



nity in Mercy's Community

Foundations shifted, floors bowed, walls cracked and furnishings were ruined. The Flood of 2008 left many homes – and dreams – destroyed, but it couldn't overcome the tide of goodwill flood-impacted Mercy employees felt from their workplace.

In the disaster's overwhelming aftermath, the Mercy Foundation almost immediately established an Employee Flood Relief Fund. This offered immediate assistance by providing each flood-affected employee with a \$750 gift card to help with critical needs. Long-term needs continue to be addressed as employees rebuild and recover. In all, 221 Mercy employees have been significantly affected by the flood.

Erika White, a financial counselor at MercyCare Blairs Ferry, her husband, Shawn, and their children, ages 7 and 3, lost their Vinton home in the flood. On June 11, the water was 103 feet away from their home; by 10 p.m. the water was at their back step. The Whites evacuated and moved in with Shawn's parents, where they remain until they can buy a new home.

Erika received a call from the Foundation office asking about her situation. When she returned to work, she received the \$750 gift card.

"It was nice to know that, even though Mercy was going through so much on its own, it still cared about its employees," says Erika. "They said to use the gift card to help with any needs we may have. I haven't heard about other companies who have been so great with their employees."

While at work in the Information Services department at Mercy Medical Center, Palo resident Deb Thomas got a panicked phone call

from her daughter Chealsey, 24, on June 9—two days before the flood reached Palo. Chealsey had taken a call from the city warning citizens of the impending flood.

Deb remembers, "I told her to calm down and not to panic. We have never flooded. The closest it had ever been, even in '93, is two blocks away."

When she left work that day, Deb fully intended to return to work as usual June 10, but the flood changed those plans as her basement filled with water. Fortunately, they had moved their basement furniture to the first floor of the ranch-style home she shared with husband Phil. The Thomas family stayed with friends for five weeks during the clean-up period.

Deb says, "I called in (to work) and my boss said, 'Take care of your house. Take care of what you need.' And I got paid the whole time."

A few days after starting the clean-up, she adds, "Janice Charles (wife of Mercy President and CEO Tim Charles), representing the Foundation, called me to say there were funds for displaced employees. This meant we were taken care of. While my employer was suffering, they cared. Psychologically, it was huge. You're looking at destruction of your belongings and beyond that, the things that made your house function. We knew we'd have all those expenses and to know my employer was helping was huge. It was the first money we received."

Deb came back to work June 19 and says,

"I called in (to work) and my boss said, 'Take care of your house. Take care of what you need.' "

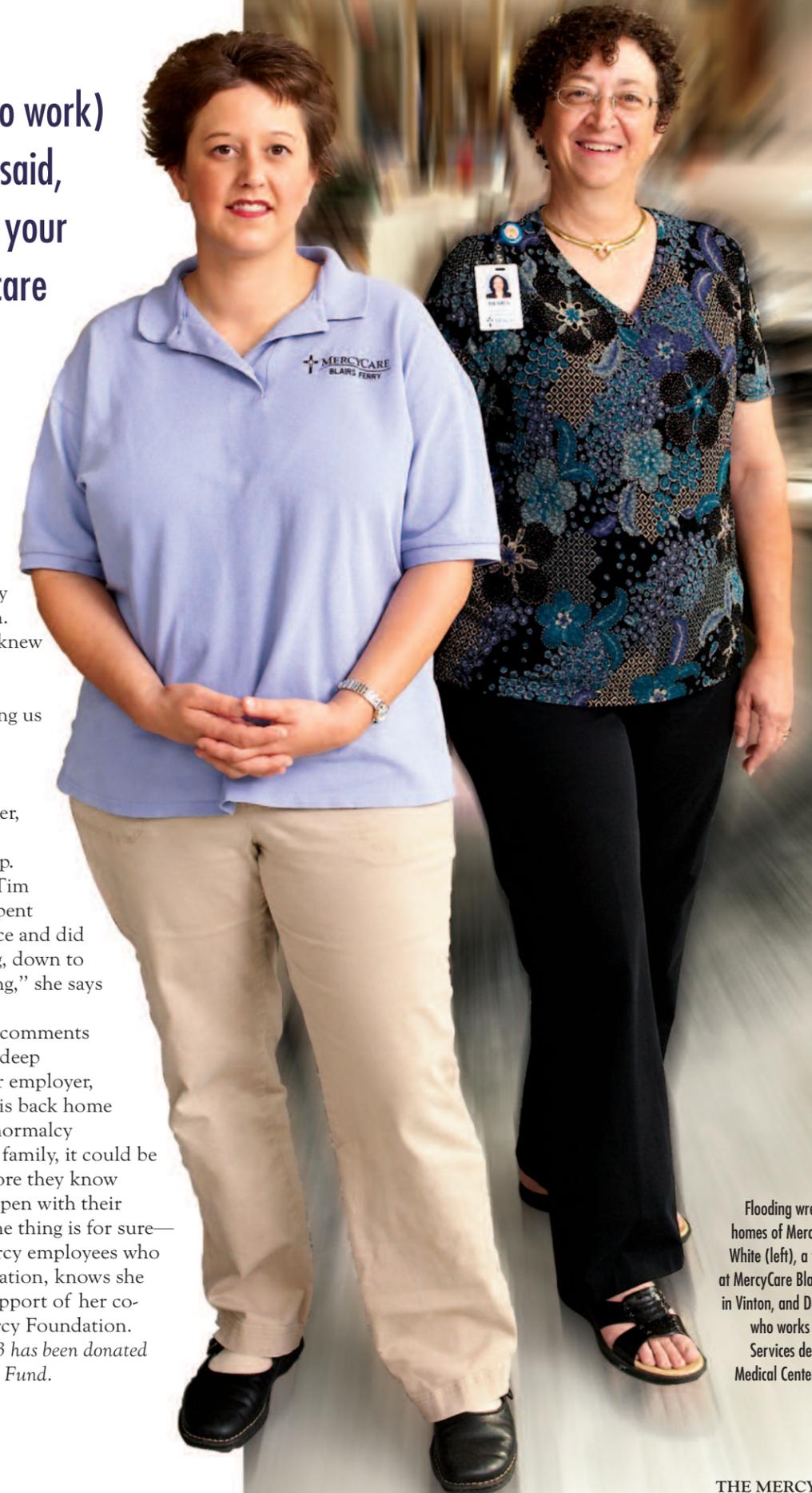
*Deb Thomas
Mercy employee*

"It was good to come in and see the progress to get Mercy up and running again. I knew I had a job. I knew my workplace would survive. So I could concentrate on making us survive."

A clean-up crew, organized through Mercy Medical Center, showed up at the Thomas home to help. The crew, including Tim Charles' son Ben, "spent three days at our place and did just about everything, down to cleaning and bleaching," she says gratefully.

Erika and Deb's comments echo a common and deep appreciation for their employer, Mercy. Deb's family is back home with some sense of normalcy restored. For Erika's family, it could be one to two years before they know exactly what will happen with their Vinton home. But one thing is for sure—Erika, like other Mercy employees who suffered flood devastation, knows she has the continued support of her co-workers and the Mercy Foundation.

To date, \$225,133 has been donated to the Employee Relief Fund.



Flooding wreaked havoc in the homes of Mercy employees Erika White (left), a financial counselor at MercyCare Blairs Ferry who lives in Vinton, and Deb Thomas (right), who works in the Information Services department at Mercy Medical Center and lives in Palo.