



'Doorway to Future' Dinner Set To Honor Goss, Chappell

The Mercy Education Project's fifth annual "Doorway to the Future" dinner will be held Thursday, May 5, at Compuware World Headquarters in Downtown Detroit. The dinner, auction and donor event will feature two of the area's most influential women—Carol Goss, president and CEO of The Skillman Foundation; and Beth Chappell, president and CEO of the Detroit Economic Club.

Both women will speak offering insight and inspiration and will receive Mercy Education Project's "PHD" award for **Positive attitude, Hard work and Dedication.**

"We selected this year's honorees based on their own history of achievement and their commitment to giving back to the community," said Amy Amador, executive director. "We share many of the same concerns and commitment to effecting change."

Goss heads the \$600-million Skillman Foundation—a private, grant-making foundation focused on fostering good schools and good neighborhoods for the children of Detroit. An advocate for at-risk children for decades, she has fashioned a professional career that includes experience in child welfare, family services and youth development in Detroit and Oakland, Calif. A native Detroiter, Goss has a BA in sociology and an MSW



Carol Goss



Beth Chappell

from the University of Michigan. Among her many honors, she was cited by Crain's *Detroit Business* as one of Southeast Michigan's "Most Influential Women."

Chappell presides over the Detroit Economic Club, one of the nation's premier speaking venues for CEOs and government officials. The non-partisan, non-profit membership organization is a platform for the debate and discussion of today's business, government and social issues. With a stellar career that includes posts at the highest levels of several major corporations, Chappell is a strong proponent of bringing all sides of the debate together to encourage a conversation that can move the city, the state and the country forward. She serves on a number of boards including the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan State University (Broad Business School), St. Joseph Mercy Foundation and United Way.

Mercy Education Project provides academic and life skills

services to at-risk girls and women in southwest Detroit to help them achieve self-sufficiency and self-esteem. "This year's honorees are fitting role models for MEP's clients and demonstrate what women can accomplish and how they can make a difference in the world," said Amador.

Tickets Are Available

There is still time to purchase tickets for the "Doorway to the Future" dinner. Tickets are:

\$100: Dinner, auction and program

\$125: Balcony reception on the 15th floor overlooking downtown Detroit and riverfront, dinner, auction and program

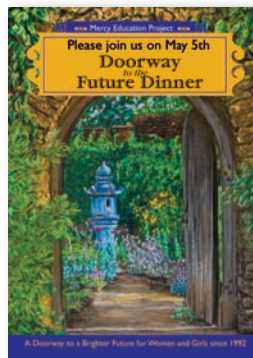
Tickets can be purchased by returning the registration card in the invitations that were mailed out earlier this month or by going online to www.mercyed.net.

Reserve a Place!

Mercy Education Project's
5th Annual
"Doorway to the Future" Dinner

Compuware World Headquarters
Thursday, May 5, 2011

For Reservations:
www.mercyed.org



Mercy Education Project's 5th annual "Doorway to the Future" dinner will be held Thursday, May 5, 2011 at Compuware World Headquarters in downtown Detroit. Don't miss a night of delicious food, amazing auction items and inspiring guest speakers! Carol Goss, President and CEO of The Skillman Foundation, and Beth Chappell, President and CEO of The Detroit Economic Club, will be honored with our PHD award for their **Positive attitude, Hard work, and Dedication.**

Girls' After-School Tutoring Carries on Academic Tradition

The Girls' Tutoring Program provides after-school, one-to-one remedial tutoring in reading and math for up to 90 at-risk girls in grades 1 through 8.

"Our tutors include working professionals, college students and certified and retired teachers," said Melanie Ward, tutorial program coordinator. Girls receive assistance with reading and math skills, homework, computer literacy, creative expression and appropriate social interaction.

"Those who join our tutoring sessions are often two or more years behind grade level in reading and/or math, live in single parent families and have many household responsibilities," said Ward.



After-school program has time for fun, too.

"The girls who come to MEP for weekly curriculum-based tutoring in reading and math, improve on average by one grade level or more over two semesters, and 100 percent of our 8th graders advance to high school."

The program is unique to Southwest Detroit and is the only initiative providing one-to-one remedial tutoring for girls in grades 1 to 8. "We draw from a racially and ethnically diverse population. Many of our girls are from families with a multi-generational history of not succeeding in education or employment," said Ward.

