



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 17, 2021

Contact: Lauren Albright

301.273.9626 / lalbright@sistersofmercy.org

NEW CATHOLIC SCHOOL GIVES STUDENTS A WAY TO EARN A LIVING WAGE

Responding to the needs of our times, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas announced today that they will sponsor a new Catholic career and technical junior/senior high school in Stuart, Florida, to better prepare low-income students for the health sciences workforce and/or college.

“We are opening the door to students in need by providing an excellent, affordable education that prepares them for contemporary job options,” said Sister Patricia McDermott, RSM, president, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. “Inspired by our founder, Catherine McAuley, and her passion for service and education, we look for creative ways to meet new needs.”

Mercy Education, the organization entrusted with overseeing the sponsored schools of the Sisters of Mercy, designed this new school model in response to the signs of the times, especially the COVID-19 pandemic. The school’s location in Stuart, Florida, part of the Diocese of Palm Beach, allows it to serve a growing population of students and families of Central and South American descent who, because of systemic oppression, often lack access to a meaningful pathway to a living wage.

“People in underserved neighborhoods were impacted the most by the pandemic,” said Sister Lisa Griffith, RSM, executive director of Mercy Education. “A diverse, educated health workforce can make a major difference in the health and welfare of all people.”

The focus of this new school will be career pathways in the health sciences, one of the fastest growing industries in the United States. Students can choose either patient care or mental/behavioral health and learn skills that will help launch them into promising, high-growth and higher-wage positions upon graduation.

Mercy Education plans to open the new school for the 2022-2023 academic year. The new school, which will be located on property of St. Joseph Parish in Stuart, Florida, is funded by the state’s public voucher program and a grant from the Drexel Fund which invests and partners in the growth of financially sustainable networks of private schools in underserved communities.

Following a nationwide search, Ed Curtin, current president of Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie, Pennsylvania, was appointed the founding head of school. “I am both honored and humbled to take my place in helping bring Mercy to this inspiring ministry,” Curtin stated. “Knowing that students will be prepared with the skills, education, and experience they need to enter the health field, with a

compassionate and merciful heart, brings me deep comfort.” Curtin has served Mercyhurst Prep for 31 years and was named president of the school in 2015.

This new school will join over 50 Mercy schools in Argentina, Belize, Guam, Honduras, Jamaica, the Philippines and the United States.

About Mercy Education

Mercy Education System of the Americas is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy. Established July 1, 2017, Mercy Education unites and serves Mercy education ministries in Argentina, Belize, Guam, Honduras, Jamaica, the Philippines and the United States.

About the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

The Sisters of Mercy—an international community of Roman Catholic women—dedicate their lives to God through vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and service. For more than 180 years, motivated by the Gospel of Jesus and inspired by the spirit of their founder, Catherine McAuley, the Sisters of Mercy have responded to the changing needs of the times. mercyedu.org

Through prayer and service, the sisters address the causes and effects of violence, racism, degradation of Earth and injustice to women and immigrants. The sisters serve in more than 200 organizations that work with those in need in the U.S., Central and South America, Jamaica, Guam and the Philippines. www.sistersofmercy.org

###