



DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

SEARCH PROSPECTUS

Detroit, Michigan  
[www.mercyed.net](http://www.mercyed.net)

Start Date: This is an Immediate Opportunity



Advocates for  
Catholic Education  
Leadership and  
Advancement



## Empowering Women and Girls Through Education in Detroit



### About Mercy Education Project

Founded in 1992 as a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Mercy Education Project (MEP) is a mission-driven nonprofit serving women and girls from low-income families in Southwest Detroit. Rooted in the Mercy values of compassion, justice, service, and community, MEP exists to expand access to education, life skills, and economic opportunity for those most often excluded from traditional systems.

Mercy Education Project began as a tutoring and summer program serving 14 girls. By the following year, GED classes for women were added. Witnessing a considerable need for remedial education for Detroit women who had dropped out of school, MEP added adult basic education and adult literacy components.

Once a very small tutoring program, Mercy Education Project now helps hundreds of girls and women in Detroit each year to succeed in education and move toward personal greatness. MEP continuously adapts to meet the community's needs, while we remain true to the vision of our founders.

For more than three decades, Mercy Education Project has been a trusted and respected presence in the Detroit community. The organization walks alongside women and girls as they pursue academic achievement, workforce readiness, and long-term stability. Today, MEP operates with approximately \$1.5 million in annual revenue and is supported by a committed Board of Directors, dedicated staff, and an engaged network of philanthropic partners.

## Mission

Mercy Education Project creates a learning community that serves women and girls to position them for success.

## Vision

Every woman and girl has a right to reach her full potential



134

total women's program  
students served

61%

of women's program  
students test at 2nd-3rd  
grade level equivalency at  
enrollment

64%

of women's program  
students live in Detroit,  
with the rest hailing from  
18 other cities across the  
metro area

13

new GED graduates

## Women's Program

MEP's Women's Program provides highly individualized educational services dedicated to helping every woman pass the GED test. The Women's Program also offers college, career, and job readiness preparation, designed to support women as they transition into higher education, the workforce, specialized training and reaching their full potential.

Our Women's Educational Programs invite women to participate in a learning community that allows them to work at their own pace, address barriers to learning, and identify their personal learning styles. What sets MEP apart from other programs is the curriculum-based content and a structured, yet highly individualized, approach to learning.

GED Preparation and Adult Basic Education are part of the core services provided in the women's programs. Our learning program includes classroom instruction, on-line resources, and one-to-one or small group tutoring. An initial assessment helps us develop an individual learning plan for each student. MEP teaches the content and skills, including work readiness skills, which students need to succeed.



## Girls' Program

MEP broadens students' experiences while increasing their academic skills, self-esteem and leadership abilities as they plan for their bright futures. Programming includes:

***One-to-One Tutoring Program:*** MEP supports girls in grades 2-12 through education, leadership development, and social-emotional learning. We help girls who are one or more years behind their grade level in reading or math gain the academic confidence they need to succeed in school.

***College and Career Readiness (CCR) Program:*** CCR (College and Career Readiness) for high school students grades 9 - 12 is a weekly afterschool program to prepare girls for college and explore career fields. 100% of students who have completed the CCR program have graduated from high school and enrolled in a college or university.

***Project Scientist STEAM Club:*** MEP hosts an interactive STEAM program where students grades 2 - 5 meet 90 minutes per week and engage in exciting hands-on experiments and activities.

***GET-IT Club:*** MEP hosts a weekly information technology program where middle school students have access to technology curriculum including HTML, Website Design, Coding, Robotics, and more! Our thanks to Michigan Council of Women in Technology (MCWT) Foundation for making GET-IT (Girls Exploring Together - Information Technology) possible.

***Summer Day-Camps:*** A diverse slate of summer day camps for girls of all ages is offered free of charge. Ranging from 4-14 days, these day-camps fuel fun and learning at the same time.



