



**MercyFirst**

a Sisters of Mercy ministry

MercyFirst  
Professional Psychology  
Internship Training Program

# **PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

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## **MercyFirst**

### **INTERNSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM IN PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

MercyFirst offers a psychology internship program that is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association and involves varied experiences with children, adolescents and their families in residential and non-residential, as well as campus-based and community-based settings. The children we serve range from infancy through late adolescence, though most are between 12 and 18 years old. Our internship program is centered around a campus-based residential program for boys. However, a broad-based experience with children and adolescents of both genders is made possible by the internship's involvement in many of the programs of the agency. In his or her training year, each intern has the opportunity to be exposed to a continuum of treatment settings involving different degrees of structure. We believe that learning about treatment in a variety of settings is particularly important today, because of the current emphasis on continuity of care and finding alternatives to hospital-based, inpatient treatment.

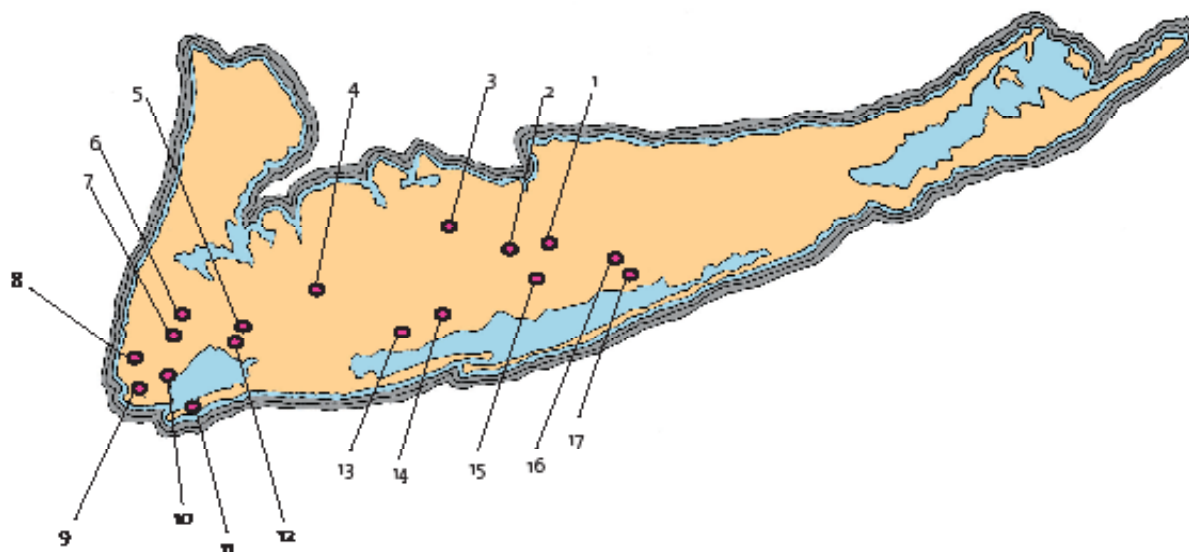
#### **Setting**

MercyFirst, a voluntary, not-for-profit, COA accredited, child care agency and residential treatment center whose roots go back more than one hundred years, was formed in 2003 through the merger of St. Mary's Children and Family Services with Angel Guardian Services. Annually, we provide care to over 3,000 children and adolescents, ranging from infancy to young adulthood. This includes a large number of children and adolescents in congregate care and foster care, as well as more than 2,000 children in our outpatient preventive services programs, in a variety of facilities that are located throughout the Long Island – New York City area. There are two main facilities. The Syosset campus is an attractive 64-acre site located on suburban Long Island's North Shore, approximately 30 miles from midtown Manhattan. The Brooklyn headquarters is housed in an attractive, historical building located in the residential community of Bay Ridge, near the Verrazano Bridge. The combined agency includes a range of residential treatment programs, a residential diagnostic center, outpatient preventive services programs, group homes and a large foster boarding home program.

