

Written by Mallory Gleich  
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As [Mercy Care](#) marks its 40th year serving Arizonans, the nonprofit health plan is commemorating its milestone with an initiative rooted in compassion and community support.

To kick off its ruby anniversary, Mercy Care challenged its staff to collect 40,000 bottles of water in 40 days - a symbolic goal reflecting the organization's four decades of service. The effort quickly surpassed expectations, with employees rallying to donate more than 51,000 bottles, all of which were delivered to [St. Mary's Food Bank](#), a vital resource currently facing urgent demand amid Arizona's extreme summer heat.

"St. Mary's is a lifeline for many people as it works to keep the most vulnerable population hydrated during the hottest months of the year," said DéMario Vaughn, Mercy Care community relations manager.

Mercy Care, which provides access to Medicaid and Medicare services through AHCCCS for children, families, seniors, and individuals with physical or developmental disabilities, has long prioritized health equity and holistic community well-being.

The water drive is just one example of its continued commitment to those values. The anniversary also reflects a broader legacy of giving, as Mercy Care is nearing \$40 million in community investment - a milestone that aligns with the organization's 40-year commitment to underserved populations.

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"Through Mercy C.A.R.E.S., which stands for **Community Action Resources Education and Service** and is Mercy Care's community giving initiative, we also partner with organizations that advance health equity and furthers the vision that everyone, particularly those who are underserved with complex health needs, deserves to live a healthier life, and achieve their full potential," Vaughn said.

Mercy C.A.R.E.S. supports AHCCCS' Whole Person Care Initiative, focusing on key social determinants of health such as housing, behavioral health, chronic condition management, and substance use recovery. The program extends support through grants, sponsorships, volunteer efforts, and board participation.

"Each year, Mercy C.A.R.E.S. awards grants to projects that demonstrate positive impact to the community and align with one or more of Mercy Care's community health focus areas," said Vaughn. "In the past few years alone, Mercy C.A.R.E.S. has helped direct funds of nearly \$40 million to community reinvestment projects that help manage chronic conditions; support mental health and well-being; address housing security; and empower recovery from substance use."

As temperatures soar and community needs remain urgent, Mercy Care's 40th anniversary campaign underscores its enduring mission: to support Arizona's most vulnerable populations with compassion, resources, and meaningful action. For more, visit [mercycares.org](https://mercycares.org).