercy affiliates through participation in board roles and financial contributions:

- Board member of Mercy Volunteer Corps and donor (Omaha, NE)
- Board member of Mercy High School and donor (San Francisco, CA)
- Board member of Eldercare Alliance and donor (Alameda, CA)
- Mercy Associate
- Mercy Volunteer Corp donor

Program Description

The ***Sisters of Mercy Denise Allen Justice Internship***, offers the opportunity for undergraduate or graduate students to serve in paid positions with the Washington, D.C. area based Justice Team for year-long, semester or summer intervals. This internship is intended to increase the capacity of the Mercy Justice Team while expanding the number of young people able to have a formative and professional experience working for justice.

Specifically, the ***Sisters of Mercy Denise Allen Justice Internship Program*** will:

- Develop advocacy skills in young adults
- Provide mentoring for faith-based, non-profit career guidance in the Mercy tradition
- Engage an education structure to deepen understanding of the Mercy charism and faith in action
- Increased capacity for the team to accomplish Chapter priorities, local priorities and the Institute level strategy of the Mercy Justice Team

The internship will provide a small income in order to ensure accessibility to students from a variety of economic backgrounds. Interns are responsible for their own housing. The internship will be part-time during the academic year and full-time during the summer paid on an hourly basis.

Individually, each intern will:

- Build professional experience in advocacy, research, communication and education
- Deepen a personal understanding and other commitment to the critical concerns of the Sisters of Mercy
- Make connections with other faith based organizations and work closely with members of the Sisters of Mercy Justice team
- Focus on determined priority policy issues and their root causes— providing an opportunity to explore research, communication and education projects that engage members of the Mercy family in action

Effective supervision and mentorship are critical to the effectiveness of the program and would be handled by the Justice Team Director or other designated team members. Each intern will receive individualized mentorship and training and offer significant individual input for projects that serve to advance the mission of the Sisters of Mercy.



Evaluation

In collaboration with staff, **Denise Allen Justice Interns** will help shape their own learning plan and establish personal and professional development goals. The achievement of these goals will be evaluated through individual intern evaluations with the Justice Director. Additionally, the interns and the Justice Team members will provide a video evaluation of their experience of the program including recommendations for program improvement. This annual program evaluation would be jointly conducted by the Justice and Advancement Teams and shared with the donor.

Application Process

Location: Sisters of Mercy Silver Spring, Maryland
Duties of a *Sisters of Mercy Denise Allen Justice Intern* will include:

- Monitor and track legislative activity relevant to the Critical Concerns
- Represent Mercy as appropriate in partnerships with other organizations
- Research additional potential partnerships that would maximize efforts in spreading the messages of Mercy and building additional capacity for the future
- Attend presentations, workshops, and reflection opportunities as assigned focused on deepening an understanding of the individual Critical Concerns, including their intersection and their root causes
- Conduct analysis that integrates experience of impacted communities and systemic issues and offers opportunities for action
- Develop skills to integrate interculturality, anti-racism and lens of nonviolence priorities of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas into justice work
- Explore opportunities to deepen individual development of social analysis, theological reflection and Mercy's Critical Concerns
- Assist with communication tasks including social media, research and writing
- Accomplish other duties and activities as assigned or requested by supervisor

Qualifications

Sisters of Mercy Denise Allen Justice Internships are ideal for passionate undergraduate or graduate students seeking to develop skills in faith-based advocacy and non-profit communication and bring the Mercy message of justice, equality and compassion to the world.

Applicants are expected to come with a foundational knowledge and previous engagement in activities connected to the Critical Concerns.

Additional Information

To learn more about the **Sisters of Mercy Denise Allen Justice Internship**, please contact the Human Resources Department at hr@sistersofmercy.org.