Internship applicants may apply for either a wholly Long Island based experience or one that is primarily Brooklyn based, with some experiences on the Syosset campus.



## MercyFirst Locations



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|---|---|---|
| 1. Brentwood Group Home<br>Brentwood, NY  | 8. The Montague Center<br>Preventive Services,<br>Foster Boarding Home<br>and Intensive Prevention<br>186 Montague Street<br>Brooklyn, NY 11201 | 13. Merrick House<br>Community Residence<br>Merrick, NY |
| 2. Deer Park<br>Mother/Baby AOBH†<br>Deer Park, NY  | 9. Angel Guardian Campus<br>Foster Boarding<br>Home Program<br>6301 12th Avenue<br>Brooklyn, NY 11219   | 14. East Massapequa Group Home<br>East Massapequa, NY   |
| 3. St. Mary's Campus<br>525 Convent Road<br>Syosset, NY 11791                               | 10. The Gerard C. Durr Center<br>Preventive Services<br>333 Avenue X<br>Brooklyn, NY 11223  | 15. Baywood Group Home<br>Bay Shore, NY                 |
| 4. Nassau Preventive Services<br>60 Hempstead Avenue<br>Suite 303<br>W. Hempstead, NY 11552 | 11. Rockaway Park<br>Foster Boarding Home Program<br>and Foster Care Diversion<br>230 Beach 102 Street<br>Rockaway Park, NY 11694               | 16. Bay Shore Group Home<br>Bay Shore, NY               |
| 5. Manning Residence<br>Mother/Baby AOBH†<br>Queens, NY                                     | 12. Queens Preventive Services<br>115-01 Lefferts Boulevard<br>South Ozone Park, NY 11420   | 17. Brightwaters Group Home<br>Brightwaters, NY         |
| 6. McAulley Residence<br>Mother/Baby AOBH†<br>Brooklyn, NY                                  |   |   |
| 7. Virginia Residence<br>Mother/Baby Residence<br>Brooklyn, NY                              |   |   |

† Agency Operated Boarding Home

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## **The Internship Experience**

Each intern spends a full year in a primary treatment placement and also provides diagnostic services to one or more of our diagnostic units. Opportunities for elective placements in any of a number of other programs or units are also available. Much of the work involves intervention and assessment with adolescents, though other experiences (e.g. consultation, case management, and forensics) and work with other populations (e.g. latency-age children, unwed mothers and their children, adults) are also available. Interns have the opportunity to provide clinical services to juvenile delinquents, sexually inappropriate youth, victims of abuse and neglect, unwed mothers, severely and persistently mentally ill youth, etc.

## **MercyFirst Programs**

MercyFirst has a wide range of programs that provide services in residential and non-residential, as well as campus-based and community-based settings. The Campus-Based Residential Programs, located at the Syosset campus of MercyFirst, include:

A Diagnostic Program, composed of one residential unit for boys where children and adolescents are admitted for varying lengths of time to receive comprehensive assessments including medical, psychiatric, psychological, educational, recreational, psychosocial and group living evaluations. The recommendations offered by the diagnostic treatment team are used by the courts, social service departments, juvenile probation departments and other referring agencies to make placement and treatment decisions.

A Residential Treatment Center (RTC), consisting of six units, where boys stay for long-term (6 months to 2 years) treatment of emotional and behavioral problems. Two of these units comprise our Abuse Treatment and Prevention Program, which provides intensive residential treatment for youth with a history of sexual behavior problems. One of the other units is a Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Program for youth with a history of criminal or gang involvement. Interns working in either of these two programs learn to develop forensic as well as clinical psychological skills. There is also an Extraordinary Needs Program, which is for more severely emotionally disturbed adolescents, many of whom exhibit a combination of internalizing and externalizing symptoms. The remaining two units are General Treatment units. A full range of treatment, including individual and group therapy, family therapy, milieu therapy, psychopharmacology, etc. is utilized in all of these programs.

