



# HeretoHelp

AN ANNUAL NEWSLETTER FROM MERCER ISLAND YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

## 2010

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Clinical Supervisor

Sharon Broz

Tambi Cork

Cheryl Manriquez

Pat Brick

Betsy Zuber

Steve Pults

#### School Based Services

Harry Brown

Cathy Gentino

Laura Falsgraf

Chris Harnish

Julie Mattson

Marla Mitchell

Elsbeth Ruder

#### Mercer Island Thrift Shop

Suzanne Philen  
Thrift Shop Coordinator

Logan Ens

Don Rupp

#### MIYFS

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Mercer Island, WA

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[www.mercergov.org/yfs](http://www.mercergov.org/yfs)

## Dear Friends,



Your generosity and compassion, along with the great work of a competent and caring staff is what keeps Islanders afloat during these tough economic times. It is the outpouring of Islander generosity in the form of food drives, clothing drives, council support and monetary and in-kind donations that has allowed YFS to offer services and help to those in need.

In 2009, as well as 2010, YFS has seen an unprecedented increase in request for services. The food pantry use has doubled over the past two years, request for rental and utility assistance has increased by 100% and, for the first time in years, there is a sustained waiting list for counseling support and services as Islanders deal with the stress of the economy.

In the face of the current economic difficulties for some in our community, other Islanders are picking up a larger share of the giving tab. On a regular basis Islanders walk in to the YFS office with food donations, food cards or checks for those in need. Youth service clubs such as Girl and Boy Scouts Adventure Guides and the Lakes Neighborhood have conducted food drives that filled food pantry shelves. An Island youth, Isabel Jamerson, established a food gleaning project to bring fresh produce to the families and elderly who use the Food Pantry. Many Islanders are making regular donation trips to the Thrift Shop, and several businesses and faith communities have offered to help partner in some way.

As Island residents you have the power to keep your community afloat. Please join several thousand of your friends and neighbors in supporting the work of YOUR Youth and Family Services Department. We provide you with established avenues for giving and the expertise of a well-seasoned and professional staff. And as important as these two components are, the YFS department still needs your good will, your compassion and your giving. You are what allows us to support a high quality of life for all Island residents.

On behalf of those we serve and all of us at YFS, thank you, thank you, and thank you.

Cynthia Goodwin, Director  
City of Mercer Island  
Department of Youth and Family  
Services

### OUR MISSION:

TO PROVIDE, COORDINATE AND ADVOCATE  
FOR AFFORDABLE, HIGH QUALITY HUMAN  
SERVICES FOR THE COMMUNITY.

### Support MIYFS Today!

You can donate today at [www.miyfs.org](http://www.miyfs.org). Simply  
click on



# YFS Program & Service Highlights

ENHANCING THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF ALL ISLAND RESIDENTS

**2009** was our 37<sup>th</sup> year of service as the Department of Youth and Family Services. The Department continues hallmark programs that provide a strong safety net, as well as other services that enhance the health and well-being of residents. Reflecting on this year, here are highlights of endeavors that were implemented to meet the community's emergent needs and service requests.

## Town Hall Meeting: MOST OF US Campaign

A new kind of Town Hall Meeting took place in May at Mercer Island High School. YFS's Communities That Care Coalition hosted a forum of community leaders, parents and youth to discuss preventing underage drinking. CTC Project Coordinator, Sharon Broz, pulled together leaders from all community sectors to hear about the MOST Of Us social norms campaign. Islander Nancy Lee also shared her expertise in Social Marketing and led over 100 participants in a discussion on reducing underage drinking.

## YFS Parent Commission

Led by YFS Director Cynthia Goodwin and comprised of YFS staff, Island parents and local parenting professionals, the Parent Commission aims to offer a template for raising healthy kids on Mercer Island. Capitalizing on the pro-family values of the community while acknowledging some of its unique challenges, the commission aims to take the best parenting research and local knowledge a step further and create a blueprint for successful Mercer Island parenting. Look for materials to be available in 2011.