For more information, contact Melanie Ward, 313-963-5881 or mward@mercyed.net

Women's Program Growing, Meeting Increased Demand

When Winn Crackel came to the Mercy Education Project in 2000 as Women's Program Coordinator, it had seven students. After one year, it had 25-30 women, one GED instructor and four tutors working in the program.

"Now, ten years later, we serve 100-160 students annually and have more than 20 tutors volunteering regularly," said Crackel. "The information is out there, our reputation is established, and now referrals from former students, the court system and other agencies keep our waiting list long."

More than 90 percent of the women who complete the GED program pass the GED exam—though many have failed in other programs, and 100 percent of recent GED grads have gone on to college, employment or job training.

GED Preparation, Adult Basic Education and Adult Literacy are the core services provided in the Women's Program. Training opportunities also are offered in computer literacy, money management, self-development and specialized job skills with presentations on various topics throughout the year. Transportation and child-care are provided.

Crackel attributed the program's success to many things. "We cultivate a safe, warm, respectful atmosphere. We're not set up as a traditional classroom with individual desks, so even just in the seating arrangement people are not repeating the negative experience they may have had in traditional school."

Participants say that an all-women program makes a difference in their ability to focus on their learning. With one-on-one tutoring, individual work with the



Winn Crackel

PACE program and classrooms at different levels, MEP supports students where they're at. Students are placed in classes according to their Test of Adult Basic Education scores.

"We encourage them to work through material as quickly as they can but as slowly as they need to; the goal is to get the information in their heads," said Crackel. "It's important to stick with it and engage students until we find out what works. We present the material in different ways until it clicks."

A growing number of MEP alumnae now are attending institutions of higher learning such as Wayne State University, Marygrove College, Wayne County Community College, Henry Ford Community College, Schoolcraft College, Macomb Community College and Oakland Community College.

But further schooling isn't always the goal of MEP students. "Not all of our graduates enter higher education," Crackel said. "However, their education here has a large impact on their families even if it can't be measured by a college degree or higher employment. Now their children can be successful in school because their mothers can help them. A lot of women come to the program because one of their family members has been successful here. It's a ripple effect," said Crackel. "It's dropping that pebble into a pond; the ripples just keep on going."

For more information, contact Winn Crackel, 313-963-5881 or wcrackel@mercyed.net



Proud 2010 graduate Connie

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Dear Friends of Mercy Education Project,

We are pleased to report that 2009-2010 was a year of quality work, positive outcomes and transformed lives. We are proud of what we've been able to accomplish. It was an exciting year that saw enhancements and expansion in both our girls' and women's programs.

In 2009, we launched our new "Emerging Leaders" program for middle-school girls. (See story, page 11.) This four-week summer course is jam packed with educational and career activities aimed at helping 30 middle school girls jumpstart their focus on college. Held at the University of Detroit Mercy, it includes a variety of field trips to other colleges and women-owned businesses, allows girls to explore "green" jobs and other career opportunities, and lets them participate in service projects. The four-day-a-week program provides the girls with all meals, transportation, programming and supplies; and it is provided free of charge. "Emerging Leaders" is a tremendous addition to our portfolio of offerings.

In our after-school tutoring program, we continue to demonstrate success as well. Nearly all of the 85 girls in grades 1 – 8, who came to MEP for weekly curriculum-based tutoring in reading and math, improved one grade level or more over two semesters. One hundred percent of our 8th graders advanced to high school

At the same time, participation in our women's program spiked a startling 44 percent! We think the strong upsurge is the result of several factors—a difficult economy, a growing realization in the population that we serve that women can have—and deserve to have—a better life, and MEP's solid reputation as an organization that delivers on its promises. When women see their friends and family members making life-changing moves, it encourages them to do the same.

Our success rates are impressive. More than 90 percent of the women who complete our GED program pass the GED exam—though many have failed in other programs. One hundred percent of our recent GED graduates went on to college, employment or job training.

But our mission is far from over. High school graduation rates remain below 50 percent in Detroit. In southwest Detroit, more than 50 percent of adults 25 years of age and older do not have a high school education with 24 percent not even completing the 9th grade.

Currently, the Board of Directors is engaged in a strategic planning process for the organization. The strategic planning process is focused on positioning Mercy Education Project for a strong, secure, sustainable future. We've already completed an environmental survey, and we are continuing to gather data, conducting focus groups and distributing online surveys to our various constituencies.


But we do not need a crystal ball to see that the need for our services is great and it will only increase in the years ahead.