A Residential Treatment Facility (RTF) which provides long-term (1 to 2 years) treatment to boys with severe and persistent mental illness, including pervasive developmental disorder, schizophrenia, and similar conditions. The RTF is separately licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health. A full range of treatment, including individual and group therapy, family therapy, milieu therapy, psychopharmacology, etc. is provided on this unit.

A Non-Secure Detention Unit (NSD), which is operated on contract with the Nassau County



Family Court. This unit, which is located on the Syosset campus, is designed to provide a highly structured short-term residential program to adolescent boys who have had problems at home or in the community.

There is a fully accredited Special Education School on our campus. In addition, MercyFirst has a unique, on-site Health Office that is professionally staffed on a 24-hour basis.

We have a number of Community-Based Residential Programs, including 11 Group Homes, located at various sites in Brooklyn, Queens, and Long Island. The group homes, which serve both males and females, are organized as follows:

The two Adolescent Girls' Diagnostic Group Homes are located on Long Island. The four Adolescent Long Term Group Homes, located on Long Island, serve males and females with emotional and behavioral problems. There are four Mother-Child Group Homes, located in Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island; these are for adolescent mothers and their young children. Finally, there is one Long Island-based Group Home for adolescent boys with severe and persistent mental illness. In general, the group home program is less structured than the residential RTC or RTF programs, with the group home members living in the community; they typically attend a neighborhood school or, if old enough, work in the community.

The Foster Boarding Home Program (FBH) is responsible for about 625 children in foster home placement throughout the Long Island and New York City areas. Most of these children are served through our Bay Ridge, Brooklyn office.

Finally, our Community-Based Non-Residential Programs include:

A Preventive Services Program, with offices throughout Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island. The Preventive Services offices serve a varied population of families in Nassau County and New York City. Individuals seen in Preventive Services may range in age from infancy through adulthood, and they represent a wide range of social classes and ethnic groups. The purpose of the Preventive Services Program is to maintain family cohesion and avoid the placement of children outside of their homes. Currently, about 950 families are served by Preventive Services.

### **Population**

The population at the Syosset campus-based diagnostic, non-secure detention and residential treatment (RTC and RTF) programs consists of boys about 11 to 18 years old; the group homes have boys and girls ranging in age from about 10 to 18, as well as unwed adolescent mothers and their young (0-5 years old) children; the foster boarding homes include males and females from infancy through adolescence; and the client population in preventive services ranges from infancy through adulthood. MercyFirst accepts children from the Long Island - New York City area.

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Referrals come from City and County Departments of Social Services, Family Court, the New York State Office of Mental Health and on a voluntary placement basis. Criteria for admission include a wide range of psychopathology, varying from adjustment disorders to psychotic disorders. Many of our clients come from disorganized and overwhelmed family backgrounds, and many families have histories of abuse and neglect.

The children we serve function primarily within the average range of intelligence with deficits in impulse control and ego functioning. The core of the internship experience typically involves the campus-based residential programs and the group homes programs.

### **Supervisory Staff**

The supervisory staff mainly consists of psychologists. Psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioners, social workers and other mental health professionals may also play a role. MercyFirst also employs a large number of nurses, special education teachers and other childcare and healthcare professionals. Our treatment philosophy is based on an interdisciplinary team approach in which psychologists and interns work closely with social service, psychiatric and child care professionals. Psychologists provide direct services through various diagnostic and therapeutic modalities and serve as members (typically leaders) of the treatment teams. The major theoretical orientations represented by our supervisory staff are cognitive-behavioral and psychodynamic. Interns start with a student status and, through the year, take on more and more responsibility. Under supervision, they evolve to function as full members of the treatment team. We expect that each intern will leave with the identity of a "Professional Psychologist."

