MERCY

A CHRISTIAN HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER

Through a community of volunteers, Mercy provides quality, whole-person healthcare in a Christ-centered environment to our underserved neighbors.

2024 IMPACT REPORT

Who is Mercy?

Since 2001, Mercy has been sharing the love of Jesus with the marginalized and hurting of Athens and the surrounding counties by providing crucial healthcare services. Additionally, Mercy equips and trains hundreds of student volunteers yearly to provide gospel-centered healthcare to the underserved. We strive for each interaction at Mercy to be soaked in the gospel and for all people to know and experience the hope and healing found in Jesus.

Our Core Values

Christ-Centered

We believe that in Jesus Christ, God's love, mercy, and grace are made known to us and all people.

We seek to follow him in his identification with and compassion for the vulnerable and underserved.

We look to the Lord as the ultimate author, leader, and guide of all we undertake.

Our purpose, vision, ministries, and decisions are nurtured in prayer, seeking the direction and wisdom of the Lord.

Romans 5:1–2
Luke 4:18

Seek Excellence

We believe that excellence honors God and strive for it in everything we do.

We work daily for the glory of our God, and not for the applause of man.

We endeavor to provide outstanding care and continuously seek new and better ways to improve our many services.

We maintain an attitude of learning, reflection, innovation, and discovery, seeking to grow in understanding, compassion, and skill.

Colossians 3:17

Value Everyone

We regard all people as created in the image of God. Therefore, we recognize and act in ways that respect the dignity, uniqueness, and worth of those we interact with.

We believe we are strengthened by each person's unique personality, culture, and contribution.

We seek to understand the situation of the underserved and engage the local Christian community to bring both toward transformation into the likeness of Jesus.

1 Corinthians 12:22–27

Faithful Stewards

We believe that the resources at our disposal are not our own.

Therefore, we live as faithful stewards of all our material resources, time, energy, and talents.

We desire to give our volunteers, patients, and staff opportunities to use the gifts and talents that our God has given them.

We act daily in accordance with the highest standards of ethical practice and financial integrity.

Psalms 8:6–8

Motivated by Love

We take God's command to love one another earnestly. From the overflowing abundance of God's love, we find our motivation and ability to serve others.

We strive to develop caring, supportive relationships with our patients, volunteers, staff, donors, churches, and community partners.

Jesus' love for all people without discrimination or conditions is shown in his example of servanthood and his offer of new life through faith in him.

1 John 4:11–12
Romans 6:4

A Word from the Doc

It's been over a decade since I received a calling from God to share the gospel with the underserved through medicine. I never could have imagined that the Lord would have brought me back to Athens to live out that calling, and I am so thankful He did.

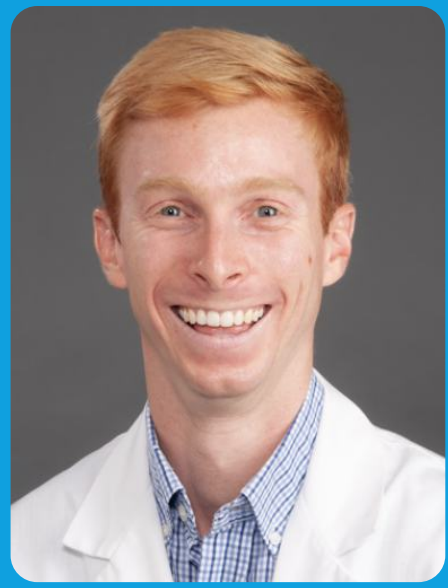
Since starting full-time at Mercy this past September, I have been blown away by the patients, staff, volunteers, board members, and donors that make Mercy what it is. It is a gift and a privilege to be a part of an organization like Mercy that has stood as a mighty oak in this community, withstanding many obstacles and barriers to continue sharing the love of Jesus with those most in need, even when it wasn't popular or easy.

As I reflect on 2024, it's hard not to be astounded by God's provision. Not everything was easy at Mercy this year, and there continue to be pruning moments as we grow and mature as an organization. Still, we are entering 2025 as eager participants in God's plan to bring redemption through healthcare in this city and community at large. If you're reading this, you were and are a MASSIVE part of our impact in this community.

We will continue to honor and glorify God by caring for and loving the oppressed, marginalized, forgotten, and lonely. Thank you for being a part of this mission with us. We can't wait for what's in store!