## V.O.I.C.E.

The YFS VOICE (Volunteers In Communities Everywhere) program led by Youth Development Coordinator Tambi Cork, provided volunteering and service learning programming to over 300 Island youth. The summer program provides unique "real life," structured volunteer experiences for middle to high school-aged youth. VOICE builds positive esteem, self confidence and pro-social skills that help youth navigate the teen years and get a head start towards becoming healthy, well-rounded adults.

## YFS Advisory Board

The YFS Advisory Board works to guide and advise the department on policy, programming and emergent community needs. Mike Cero, YFS City Council Liaison, connects this board to elected city officers and the citizens of the Island. Staffed by youth, parents and professionals from the community, the board keeps the Department of YFS informed on issues important to youth and family services. This kind of feedback loop is vital to YFS and our mission to meet the emergent human service needs of all Islanders.



## Girls on the Run

Elsbeth Ruder, YFS Mental Health Counselor at Island Park Elementary, implemented the Girls on the Run program to educate and prepare girls for a life time of self-respect and healthy living. Ruder taught the group of girls positive self perception and goal setting which enhanced their education and culminated in the completion of an organized distance run. This highly successful program would not be possible without the collaboration between Island schools and YFS mental health counselors.

## Senior Outreach

Geriatric Specialist Betsy Zuber served 320 Island seniors and their adult children with outreach services last year. Zuber's approachable style and expertise in senior issues coupled with her credential as a Licensed Mental Health therapist make her a superb resource and advocate—something unique to most YFS agencies, and incredibly valuable here on Mercer Island. Whether penning *A Page On Age* in The Reporter, providing senior grief and loss groups or helping Island seniors thrive in the retirement years, Zuber's contributions to our community are unanimously praised.

## Flash Family Inspirational Award

The Flash Family Inspirational Award was established in the spring of 2009 by Phil Flash, a Mercer island resident and local artist. This award honors a Mercer Island senior adult who exemplifies the spirit of good sportsmanship or community leadership, and who possesses an optimistic attitude and friendly demeanor while acting as a role model to others.

In 2010, the Flash Family Inspirational Award was presented to Genny Rees. Genny is a Mercer Island resident who is an active volunteer in the Island community. Genny is positive, courteous and respectful of everyone. Through her involvement in the arts community, tutoring English to non-native speakers and as a Thrift Shop volunteer, Genny truly and consistently demonstrates community leadership. Her demeanor is always friendly and she works with an optimistic attitude acting as a role model to both youth and older adults. Genny exemplifies the spirit of the Flash Family Inspirational Award.



Genny Rees, pictured with Mayor Jim Pearman, is the 2010 Flash Family Inspirational Award winner.

## YFS in the Schools

For over 20 years Mercer Island Youth and Family Services (MIYFS) and the Mercer Island School District have partnered to provide professional, high-quality counseling services to students and their families.

YFS staff currently provide services on site at each public school in the district and all are state-licensed mental health or chemical dependency professionals.

The three elementary level counselors, Laura Falsgraf, Julie Mattson and Elsbeth Ruder are YFS employees who work independently and collaboratively with their school community to enhance and facilitate the healthy social and emotional development of students. Healthy students are better able to take full advantage of the academic environment. In addition to their specialized expertise in mental health, the counselors also play an important role as consultant to the principal and other school staff.

The counselor at the middle school, Harry Brown, tailors his clinical approach to meet the social and developmental challenges unique to those transitional years while lending expertise to popular school-wide programs like Natural Helpers. He is joined by Marla Mitchell whose mental health and Chemical Dependency credentials equip her to tackle the important job of alcohol and drug education, prevention and intervention.

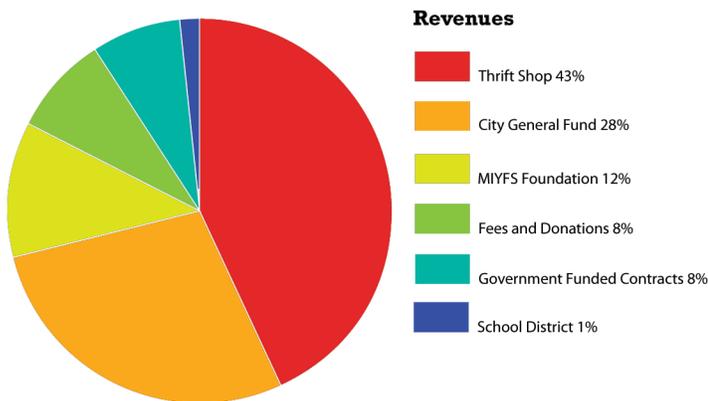


2010 – 2011 School Counselors Pictured from left to right: Laura Falsgraf, Elsbeth Ruder, Harry Brown, Chris Harnish, Marla Mitchell and Cathy Gentino. Not pictured: Julie Mattson.