### **Philosophy of Treatment**

The philosophy of treatment at MercyFirst is based on the belief that children are born with an innate drive towards health and adaptation. We also believe that children are born with individual differences in their ability to adapt and grow physically and psychologically within any given environmental context, and we take account of these individual differences, as well as any social and cultural variations, in our treatment planning. Our treatment approach focuses on the therapeutic milieu, in which the goal is to provide educational, recreational, medical and psychological experiences that will foster each child's capacity for positive growth and adaptation. A highly structured operant behavior management system is a crucial aspect of treatment in the residential and group homes programs. Psychotherapy serves as an experiential tool for examining the child's life, and for developing self-control and coping abilities. Individual, family or group therapy is available to our patients and, depending on the staff member and the needs of the child, a cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic or family systems approach may be utilized. Psychotropic medications are often utilized as part of the individual child's treatment plan to aid in fostering healthy development and enabling the child to better avail him- or herself of the variety of treatment interventions. In addition to providing direct treatment, psychologists and interns at MercyFirst typically



function in leadership roles on the treatment teams to which they are assigned, and they play important roles in developing and monitoring each child's treatment plan.

### **Philosophy of Training**

The professional psychology internship program at MercyFirst is conducted along the guidelines provided by the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC). We strive to provide students with a planned and programmed sequence of supervised clinical experiences and educational seminars, utilizing a Practitioner-Scholar model of training.

We believe that, in addition to developing the core clinical skills of assessment and intervention, it is crucial for psychologists working within human service settings to be sensitive to group and organization dynamics. Working together with other professionals with different backgrounds and viewpoints necessitates an appreciation of how one's treatment interventions interact with other aspects of the milieu. Interns will learn to work on a systems level, employing extensive consultation skills to facilitate coordination of treatment.

Interns have the opportunity to develop their clinical skills via interviewing and testing, therapeutic intervention and consultation in a mentor system. In this framework, trainees work directly under two primary supervisors (one diagnostic and one treatment), with the opportunity to closely observe and process the supervisor's professional functioning.

Psychological services for diverse cultural and ethnic groups, especially those with economic disadvantage, is another focus of the experience at MercyFirst. Because we serve a largely minority population, interns learn to better understand and appreciate the role of cultural and ethnic differences in psychological functioning. Finally, because we have both short-term diagnostic and long-term treatment programs, our interns have the opportunity to practice a wide variety of treatment interventions, ranging from brief crisis intervention to year-long psychotherapy.

### **Training Objectives**

Within the professional psychology training model that we utilize at MercyFirst, primary emphasis is placed on developing each intern's skills in the following:

**Assessment** - through mastery of interviewing techniques; test administration, scoring and interpretation; report writing; case presentation; diagnostic nosology; etc.

During the course of the training year, interns are trained to assess a wide variety of clinical conditions, ranging from mild adjustment or parent-child problems to frank psychosis. Interns also gain experience utilizing many different assessment techniques and procedures, including clinical interviews, behavioral observations, risk assessments,

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objective tests and projective tests. Testing and evaluation compose an important part of the internship experience at MercyFirst and, especially on the residential diagnostic unit, each intern is expected to function as an integral part of the evaluation team.

Intervention - via a wide variety of experiences, including brief and long-term therapy; cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic and family systems interventions; and individual, group and family modalities.

Training in the specialized treatment of sexually inappropriate youth and juvenile delinquents, treatment of the severely and persistently mentally ill, dyadic mother-child treatment, or the use of play modalities are also available, as are experiences in crisis intervention. Group therapy experiences may involve time-limited, cognitive-behavioral approaches, such as anger management or social skills training, or insight oriented process groups.

In addition, we also seek to develop the following skills:

Interpersonal Relationship and Self-Knowledge - largely through supervision and the mentoring relationship, and also through the voluntary interns' process group, which is led by an outside consultant.

Consultation and Case Management - especially to the multi-disciplinary treatment team, and also to the on-grounds school. Interns also have the opportunity to act as consultants to the juvenile justice system by, for example, performing risk assessments on juvenile offenders, and they may have the opportunity to testify in court.

Research/Evaluation - via seminar offerings, program evaluation experiences, and the encouragement of a skeptical, data-based approach to clinical work.