In **Him**,

Cole Phillips



Cole Phillips, MD, MBA
CEO & Medical Director

A quote that inspires Cole:

"God has always wanted the vulnerable in society to be cared for. He never intended for them to languish in poverty, abuse, slavery, homelessness, or other types of devastation. When we care for individuals who are trapped in these ways, when we show them love and help them move toward freedom and wholeness, we participate in bringing a little part of God's Kingdom back into alignment with His greater plan.
We do justice and God smiles."

- John Perkins

Who We Serve

Mercy continues to offer free healthcare services to uninsured patients at or below 200% of the federal poverty line. These patients face extreme barriers to care and are often fearful and distrusting of the healthcare industry.

As of 2022, an estimated 17% of Athens-Clarke County residents were uninsured, and 27% were living at or below the federal poverty line. In the surrounding counties that Mercy serves, the estimated average uninsured rate is also 17%.

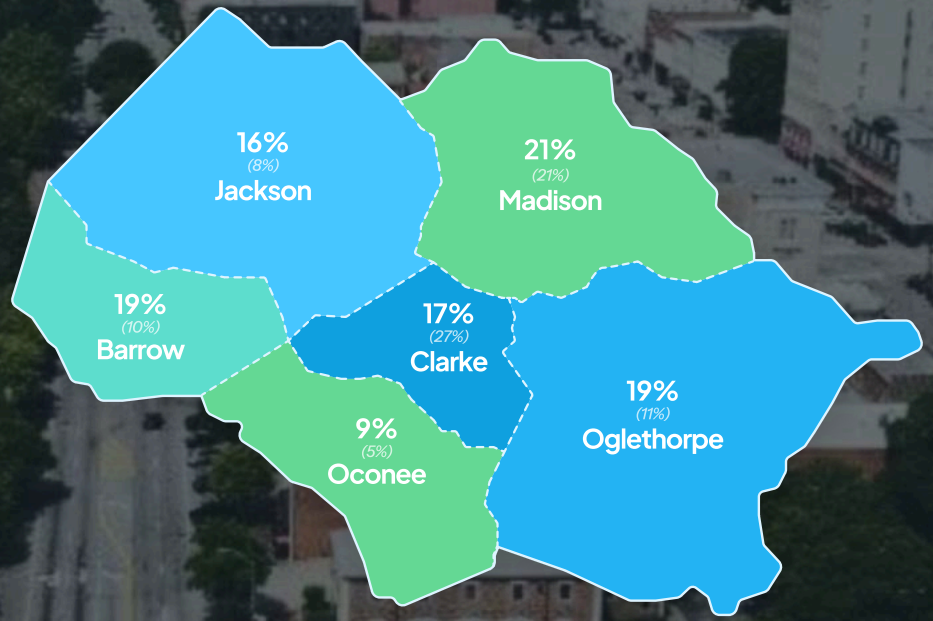
This means that approximately 40,000 individuals in our service area lack health insurance and live either at or below the federal poverty line.

These people, made in God's image, live on the margins of our society. They are often hurting, desperate, and lacking hope.

Mercy stands as a beacon in our community, offering not only physical healing but also spiritual and emotional healing.

Mercy Health Center Service Area

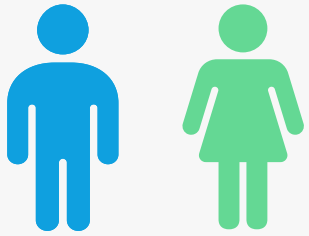
% Uninsured
% Living Below FPL



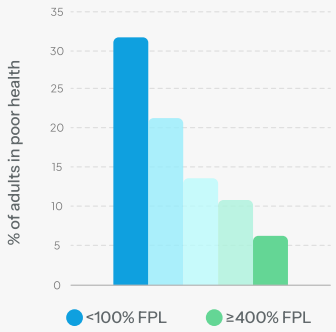
Life Below the Poverty Line

Gap in life expectancy between the richest 1% & poorest 1% of individuals.

14.6 Years **10.1 Years**



Poor adults are **5x** more likely to report being in "poor health" than those who make **400%** more than the FPL.



$31,200

Average income for a family of **4** living at the federal poverty level.