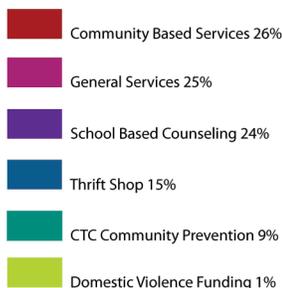
YFS high school services are provided by long time counselor Cathy Gentino. Her partner at the high school, Chris Harnish, is a drug and alcohol prevention and intervention specialist. Together, they offer full spectrum mental health and chemical dependency services to students and families from the Resource and Referral (R & R) Place at MIHS. Their contributions to the school guidance team connect their expertise with decisions that impact the whole student body.

The School-City partnership affords Island youth and families cutting edge access to mental health and drug & alcohol services. This in turn supports the ability of the school to provide the highest quality education. YFS counselors work closely with school staff to address the kind of issues that can become barriers to both personal and academic success.

## Financial Snapshot



### Expenditures



**Total Expenditures:**  
**\$1,817,700**

## Mercer Island's Gleaning Home Town Hero Gives Back



Isabel Jamerson's gleaning project connects the YFS Food Pantry & the Farmer's Market.

Isabel Jamerson, an Island resident and middle school student at the Bush School, executed an ambitious project

this summer as part of her middle school community service curriculum. Isabel established a gleaning project to bring unsold fresh produce from the M.I. Farmer's Market to the YFS Food Pantry. Her goal was to see that, fresh produce went to people in need. In January, Isabel began working with Farmer's Market organizers to communicate with farmers about who would

be willing to pass on unsold produce. She then arranged storage with the Presbyterian Church. On Monday mornings, Isabel transported fresh produce from the church to the Food Pantry. Cheryl Hudson-Manriquez, Family Assistance Coordinator, states that "for many families, the fruits and vegetables are treats they don't often have. It was especially fun to see families with children arrive to pick up fresh strawberries, blackberries and raspberries."

# MIYFS Foundation

SUPPORT FOR A CARING COMMUNITY



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## MIYFS Foundation

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## Local Dollars, Local Youth

a new partnership to raise money for youth

This November Islanders will have the opportunity to support four community youth serving organizations by simply adding \$1.00 to purchases at Island businesses.

This new community fundraising endeavor is a joint project of Mercer Island Youth and Family Services Foundation, Youth Theatre Northwest, the Boys and Girls Club and the Mercer Island Schools Foundation. Board members of the Mercer Island Chamber of Commerce have graciously and enthusiastically supported this campaign as the kickoff to their larger "shop local campaign." According to Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, Terry Moreman, "Shopping locally helps the downtown area remain vibrant and alive. Many business owners are Island residents and hundreds of Island youth get their first job here."

So, this November - **SHOP EARLY + SHOP OFTEN.**

*Thank you to all participating businesses.*



## YFS and Aljoia Partner to Deliver School Supplies to Low Income Mercer Island Youth



Now an annual tradition, this August backpacks full of school supplies were made available free-of-charge to students of low income Mercer Island families.

The MIYFS Back-to-School program, which is annually sponsored by Aljoia, met the needs of 55 Mercer Island kids this year—an increase of 25% from last year.

"This is an opportunity for Aljoia to give back to the community and our residents are proud to be involved,"

said Molly Cole, Community Relations Director at Aljoia. "Not only does this program guarantee that all students are prepared for the school year, but it also provides a level of confidence that they might not have had."