### **Training Placements**

Interns have two main placements during the training year, a full-year primary diagnostic placement and a full-year primary treatment placement. These placements typically occur on either a Syosset campus-based residential unit or a group home, though there is also opportunity for one Brooklyn-based intern to work with foster children and their families on an outpatient basis. Interns also have the opportunity for an elective placement in any one of a number of possible settings. In each of these assignments, interns function as members of the professional staff and members of the treatment team.

Primary Diagnostic/Short-Term Treatment Placement: In the diagnostic units, interns learn to evaluate children from a variety of cultural, ethnic and economic backgrounds. They may also provide crisis intervention and short-term treatment, and consult with the evaluation/treatment team on appropriate long-term clinical interventions and placement planning. Each intern can expect to complete approximately 14-20 psychological evaluations over the course of the training year, including one or two risk assessments of sexually inappropriate



youth. They may also learn to perform brief interventions, including crisis interventions. This placement typically involves work in either the residential diagnostic unit on the Syosset campus or one of the diagnostic group homes. (1 hour of individual supervision per week)

Primary Treatment Placement: Each Syosset-based intern is assigned to one of the campus-based residential treatment units (RTC or RTF) or to an adolescent group home for a full-year experience that includes psychotherapy, clinical assessment, milieu treatment, treatment planning, and consultation with staff. Participation in frequent rounds and treatment team meetings is an important part of these placements. Brooklyn-based interns are assigned to either a mother-child group home for a very similar experience, or to the foster home program, where they work with foster children and their families on an outpatient basis. Each year, two Syosset campus-based interns specialize in the treatment of youth with histories of inappropriate sexual behavior; these two interns have a primary treatment placement on one of the units which deals with this population. Interns in most treatment placements will have the opportunity to see a number of long-term individual psychotherapy patients, lead or co-lead one or more therapy groups, do family therapy, and perform crisis interventions, as well as consult to their multi-disciplinary treatment team. Interns have the unique opportunity to interact with the residents and observe them in different aspects of their lives, including group living, recreation, and education. (1 1/2 hours of individual supervision per week)

Elective Placement: In addition to his or her primary placement, each intern may choose, with supervisory approval, an elective placement in any one of a number of agency units or programs. These experiences may include short- or long-term treatment, group therapy, specialized treatment of juvenile delinquents or sexually inappropriate youth, community-based group home interventions, etc. (1/2 - 1 hour of individual supervision per week)

For their placements, interns may be assigned to any of the following units or programs:

Abuse Treatment and Prevention Program: On two of our Residential Treatment Center (RTC) units, MercyFirst has a specialized residential program for youth with a history of sexual behavior problems. The residents in these units participate in an intensive treatment program that involves group, individual and/or family therapy. Interns assigned to either of these units can be expected to carry individual, family and group therapy cases, and also perform risk assessments as needed. Work on this unit may involve considerable experience in forensic psychology.

Juvenile Delinquents Program: This program is for adolescents who have been adjudicated as juvenile delinquents (JD) but who do not meet the criteria for a secure facility. The JD unit, part of the Residential Treatment Center, utilizes a cognitive-behaviorally based treatment program in which residents receive individual and group therapy, as well as family therapy. Interns working on the JD unit learn to develop forensic as well as clinical psychological skills.

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Extraordinary Needs Program: One of the campus Residential Treatment Center units is designed for adolescent boys who have a combination of both externalizing and internalizing symptoms, usually conduct disorder and a mood or psychotic disorder. They also frequently have histories of significant trauma, multiple failed interventions, and psychiatric hospitalization. Interns working on this unit provide individual psychotherapy, as well as various group therapies and family/parent interventions. This unit has not recently been used as a primary placement; however, it may be available as an elective placement.

Residential Treatment Center Generalist Program: The two General Residential Treatment Center units serve neglected, abused and/or behavior disordered boys. In this program, there are opportunities for individual therapy, in a variety of modalities, group therapy and family therapy.