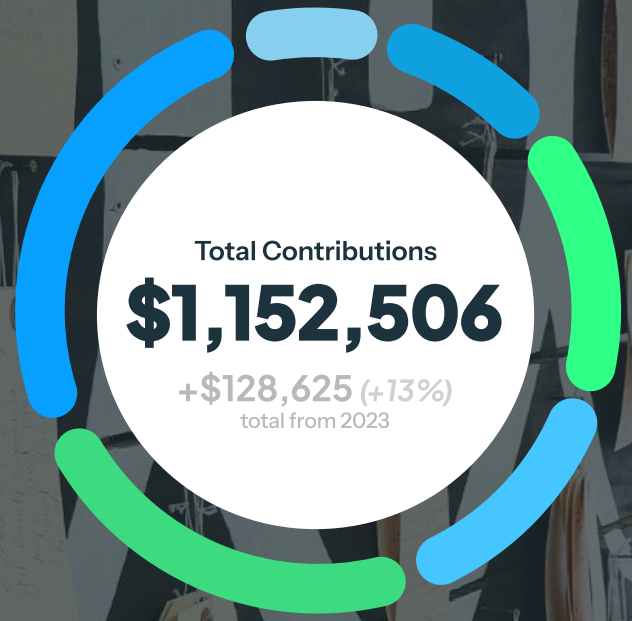
Lower income individuals face significant challenges such as:

- Food & Housing Insecurity
- Low Access to Medical Care
- Barriers to Employment
- Limited Education Resources

FPL: Federal Poverty Level

Fundraising Overview

Mercy remains an entirely free clinic for our patients. We rely completely on donations from individuals, businesses, and churches in our community, along with private grants and foundations, for our operating expenses. Mercy does not receive any regular government funding, so your support is vital to the success of our mission.



$357,007
Individual Donors

$308,500
Grants & Foundations

$192,714
Event Fundraising

$171,310
Corporate Sponsors & Business Contributions

$90,605
Church Donations

$32,370
Misc. Income

Support

Thank you to our corporate partners!

We are thankful to have business leaders in the community who prioritize investing in the well-being of our underserved neighbors. Our mission depends on the continued support of the community in the Athens area.

2024 Corporate Sponsors

Thornton Brothers 85 Years

Roll Off Systems

The Ramon and Amanda Thompson Family Fund

Georgia Skin Cancer & Aesthetic Dermatology

Athens Eye Doctors & Surgeons, LLC

Southern Home Design and Construction 706-224-2343

CEI Cable East

Dr. Stanley D. Satterfield and team

Behavioral Safety

FBG Fortson, Bentley & Griffin, P.A. Attorneys at Law
Celebrating 75 Years

Merrill A Bank of America Company
ARH Wealth Management Group

Ron J. Seib CFP, ChFC, AAMS
Edward Jones

Ministry Highlights

New and Renewed Partnerships

We formed a new partnership with the Athens General Practice Dental Residency, which allowed for expanded dental services to a much larger number of patients. The dental residents, Dr. Grove, Dr. Johnson, and Dr. Wade, have been an incredible blessing to our patients and team. We renewed a partnership with the Medical College of Georgia here in Athens, as our staff medical director is now adjunct faculty, opening the door for medical students to begin coming back to Mercy after a several-year hiatus.

We Welcomed a Full-Time Medical Director

Dr. Cole Phillips is on staff and seeing patients regularly. A full-time medical director allows for improved clinic processes, continuity of care, and access for our patients, ultimately leading to improved patient care while providing steady vision and leadership for the clinic.

Treating the Whole Person

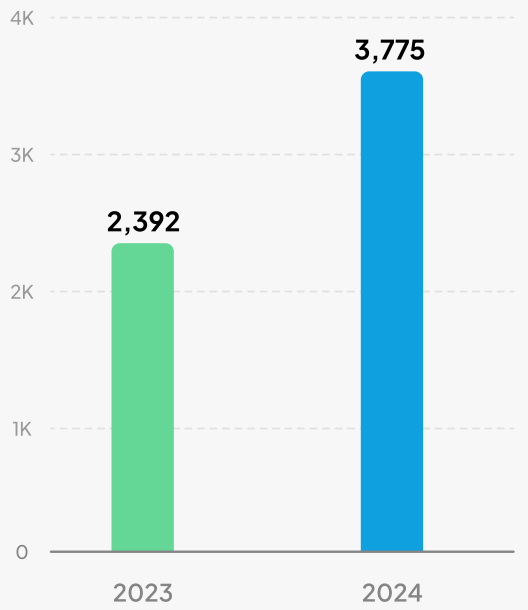
Our whole-person care department continues to grow and offer crucial services to our patients. In 2024, we welcomed interns from two new universities, opening the door for future interns from these programs. We launched a pilot microloan program, giving $2,000 in loans to Mercy patients. We also put on three Mercy Moves events, serving our community together with our patients as we invite them to be active participants in what God is doing.

