

# Mercy Medical Center is Edna Jacurak's 'second family'



While longtime Mercy Medical Center staffer Edna Jacurak's official title is Collections Manager, she spends her spare time working on completely different types of collections - items for Mercy's annual outreach programs.

Chairwoman of outreach for its Mission Integration Committee, Jacurak manages three drives a year.

In the spring, the group collects items for an institution, such as Marian House, or an area in the hospital that needs donations, such as the NICU unit.

The second collection is supplies for a community school in need; this year it helped Ss. James and John School and Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary.

The final outreach will be toys and clothing for children for Christmas.

"I am passionate about the collections and I enjoy working with all the people involved," Jacurak said. "Donations come from departments all over the hospital and off-site areas as well. I am overwhelmed by the compassion that Mercy employees demonstrate by their willingness to help others."

Jacurak, a parishioner of Sacred Heart of Mary in Graceland Park, has worked two stints at Mercy totaling 36 years, the first lasting five years in payroll.

"Then I took a 17-year maternity leave," she said. "I quit when I had my first child, but found my way back to Mercy. It's my second family."

The Mission Integration Committee meets every other month to brainstorm ways to keep alive the hospital's mission, which begins: "Like the Sisters of Mercy before us, we witness God's healing love for all people by providing excellent clinical and residential services within a community of compassionate care."

"We're big business now, but we've still maintained that family unit," Jacurak said. "We want to make sure we don't lose that."

In addition to the outreach collections, Jacurak is also on the Catherine's Day Planning Committee, which celebrates Sister Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. In 2002, she became a Mercy Associate, helping the sisters' mission.

"I enjoy working at Mercy and admire everything that it stands for," Jacurak said. "It is my personal mission to educate new staff members about Mercy and (its) history and to keep the mission going for many generations to come. It's important that the Mercy values are taught and incorporated into the staff's daily work life."

She does not intend to slow down.

"I'm 70 and have no intention of retiring," Jacurak said. "As long as I'm healthy I'll continue to work and serve others. Mercy is such a big part of my life; I can't imagine not being here."