Residential Treatment Facility: The Residential Treatment Facility (RTF), based in the Syosset campus, provides long-term (1 to 2 years) treatment to boys with severe and persistent mental illness, including pervasive developmental disorder, psychosis, and similar conditions. A full range of treatment, including individual, group and family therapy, is provided in the RTF.

Diagnostic Program: There is one Syosset campus-based residential diagnostic unit and two community-based diagnostic group homes. The campus-based residential diagnostic unit is for boys; the two diagnostic group homes are for girls. Work in the diagnostic program mainly involves assessment, including diagnostic testing and mental status interviewing, as well as the opportunity to do brief therapy, treatment/placement planning and crisis intervention.

Group Homes Program: Our Group Homes are located in various communities throughout Long Island, Brooklyn and Queens. These community-based programs include homes for boys and girls, as well as for adolescent mothers and their children, all of whom present with a wide range of behavior and emotional problems. In the group homes, interns provide individual, group and family therapy, and act as consultants to the treatment team.

Preventive Services Program: In past years, there have been opportunities for elective placements in the Preventive Services Program, an outpatient program with offices in West Hempstead, on Long Island, and Queens and Brooklyn, in New York City. The focus of this elective placement is on treatment, assessment and consultation services to younger children, adolescents and families.

Other Experiences: A variety of other training opportunities are also available. For example, interns have the opportunity for experiences in forensic psychology, including performing risk assessments for sexually inappropriate youth and testifying in family court on child welfare and/or juvenile delinquency matters. Interns may work with the staff in our on-grounds special education school. Interns have an opportunity to do research at MercyFirst, and we are very supportive of research activities; for example, students and



faculty from a number of local universities occasionally conduct research with MercyFirst residents. Interns also participate in ongoing staff development programs and case conferences at MercyFirst, and in special seminars established for our professional psychology training program.

### **Supervision**

Each intern receives ninety minutes of individual supervision in psychotherapy each week for the treatment cases carried on his or her primary treatment unit, and at least one hour per week of individual supervision in psychological assessment on his or her primary diagnostic unit. The individual supervision is also designed to help interns develop consultation skills in their two primary units. In the elective placement, one-half to one hour per week of individual supervision is usually offered. Additional group supervision is also typically offered. Thus, each intern receives a total of about 4 hours of supervision per week (not including seminars), of which a minimum of 2½ hours is individual supervision. In practice, additional supervision is readily and routinely provided. Interns are usually assigned to supervisors with a variety of theoretical orientations, typically cognitive-behavioral or psychodynamic.

### **Education Programs**

In addition to their weekly supervision, interns have the opportunity to attend seminars conducted by supervisors, workshop presentations by outside experts, agency-wide staff development programs, and, less frequently, off-campus training conferences. These include:

Abuse Treatment and Juvenile Delinquency Seminar: This seminar focuses on clinical aspects of treatment that commonly arise at MercyFirst. Sections are devoted to the treatment of youth with histories of sexual behavior problems and youth with histories of juvenile delinquency. The seminar utilizes both didactic and case presentation teaching approaches.

Diagnostic Seminar: This seminar covers a wide range of psychological assessment issues, including objective and projective testing, Rorschach with Exner scoring, learning disabilities assessment, behavioral observations, pre-school evaluation, and other topics related to diagnostic evaluation.

Teaching Rounds: A wide range of issues relevant to professional practice, including ethics, mental status interviewing, psychopharmacology, DSM-IV, post-internship options, supervision, and clinical research, may be addressed in Teaching Rounds. The Research Seminar, in which interns discuss their research interests and learn about ongoing research at MercyFirst, is a part of Teaching Rounds.

Continuing Case Conference: In this ongoing seminar, interns meet with the Coordinator of

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Training to discuss their clinical cases (treatment or assessment) in a manner that emphasizes conceptual, rather than directly practical supervisory issues. The goal of this seminar is to allow the interns a chance to share ideas and clinical experiences with each other, while relating these to the theory and research they have studied in graduate school.