Each backpack contains all of the school supplies a particular child requires for their studies, including binders, paper, rulers, pencils, crayons—even the advanced calculators now required for some high school courses. The program is administered through YFS as a part of its Family Assistance and Support program which helps Mercer Island residents that are struggling financially.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Giving from the Heart**  
**Breakfast**  
**February 9, 2011**  
**7:00 to 8:30 a.m.**  
 Community Center at Mercerview

## About Us

The Mercer Island Youth and Family Services Foundation was founded in 1989 to support and enhance the work of Mercer Island Youth and Family Services (MIYFS), the human services department of the City of Mercer Island. The Foundation's fundraising efforts support every aspect of MIYFS's work of providing an intergenerational range of affordable, high-quality services that touch all members of the Mercer Island community. The board continues to grow its capacity to raise funds to support its vision of a healthy community for all adults, children and youth.

## Mercer Island Youth & Family Services Foundation

The MIYFS Foundation is grateful to the individuals, families, businesses and organizations who participate in our ongoing fundraising efforts. This listing includes in-kind, sponsor and monetary gifts received from June 21, 2009 through June 20, 2010.

Primary Addressee  
Able Acupuncture and Herbal Medicines  
Adage Capital Services, LLC  
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Alpenland Inc.  
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Barnes & Watson Fine Teas  
Bernstein Global Wealth Management  
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"Puget Sound Behavioral Medicine, PS"  
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Rose Clinic  
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Sanford Foundation  
Sara Lee Foundation  
Schoenfeld-Gardner Foundation  
Somers Tamblin King PLLC  
St. Monica's Parish - Friends of the Needy

**"MIYFS keeps its finger on the pulse of our community. From proactive substance abuse education in schools to helping citizens regain emotional balance. Each and every one of us benefits."**

**- Louise Berman  
- Advisory Board Member**

Designed Clinical Nutrition Center  
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Mercer Island Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
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Mercer Island High School PTSA  
Mercer Island Holy Trinity Lutheran Church  
Mercer Island Lions Club  
Mercer Island Lodge #297  
"Mercer Island Pediatric Associates, Inc., PS"  
Mercer Island Preschool Association  
Mercer Island Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Mercer Island Women's Club  
Mercer Island Yoga Community  
Mercer Wellness Chiropractic

Starbucks Coffee Co.  
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Henry Hong  
Denise Hopkins

**"The resources and services provided by MIYFS are vital to the well-being of our community. They warrant our generous gratitude and support."**

**Beth Larson Loken,  
Island Therapist**

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 Terry Zerngast  
 Marcia and Basil Zervis  
 Edo and Alice Ziring

**"I am glad I live in a community that has such resources available. MIYFS is a vital part of our community."**

**- Joni Johnson, Islander**

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# Mercer Island Thrift Shop

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS AS A COMMUNITY PARTNER IN SOCIAL VENTURE RECYCLING

## Breaking \$800,000 Gross Sales in 2009



On average, the thrift shop shares ¾ of a ton of textiles and other goods per day with 501(c)3 organizations that are doing a world of good also.

As the recession began to take its toll on almost every aspect of the economy, MITS quickly moved to correct its course in order to preserve funding for the important programs and services that the department of Youth and Family Services provides to Island residents. Once the store was on the map and recruiting new customers, MITS focused on driving business with quality customer and donor service. In addition, MITS provided top quality merchandise with unmatched thrift store visual merchandising standards. These efforts have continued to draw new business and the store is on track to meet the goal of \$945,000 for 2010.

## Here to Help as a Social Venture

Among the other benefits that result as the store fulfills its mission to raise funds for the Mercer Island Youth and Family Services,

MITS is a place where volunteers can become integrated, productive and contributing members of their community. The store's volunteer recruitment practices have diversified to include persons with disabilities and or barriers to regular employment. Relationships with

*"It is great to be able to have my students working in actual business settings and gaining the skills and behaviors they will need to seek competitive or supported employment. Perhaps even more important is the recognition and friendships they enjoy while working at Mercer Island Thrift Shop."*

Susan Jobe, MIHS

At Work (a non-profit organization), the Department of the Vocational Rehabilitation, and Mercer Island High School Special Education Department have presented focused opportunities in work place training for individuals who are paired with job coaches.