72

total girls' program  
students served

73%

of girls' program students  
returned from last year

100%

girls who attended  
regularly showed  
meaningful gains in math  
and/or reading

85%

of girls' program students  
are Hispanic

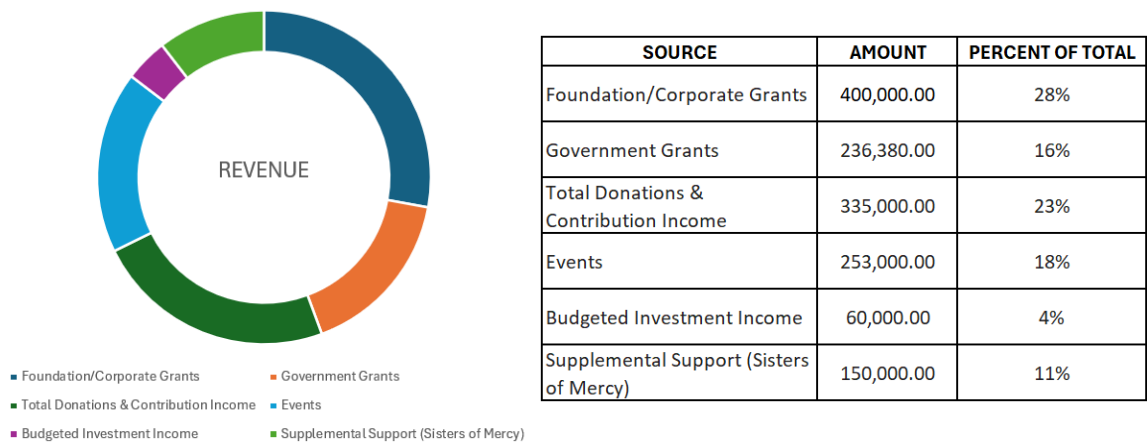
100%

of girls' program students  
would recommend the  
program to a friend



# Financials & Resources

The organization is funded through the generous support of individuals, organizations, foundations, and corporate partners who share a commitment to its mission and long-term sustainability.



In addition to financial contributions, the MEP benefits from significant in-kind support through the engagement of more than 100+ dedicated volunteers. These volunteers serve in a variety of essential roles, including tutors and instructors, program organizers, painters, and members of the Board and its committees, providing critical expertise, leadership, and services that enhance operational efficiency and amplify the organization’s impact.





## Position

Mercy Education Project seeks a Director of Development to join its senior leadership team at an important moment in the organization's continued growth and sustainability. This role offers a meaningful opportunity for an experienced, mission-aligned advancement leader to steward and strengthen the philanthropic foundation that makes MEP's work possible. The Director of Development serves as the organization's chief advancement leader, guiding all contributed revenue in support of programs, operations, and long-term vitality.

Reporting to the Executive Director and working closely with the Board Development Committee, the Director of Development provides strategic and operational leadership across all areas of advancement, including individual giving, major gifts, foundations, government funding, special events, and development communications.

The Director of Development is a key member of MEP's leadership team and leads a small development staff in a collaborative, mission-centered environment. This leader plays a central role in articulating MEP's impact, cultivating donor relationships, and ensuring that the organization's story is communicated with clarity, authenticity, and purpose. This is not simply a fundraising position. It is a senior leadership role for someone who understands development as a relational, values-driven vocation.

A comprehensive position description, detailing all responsibilities, competencies, and performance expectations will be provided to candidates as they advance in our search process.

## Application Procedure

To apply, please submit the following documents, confidentially, and as separate PDF attachments in one email to Katherine Shubnell at [katie.shubnell@acelasolutions.com](mailto:katie.shubnell@acelasolutions.com).

- Letter of Interest summarizing your motivation for the position and the leadership strengths you would bring to the Mercy Education Project.
- Current resume with all appropriate dates included.
- List of five references including each person's name, relationship to you, phone number, and email address (references will not be contacted without your approval).



**ACELA**  
SOLUTIONS

Advocates for  
Catholic Education  
Leadership and  
Advancement

ACELA Solutions is a trusted national partner serving catholic schools, dioceses, foundations, religious communities, and social ministries. We deliver mission-driven leadership solutions rooted in discernment, strategy, and stewardship, helping catholic institutions strengthen their mission, culture, and capacity.

With decades of experience across catholic schools, dioceses, religious communities, and ministries, our team brings lived expertise to every engagement. We accompany our partners through a relationship-centered approach grounded in faith, professionalism, and commitment to mission over margin.

ACELA's integrated model spans executive search, leadership coaching, team and culture development, strategic planning, organizational and operational assessments, school system strategy and design, board development, long-term counsel, and helping institutions build cultures of philanthropy that support long-term vitality. We help institutions navigate transitions, build strong teams, and design structures that sustain growth and mission.

ACELA Solutions is formed through legacy, built for leadership, and honored to walk with catholic communities seeking clarity and transformational impact.

Learn more at [www.acelasolutions.com](http://www.acelasolutions.com)