Interns' Process Group: An experiential process group for interns which is led by an outside consultant with expertise in group therapy and group dynamics. Attendance is encouraged but not required.

Interns' Administrative Meeting: This meeting, with the Coordinator of Training, is designed to provide ongoing orientation to interns and to help them define their role in the agency's delivery of services.

Grand Rounds: These are a series of training workshops led by outside experts who are invited to MercyFirst to present on important clinical issues. Recent Grand Rounds presentations have addressed the following topics: trauma and the trans-generational transmission of trauma; counter-transference issues when working with traumatized youth; assessment with the MMPI-A; family therapy; diversity issues in psychotherapy, including ethnic/cultural diversity and physical disability; eating disorders in adolescents; treatment of panic disorder and agoraphobia. Workshop leaders are typically highly esteemed professionals from the Long Island/New York City area. In recent years they have included psychologists and other mental health professionals affiliated with institutions such as Four Winds Hospital, Minuchin Center for the Family, UN Commission on Human Rights, National Eating Disorders Association, Adelphi University, Fordham University, Hofstra University, St. John's University, Pace University, Yeshiva University, and others.

Case Presentation: MercyFirst interns may have the opportunity to formally present their clinical work at a departmental case presentation. These are usually attended by other interns, externs, supervisors, and other clinicians. An outside discussant, who is an experienced and skilled mental health professional with specific expertise in the area being addressed, works with the intern to develop the case presentation and lead the group discussion of the case. Recent discussants have included local private practitioners, as well as individuals affiliated with the following agencies: Nassau University Medical Center; Long Island Jewish Medical Center; International Institute of Object Relations; Adelphi University; Long Island University, and others.

Staff Development Training: These are agency-wide meetings for MercyFirst clinical staff which occur approximately four times a year. At these clinical forums, staff from throughout the agency discuss their work and their programs; additionally, there may be didactic presentations. Since MercyFirst is among a small group of child care agencies selected to participate in the Sanctuary program, interns and supervisors also participate in periodic sanctuary trainings, which are designed to enhance and facilitate the application of this trauma-focused treatment program to our children.

Other Educational Opportunities: Interns are encouraged to attend off-campus professional



conferences in areas of individual interest. Arrangements are typically made for each intern to attend, at agency expense, at least one training conference at a nearby university or medical center each year. MercyFirst interns have use of our small professional library, as well as full privileges at the libraries of two local universities and one large local teaching hospital.

### **Development of Professional Identity**

A major goal of the training program is the development of each intern's identity as a professional psychologist. Interns see their supervisors contribute to many different aspects of the agency's program, and senior staff lead many of the agency's professional activities. Within the agency, psychologists serve on various committees which monitor and modify the treatment programs.

Psycho-diagnostic assessment is considered an important part of the overall treatment planning process, and we view assessment as the psychologist's special contribution to a full understanding of the child's cognitive and emotional development. Thus, assessment is an integral component of the MercyFirst internship experience.

During the year, interns have the opportunity to meet with the Coordinator of Training and other senior staff to discuss issues relevant to their training. Feedback about the training program is solicited by the Coordinator of Training. Problems with agency staff, or conflicts with supervisors, if they arise, are open for discussion. Ethical issues, including problems with confidentiality within a system requiring careful monitoring and record keeping, are discussed. Each intern is provided with a copy of Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, and these issues are discussed at several regularly scheduled meetings.

### **Benefits**

In addition to a nationally competitive monetary stipend of \$24,000 per year, interns receive a liberal package of time benefits, including two weeks of paid vacation, eleven paid holidays, four personal days accrued quarterly, six paid sick days after three months of service, and paid time off for professional conferences and activities. Interns also receive medical and dental insurance coverage through the agency's group policy, and they are eligible for other benefits in our cafeteria-type plan.

### **Intern Requirements**

The internship program is open to professional psychology doctoral students who are in the process of completing, or who have completed, their academic training. Selection is generally limited to students from APA accredited graduate programs. Applicants should

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have had graduate courses and practicum experiences in clinical intervention techniques and psychological assessment, preferably including projective testing.