That is why we are so grateful to our many generous donors whose support—both financially and in a volunteer capacity—is the lifeblood of our organization. We appreciate your ongoing loyalty to our cause. In these tough economic times, your commitment to stay with us and help foster our mission is a blessing of immense proportions, and we cannot say thank you enough.

Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, devoted her life to educating women and children in the most impoverished and marginalized segments of the population without regard to their religious affiliation or life situation. When the Sisters of Mercy established MEP in 1992, it was with her legacy in mind. Today, we continue this important work and with your help we will continue to do so.

Thank you, and God bless each and every one of you.


Theresa Blaquiere, RSM
Chair, Board of Directors


Amy Amador, MSW
Executive Director

Program Achievements 2009 – 2010

WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Total participants in Women's Educational Services:	157
Total participants in Early Childhood Development Classes:	34
Total participants in GED Preparation, Adult Basic Education and/or Adult Literacy:	109
Total number of hours of educational services provided:	14,998

Outcomes

Earned GED:	9
78 percent of FY 2010 graduates entered college, job training and/or became employed.	
100 percent of students enrolled in educational services for at least 30 days improved in reading, math and/or writing skills.	

Participant Demographics

Women ranged in age from 17 to 77; 83 percent of participants are between 18 and 44.

GIRLS' PROGRAMS

Total participants in Girls' Programs:	108
Total participants in after-school tutoring:	99
Total participants in Emerging Leaders summer program:	25
Total number of hours of tutoring and program services provided:	8,110

Outcomes

100 percent of 8th graders entered high school.
Average improvement of 1.0 grade level for girls in reading and math.

Participant Demographics

Age Range	Percent
5 – 10	43
11 – 14	55
15 – 18	2

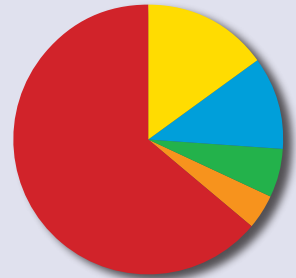
VOLUNTEERS (ALL PROGRAMS)

Number	Hours Contributed	Estimated Value
107	7,956	\$109,444

Participation Profile

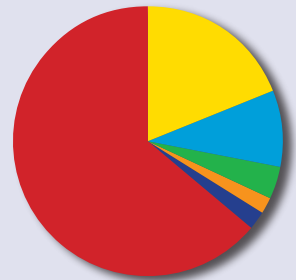
Income Levels

Below \$11,000	64%
\$11,000 – \$19,000	15%
\$20,000 – \$29,000	11%
Over \$30,000	6%
Unknown	4%



Ethnicity

Black	64%
Hispanic	19%
White	9%
Multi	4%
Native American	2%
Other	2%



Reading Ability of Incoming Adult Students

1st – 3rd grade	6%
4th – 6th grade	37%
7th – 9th grade	29%
10th grade	13%
11th grade	4%
12th grade	10%



A Day at Mercy Education Project

- 9 a.m.** Women arrive for classroom instruction, individual work and tutoring.
- 11:15 – 11:45 a.m.** Women are served lunch.
- 1 p.m.** Women leave.
- 3:30 p.m.** School bus arrives. Girls are served a meal and have activity time.
- 4:30 p.m.** School bus arrives with second set of girls.
- 4:30 – 5:35 p.m.** First tutoring session.
- 5:45 p.m.** First session girls are taken home.
- 5:45 – 6:50 p.m.** Second tutoring session
- 7 p.m.** Second session girls are taken home.

Naming MEP in a Charitable Bequest Helps Ensure Long-term Viability

Specifying Mercy Education Project as a beneficiary of a charitable bequest is a wonderful way to help the organization be available to future generations.

“As we approach our 20th anniversary, we want our friends and donors to know that MEP has only just begun. We have plans to continue helping people far into the future. We hope when people are writing their wills or making trust or other estate plans that they will consider including Mercy Education Project, so we can continue our mission,” said Maureen Mulcrone, R.S.M., director, Development and Marketing.

“Donors may wish to leave a specific amount of money, a percentage of their estate or personal property such as stocks, bonds or real estate in their will,” said Sister Maureen. “This type of planned giving is a real boost to our financial longevity and helps us with long-term, strategic planning, too.”

In addition, by notifying the Mercy Education Project of a bequest intent, donors can help ensure that their legacy will be fulfilled in the manner in which they would prefer. A generic bequest may be made to the Mercy Education Project for the general purposes of the organization at the discretion of the Board of Directors or donors can specify a certain use or focus for their contribution.