FOR OVER  
**35 YEARS,**  
THE THRIFT SHOP'S  
**DRIVING FORCE**  
HAS BEEN A GROUP OF  
**COMMITTED VOLUNTEERS.**  
THESE INDIVIDUALS GIVE OVER  
**14,500 HOURS**  
OF THEIR TIME EACH YEAR.

1975 Hannie Schott, 1976 Eric Hawkins, Marolyn Hawkins, 1977 Sue Gurevich, 1978 Genny Rees, 1985 Edna Berger, 1986 Chris Berger, 1988 Charlotte Wilhelm, 1990 Simrit Sehkon, Barbara Tourtillotte, Mimi McNiven, 1994 Tinker Sutter, 1996 Pat Aitken, Toby Franco, 1997 Lillian Rudensey, 1998 Pam Goetz, 1999 Jean Burnell, 2000 Evin Cramer, 2001 Al Taylor, 2002 Ludmila Krouglova, Karen Levin, 2003 Mona Hupp, Toi Tan, 2004 Pat Urban, Lynn Rutledge, Bob Johnson, Diane Osborne, Randy Winn, 2005 Nadine Baker, Connie Foseid, Martha Galvin, Le Moore, Joanne Schunter, 2006 Connie Carson, Betty Tonglao, 2007 Patricia Wittman, Liliya Batalova, Meredythe Glass, Ginny Larson, Karen Selzer, 2008 Iris Angel, Gisha Jacobs, 2009 Brad Morse, Lois Hummel, Arne Carson, Charlotte Walsh, Carissa Ham, Katie Herr, 2010 Melinda Salmirs, Emma Ravits, Abbey McArthur, Ann Lindsey, Fred VerPlanck, Ty Buchanan, Tu Ahn & Baoanh Vu, William Buchanan, Ezana Wasihun, David Clausen, Tyler Cox, Justin Chang, Conner Perryman, Elenoa Motokana.

## MERCER ISLAND THRIFT SHOP



**GIVE**

Donations  
Monday - Saturday  
9:00am - 4:00pm



**SHOP**

Monday - Friday  
10:00am - 7:00pm  
Saturday  
10:00am - 5:00pm



**JOIN**

Volunteer Today  
[www.miyfs.org](http://www.miyfs.org)

## RECYCLING AT ITS BEST

- Open six days a week
- After-hours appointment
- Easy to donate
- You receive thankful and friendly assistance at the donation area

As stewards of public donations, we are thankful for the generosity of islanders as we seek to find more sources of revenue for everything that is donated.

**The Thrift Shop is located at:**  
7710 SE 34th Street  
(SE corner of Mercerdale Park)  
Mercer Island, WA 98040  
(206) 275-7760





Non-Profit Org  
US POSTAGE  
Paid  
Mercer Island, WA  
Permit #159

POSTAL CUSTOMER  
MERCER ISLAND, WA 98040

**Enclosed:**

**Your Gifts Become Our Transportation**



MIYFS staff regularly transport youth to volunteer projects, leadership retreats and social skills workshops. Your donation in the enclosed envelope will be designated toward our van replacement fund. Please help keep our kids safely on the move with your gift today.

# Upcoming Foundation Events

**SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY**

## **Local Dollars, Local Youth, November 1 – 30, 2010**

Add a dollar to your purchases at Island businesses during the month of November and support Mercer Island Youth and Family Services and three other Island youth organizations.

## **All Island Fund Drive, December 2010**

Support MIYFS with your donations when you receive your request in the mail. Your neighbors are counting on you.

## **Giving From the Heart Breakfast February 9, 2011**

Your table is waiting! Join us on Wednesday morning February 9, 2011 at the Community Center at Mercer View 7:30 – 8:30 for the Foundation's signature fundraising event. This is the Island's largest coffee klatch where you can share coffee and breakfast with friends and associates and hear some inspiring words about MIYFS.

## **School Fund Drive, Spring 2011**

Parents of school aged children, please support the work your child's YFS school based counselor. Letters and donation envelopes will be sent to you in April of 2011.



For more information about these and other Foundation activities, please visit our website at [www.miyfs.org](http://www.miyfs.org) or call 206-275-7611.