All applicants are encouraged to speak to current and former interns about our program. Names, telephone numbers and email addresses are available upon request.

The training year at MercyFirst begins the Wednesday after Labor Day and ends one year later. The work week for interns involves approximately 40-48 hours, including direct service, staff meetings, supervision and seminars, and paperwork. Since the internship experience may involve travel between different agency settings (e.g. group homes and Syosset, or Brooklyn and Syosset), and since suburban Long Island does not have an extensive mass transit system, interns are advised to insure that they have the use of an automobile throughout their training year.

### **Application Procedures**

Completed applications for the internship program must be received by November 15th. Earlier submission of applications is encouraged. A complete application consists of a fully completed APPIC Online internship application form (AAPI Online), which includes:

- . a current curriculum vita;
- . three (3) letters of recommendation, including
  - at least one from a current or past diagnostic supervisor and
  - at least one from a current or past therapy supervisor;
- . a graduate school transcript;
- . a cover letter indicating why you would like to be an intern at MercyFirst.

In addition, applicants are asked to include a work sample, consisting of a recent comprehensive psychological evaluation report.

The AAPI Online, which includes a form to be completed by the graduate training director verifying the applicant's eligibility for internship, can be obtained by accessing the APPIC web site at [www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org) and then clicking "AAPI Online." Questions regarding the internship should be sent to [smigden@mercyfirst.org](mailto:smigden@mercyfirst.org).

Stephen Migden, PhD, ABPP  
Coordinator of Psychology Internship Program  
MercyFirst  
525 Convent Road  
Syosset, New York 11791-3864  
(516) 921 - 0808 Ext 801  
[smigden@mercyfirst.org](mailto:smigden@mercyfirst.org)



It is the candidate's responsibility to see that all materials are received by MercyFirst prior to the deadline of November 15.

Once a completed application is received and approved, a personal interview can be arranged. Applicants are notified whether or not they have been matched to MercyFirst on APPIC Match Day.

MercyFirst psychology interns are expected to successfully participate in and pass the same pre-employment screening process that is required of regular employees of MercyFirst. This includes: completion of a MercyFirst application for employment, and a Disclosure and Consent Form; satisfactory completion of a medical examination which includes a drug screening; receipt by MercyFirst of a "Not Indicated" response from the New York State Central Registry on Child Abuse; and fingerprint screening for criminal record. These procedures are undertaken following the APPIC match. Interns are evaluated by their supervisors on an ongoing basis and, at least twice yearly, they are formally evaluated with a written report that is sent to their doctoral training program. All MercyFirst employees, including psychology interns, maybe called for a random drug test during their period of employment.

Because MercyFirst is a member agency of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC), we adhere to all APPIC guidelines regarding application procedures, including those involving Internship Offers and Acceptances and Use of Ranking-Related Information. This internship site agrees to abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept or use any ranking-related information prior to the date of the APPIC match. Those wishing to do so may contact APPIC by telephone at 202 589-0600, or by email at [appic@aol.com](mailto:appic@aol.com).

Those wishing to verify the current APA accreditation status of the internship program at MercyFirst may contact the American Psychological Association, Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242, telephone 202 336-5979.

*MercyFirst reserves the right in its discretion to modify any of the information and/or experiences described in this brochure.*

*Broc08 Revised 8/2009*



#### **Accreditations**

Council on Accreditation

American Psychological Association

#### **Affiliations**

Child Welfare League of America

Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies

Federation of Child Caring Agencies of the Diocese of Brooklyn

Health and Welfare Council of Long Island

Long Islanders for Families and Youth

New York State Coalition for Children's Mental Health Services

#### **525 Convent Road**

Syosset, NY 11791

516.921.0808

#### **6301 Twelfth Avenue**

Brooklyn, NY 11219

718.232.1500

[www.MercyFirst.org](http://www.MercyFirst.org)