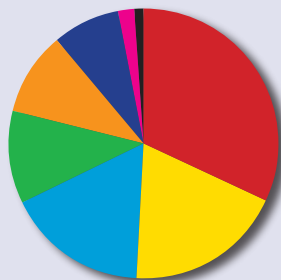
“Making a bequest to MEP can be as easy as including a sentence in your will saying, ‘I give \$15,000 to Mercy Education Project,’” added Sister Maureen. “Its impact will be felt for decades.”

Interested donors should talk with their attorney or estate planner.

For more information on how to establish a bequest or similar charitable instrument, contact Maureen Mulcrone, R.S.M., director, Development and Marketing; at 313-963-5881 or smmulcrone@mercyed.net.

Revenues

- Foundations 32%
- Sisters of Mercy. 19%
- Individuals 17%
- Events 11%
- Government 10%
- Corporations. 8%
- Churches 2%
- Other 1%



What Your Dollars Can Do!

\$5,000

Educates a woman for one year.

\$3,500

Educates a girl for one year in both the after-school tutoring program and summer “Emerging Leaders” programs.



\$2,500

Provides after-school tutoring for a girl for a year.

—or—
Provides safe bus transportation for all MEP students for one month.



\$1,000

Sends a girl to the “Emerging Leaders” pre-college summer program for middle-schoolers.

\$750

Underwrites technology and life-skills training for a woman in our program.



\$500

Supplies GED books, calculators and supplies for an entire women’s math class.

—or—
Covers the cost of field trips and an overnight experience for one girl in the “Emerging Leaders” summer program.



\$250

Affords GED testing for one woman.

—or—
Fills the gas tank of our school bus for two weeks.

\$100

Furnishes one week of meals for the Women’s Program.

—or—
Buys an emergency food/clothing gift card for an MEP family.



\$35

Pays for one day of meals for girls in the after-school tutoring program.

Volunteers Make a Difference

Faith Sharing Group Brings Friends Together at MEP

Sue Flanagan, a stay-at-home mom with two college-age daughters, was a member of a faith sharing group at her parish—St. James in Novi—when one of the other participants shared her experiences as a volunteer at Mercy Education Project.

“Gene Swedish (See story, page 10) talked so positively about MEP and her involvement there, that she convinced me to sign up,” said Flanagan. A self-described “suburban girl,” Flanagan didn’t spend much time in the City. But her work with MEP has changed all that.

Now, a regular at MEP, Flanagan works with a fourth grader and a second grader and she said the program is set up to “allow you to be successful. They give you everything you need to help the girls—monitoring, testing, materials.” She emphasized the fact that people do not have to be teachers or have a background in education to participate.

She feels the staff and volunteers are good role models for the students and offer hope to the girls for a bright future.



Sue Flanagan with one of her after-school charges.

Retired Teacher Calls MEP ‘Best Organization of Its Kind’

When Janet Calcaterra retired from the Troy Public Schools, she wasn’t quite ready to hang up her teaching togs. She took a position as a resource person at the Henry Ford Academy in Greenfield Village. When she left that school, she retired for a second time; but still needed an outlet for her lifelong passion of teaching.

“I’d heard about Mercy Education Project from a neighbor of mine, an accountant who works with non-profits, and she couldn’t say enough positive things about MEP,” said Calcaterra, “So, I decided to check it out—and she was right.”

Now in her second year of tutoring in the women’s program, Calcaterra teaches the Math Foundations class and works one-on-one with women who are preparing for their GED.

“I’ve taught,



Jan Calcaterra makes a point for her Math Foundations class.

I’ve tutored and I’ve volunteered at a variety of organizations over the years,” she said. “And without a doubt, MEP is the most organized, best run, most successful initiative of its kind I’ve ever seen. Not only that, the surroundings are conducive to learning—everything is updated, quiet and orderly. The program leaders are proactive, always seeking better ways for adults to learn and then implementing these tactics.”

One of MEP’s biggest fans, Calcaterra thinks the small successes the women achieve in learning fractions or their multiplication facts are a basis for greater successes in their lives.

“We show them that they can reach their goals,” she said. “The work may be hard and challenging, but if they stick with it there is a great payoff.”

The mother of two grown daughters, Calcaterra said, “When I see how my students try so hard to succeed despite the challenges in their lives, I’m certain I’m far more inspired by them than they are by me.”

