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Charlie Lynch: Making the World a Brighter Place



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Everybody knows Charlie Lynch. At least, many of the North Shore commuters do who visit the Dunkin' Donuts next to the Syosset train station every weekday morning. Charlie is a fixture there. With an amiable smile and shy demeanor, he says hello and shakes hands with the daily commuters every morning.

I went early one morning to find Charlie sitting in his regular spot, the banquet facing the train station. I introduced myself and he smiled and patted the seat next to him. He is a man of few words, but very charming.

It was remarkable sitting there and watching everyone come by to say hello.

He is like the mayor. As I sat down to talk to Charlie, one gentleman brought him a coffee and another shook his hand and said, "Where were you yesterday Charlie? I was worried about you." "Allergies," Charlie said with a smile and a shrug. "Well, I am glad you're back." The commuter said, patted him on the back and left to catch his train. Charlie nodded his head and smiled.

Charlie leaves Dunkin' Donuts around 7:30 every morning and heads to work at Mercy First, a boys' home in Syosset.

Charlie has worked for Mercy First for 37 years. Mercy First has 122 boys living on campus and the organization also manages up to 500 foster children and offers numerous other family serv-

es. Charlie knows the place well, because he lived there as a young boy.

In 1972, Charlie came back to work at Mercy First in the kitchen. He switched jobs in 1990 and now delivers the mail to most of the thirteen buildings twice a day. He also organizes the clothes for the boys when they are delivered to the facility. According to Nancy Atkinson, the Director of Grant Development, and who has known Charlie for 30 years said, "Charlie is a big part of this organization."

Amidst all the ugliness and chaos, it is nice to know that there are people like Charlie in the world. He makes it a brighter place.