Made Medication More Accessible

The Mercy Pharmacy operated again in 2024, dispensing over 2,500 medications free of charge to our patients. We also continued to advocate for our patients receiving high-priced medications directly from pharmaceutical companies via the MMAP program, securing over $600,000 in medicines for our patients in 2024.

Patient Encounters

58%
INCREASE



Quantifying our Impact in 2024

1,989
Medical Visits

1,004
Dental Visits

783 Dental Procedures

782
Whole-Person Care Visits

Total Patient Interactions:
5,907

Value Of Care Provided:
$1.2 Million

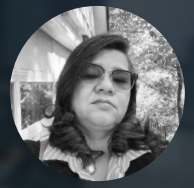
3,775 Patient Encounters
58% **increase** from 2023 encounters of 2,392 patients.

We saw
244
new patients

14,082
Student Volunteer Hours

1,704
Provider Volunteer Hours

Stories of the Mercy Community



Meet Dory

Dory has been a patient at Mercy for over **3 years** now and loves to share the blessing that Mercy has been for her in her life:

"If I had one word to describe Mercy it would be **grateful**. It's **like a family there** and I know if ever need anything, all I have to do is call.

I have a real connection with the doctors there who have helped me greatly over the years. Mercy has coordinated care for me countless times and **it's not an exaggeration when I say that I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Mercy.**

Mercy is a place **I tell all of my friends about** and many of them are now also patients and have come to appreciate the wonderful and caring people there."



Meet Carlton

Carlton has been a patient at Mercy for over **5 years**. Here's what he had to say about why he continues to seek care at Mercy:

"I get my medical and dental services at Mercy, which has had a big impact on me.

But most of all, it's the **support and care that I get at Mercy that makes a difference**, especially when I've been in crisis in my life. I'm 12 months sober right now and thankful to have a place like Mercy for my health needs.

I refer a lot of people to Mercy, and I try to **serve my community because of what places like Mercy in this city have done for me."**



Volunteer Spotlight

Katelyn has volunteered for over **400 hours** at Mercy during the past 3 years. She will graduate from UGA in Spring 2025 and plans to pursue medical school.

"For me, Mercy embodies many **small moments of hope and strength.** I am reminded of so many sweet faces that have humbled me with their gentleness and kindness despite the many struggles these individuals endure that threaten to harden and embitter their hearts.

Mercy keeps me coming back because the patients represent the resilience of the human spirit. Most of all, my time at Mercy continues to confirm the reality that **true healing in our broken world is incomplete without the hope that is the finished work of Christ."**



Where We're Going

"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.
Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" Isaiah 43:18-19

Vision Casting for the Future

One of our goals in 2025 is to complete a five-year strategic plan as we prepare to launch a "Mercy 2030 Campaign." The world is changing rapidly and so are our community's healthcare needs. We are eager to listen to God and seek His will for what Mercy will become over the next five years.

Fundraising Growth

We aim to drastically increase revenue through continued local fundraising efforts along with the help of a grant consulting agency to increase significantly our grant funding. We pray that the Lord will provide abundant growth to allow for expanded services in the near future. We are setting out to raise **$1.5 million** in 2025!

Core Staff Hires

We plan to welcome a full-time Nurse Practitioner in mid-2025 to improve patient access to vital primary care services. Mercy seeks to provide excellent and consistent healthcare services, and this position will allow us to do those things more effectively.

It's an exciting time to be at Mercy. 2025 is poised to be another foundational year as we prepare to adapt and grow into the health center God is calling us to. Now is a great time to join us and have a front-row seat to all the Lord is doing at Mercy!

We need YOU to continue serving our community!



At Mercy Health Center, we rely on the hands, hearts, & prayers of our community to fulfill our mission.

You can join us by volunteering, praying, and/or financially contributing to our mission.
To learn more, get involved, or give, visit our website or send us an email!

“O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” - Micah 6:8

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