Mother-Daughter Team Volunteers

Darise Spight has raised and educated three girls, so she knows the joy that comes of watching children make their way in the world. At Mercy Education Project, she gets to experience that feeling all over again—and share it with one of her own daughters.

“My daughter, Chai, started volunteering at MEP in 2007,” said Spight, who is retired from AT&T. “She works at MGM Casino in Human Resources and thought this was a good way to give



Darise Spight works with a student.

something back to the community. We’re both really enjoying it.”

For Spight, part of the value of a program like MEP is exposing the girls to different lifestyles and expectations. Her own daughters all graduated from college—one from Saint Louis University and two from Michigan State—and now work in their chosen fields. She wants to open her students’ eyes to the possibility for themselves. “Many of the girls come from non-traditional families that don’t always emphasize education,” she said. “This is a chance to mentor these children and show them that there are other options to what they may have seen. It broadens their perspective.”

She encourages others to volunteer. “The program is very well organized, the girls have been tested and the curriculum is all prepared,” she said. “The girls are very sweet—I’ve never had any disciplinary problems.”

Spight, who works with a second grader and a seventh grader, said, “I know they really enjoy coming. My one little girl told me she wished she could come every day. I think that says a lot.”

Donors Make Giving to MEP a Priority

Beson Focuses on Women, Children, Education

Beth Beson established The Conrad Charitable Foundation in 2001 to support causes that focus on women, children and education. The Mercy Education Project was a perfect fit.



Beth Beson

“Over the years, Beth has been a generous guardian angel to MEP,” said Sr. Maureen Mulcrone, development and marketing director. “She donated \$100,000 in 2009 to establish an endowment because she said she wanted to be sure we’d be around for a long time.” In addition, she has made a series of gifts for \$25,000 and has been a sponsor of the “Doorway to the Future” dinner.

Beson, who is the mother of three young adults and currently sponsors a young boy from Africa, knows the importance of a good education. “I can’t think of a cause that would be more deserving of support,” she said.

When Beson first set up the Foundation, she originally donated to organizations anonymously.

But she wanted to share her passion for the work with others, so she threw herself a party when turned 49 that she dubbed her “coming out party.” “I invited all of my girl friends and told them about what I was doing and asked them to contribute to some of the same causes.”

Now semi-retired, Beson manages the Foundation, organizes fundraisers and hosts house parties to solicit other support. “I feel like I get to live a life that others dream of,” she said.

Happy “to give back,” Beson encourages others to join with their friends and neighbors to volunteer, share their blessings and spread the love.

In 2008, she received the Mercy Education Project’s PHD (Positive attitude, Hard work and Dedication) award.

Buermeyers Step up with Support for MEP

There are any number of Catholic organizations in southeastern Michigan that have felt the generosity of Cy and June Buermeyer; and when June liked what she heard about the Mercy Education Project at a Council of Catholic Women meeting, they decided to add one more.

“I listened to Sr. Maureen describe the important work this organization does, and I went home and said to Cy, this is worth our support,” said June.

Over the years, the Buermeyers have been generous with financial resources as well as gifts-in-kind of school supplies and other materials. They have made several



Cy and June Buermeyer

substantial, unrestricted gifts to MEP, at least one of which was prompted in part by a challenge grant in 2008.

“We do what we can,” said June.

The Buermeyers have a long history with the Sisters of Mercy, who staffed St. Anselm’s parish school in Dearborn, where their children attended; and later a daughter and granddaughter both went to Mercy High School in Farmington Hills. At MEP, the Mercy connection continues.

Swedish Gift Funds MEP Endowment

When Joseph Swedish, President and CEO of Trinity Health, learned of the Mercy Education Project his first thought was that his wife, Gene, would love this organization.

“She is a teacher and has taught and tutored in all the cities where we’ve lived because of her passion for educating children,” he said.

“I knew of the Sisters of Mercy because of my daily engagement with their ministries as part of my work at Trinity Health,” said Joe, who assumed his current post in 2004. Trinity Health, which was co-founded by the Sisters of Mercy,



Joseph and Gene Swedish

operates the Mercy Primary Care Center in Detroit, which serves some of the same population as MEP. “And the more we learned about MEP and its outreach to young girls and women, the more we were impressed with its ministry to provide access to education to some of the area’s most vulnerable residents.”

Gene signed up as a tutor in the after school program, and quickly understood the profound impact it has on all the lives it touches. Together the couple decided to make a financial commitment to the organization. “We’ve been very blessed, and we wanted to share our good fortune,” said Gene, who currently is tutoring two students and also is involved in Big Brothers/Big Sisters. “We initially pledged a major gift, with the idea that we would pay it out over several years. But Joe serves on a corporate board that offered to match its members’ charitable giving with 2-1/2 times the initial pledge. We decided to accelerate our gift to take advantage of the offer, which gave MEP a lump sum to fund an endowment that would help ensure the organization’s long-term viability.”

In addition, Joe has made a commitment to donate fees or honoraria he receives for various speaking engagements. “Often groups will ask if I have a favorite charity to which they could make a donation, and I always say MEP,” he said.

Parents of three adult children themselves, they appreciate the effect MEP has on young people’s lives. “I’m particularly impressed with how the staff is willing to make changes and try new things,” said Gene, citing the Emerging Leaders summer program for middle-school girls as an example.

‘Emerging Leaders’ Summer Program Helps Middle School Girls Explore College, Careers

The Emerging Leaders summer program, which was launched in 2009, offers 30 middle school girls from southwest Detroit a chance to explore college and career choices, develop leadership skills and benefit from academic enrichment.

“We felt we needed to develop a program specifically designed around these themes for at-risk girls in this age group,” said Melanie Ward, tutorial program coordinator. “We want them to know there are options that will give them a path to a great life.”

The program is held four days a week (Monday through Thursday) for four weeks at the University of Detroit Mercy. Participants visit colleges and universities, learn about careers, see local businesses, and participate in leadership development and teambuilding activities.

“We also are helping the girls learn about the college application process, the availability of financial aid and the many careers open to them,” added Ward.

The Emerging Leaders program also offers recreational outlets like swimming and art, as well as activities aimed at developing leadership and self-esteem.



“One particularly nice aspect of the program is its diversity,” said Ward. “We have white, African-American, Latina and Arabic girls in the group, all of whom are respectfully learning about each others’ cultures.”

Group leaders accompany the girls, who are picked up and dropped off at their homes and receive breakfast, lunch and snacks each day. There is no charge for the girls to attend, but the cost to provide the program is approximately \$1,000 per student.

At the conclusion of the four weeks, girls with good attendance and participation were invited on an overnight trip during which they camped at a YMCA facility near Muskegon and spent a day at Michigan’s Adventure amusement and water park.

As a follow up, the girls prepared PowerPoint presentations on what they learned and presented them to their parents in a closing assembly.

“Our hope is that while the girls are learning about two-year and four-year colleges, financial aid options and the college application process, their parents will begin to see the possibilities, too,” said Ward.

For more information on the Emerging Leaders summer program or to donate money to help offset costs, contact: Melanie Ward, 313-963-5881 or mward@mercyled.net.



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MEP Set to Celebrate 20th Anniversary in 2012

Next January, Mercy Education Project (MEP) will celebrate its 20th anniversary. The program is the result of a Sisters of Mercy initiative that sought to bring foundress Catherine McAuley’s mission to the modern day.

“In 1990 or 1991, sisters who were educators in the Detroit Regional Community—nearly 200 of us—came together to reflect on our call as educators,” remembered Canice Johnson, R.S.M., PhD “And we began a dialog on how to focus educational energy on low income residents of southwest Detroit, specifically women and children.”

She made it known that she would be interested in leading such an effort, and by early 1992, Mercy Education Project was born. Its mission: To serve girls in southwest Detroit in grades 1 through 8 with after-school tutoring and educational enrichment and their mothers with GED training. “We later

expanded the adult program to all women—not necessarily our students’ mothers, and we were off and running,” she said.

In 1998, Sister Canice was succeeded by Karen Egri, R.S.M., who left MEP in 2006, when current executive director Amy Amador assumed the lead.

In the 20 years since its inception, Mercy Education Project expanded in size, added programming, involved hundreds of tutors and other volunteers, and moved from the old St. Vincent’s School building to its current location on Howard Street.

Board of Directors member Bernice (Bernie) Lopata has been there for almost all of it. An original member of the board, she recalled, “There were just a few of us at the beginning—almost a kitchen cabinet—but it has been very satisfying to watch the organization expand, evolve and mature over the years.”



*Canice Johnson,
 R.S.M., PhD.*



*Bernice (Bernie)
 Lopata*

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 Compuware World Headquarters **Thursday, May 5, 2011** For Reservations: www.mercyed.org