



STRATEGIC PLAN



MAPPING OUT THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For more than 5 years, Mercy Goods has been dedicated to working with at-risk youth in the Richmond, Texas area. Formerly under the umbrella of another local nonprofit that serves Richmond, Mercy Goods is stepping out independently into a new chapter. This is a pivotal moment for us – a moment of opportunity to transform our organization and refine our program framework. It will be characterized by careful evaluation, and a rededication to our mission. We hope you will come alongside as we reshape our strategies, increase our impact, and solidify our influence so that we continue to provide the opportunity for every teen who walks through our program to have a mentor and a chance to become who they were meant to be.



HE SAVED US, NOT BECAUSE OF THE RIGHTEOUS THINGS WE HAD DONE, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS MERCY.

TITUS 3:5

MISSION STATEMENT

Mercy Goods exists to create employment, job-training, and mentorship for at-risk youth.

We are a social enterprise that applies commercial strategies to maximize improvements to financial, social, and environmental well-being.

VISION STATEMENT

Grow and multiply opportunities for healing and restoration through work.

Our vision is nothing less than realizing the collective impact of a community of young people learning how to make a living not take a living.

“

*At Mercy Goods we **build, refine, mold, and make new.** Not just with the objects we work on, but with the area students we employ.*



OUR PROGRAMS

EMPLOYMENT

Our goal is to provide both the practical need of legal employment and the benefit of having a first line on a resume. Students are integrated as team members, emphasizing personal accountability and the impact of their actions on their peers. Within our workshop and retail space, we cultivate a safe and supportive work environment conducive to learning, skill development, and guidance toward prospective career paths for students within LCISD. The Mercy Goods retail space serves as a platform to market custom furniture, home accessories, and socially conscious products. Moreover, it serves as a venue for other local social enterprise ventures and artisans to exhibit and sell their merchandise.

JOB TRAINING

Our purpose is to provide students with spaces and opportunities for workforce development which helps develop skills essential for their future. Through hands-on work, we aim to cultivate problem-solving abilities and attention to detail in our students. By setting high standards, we encourage our workers to build confidence and take pride in their accomplishments. We emphasize real-world applications by involving students in the entire process when we receive a custom furniture order. This involvement ranges from visiting job sites to measure spaces, estimating project costs, purchasing materials, to providing customer service.

MENTORSHIPS

At-risk youth facing tough situations are more likely to stay in school and perform better academically when they have strong, meaningful connections with adults. Employment and job training play a crucial role in fostering these mentoring relationships where real change occurs. Each employee will be matched with a mentor who dedicates one-on-one time every two weeks. Our aim is to cultivate a supportive and friendly environment that goes beyond mere programs, activities, or paychecks. Through these relationships, we encourage our students to envision their futures differently and provide practical steps to help them achieve their maximum potential. These mentor-mentee connections are established through strategic collaborations with nonprofits, churches, local leaders, and other businesses within the community.

PROGRAMS CONTINUED

TEEN MOM NIGHTS

In 2019, Mercy Goods launched an initiative to support pregnant and parenting teens in Lamar CISD. The Teen Mom Nights aim to engage, empower, and assist young parents on their path to financial independence by fostering skill development and creating opportunities for future employment. During the event, participants learn to craft marketable products like jewelry or candles and receive a kit to continue making these items at home. They can then sell their creations at the Mercy Goods storefront. Through collaboration with the LCISD Activities Supporting Adolescent Parenting (ASAP) Program, generous donors, local small-business owners, and volunteers, Teen Mom Nights are now held bi-monthly.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP WITH ELIJAH RISING

In 2022, Mercy Goods entered a workforce development and social enterprise collaboration with Elijah Rising, an anti-human trafficking nonprofit based out of Houston. Through this collaboration, Mercy Goods took over the making and selling of all Elijah Rising’s survivor-made candles and other goods. In May of 2022, Mercy Goods brought on a full-time artisan from Elijah Rising’s Restorative Care Program – a program which helps women recover from the trauma of sexual exploitation, obtain life skills, and find rewarding career paths. “B” has been employed by Mercy Goods for almost 2 years and is thriving in her role as Mercy Goods first full-time Maker of ‘goods that do good’.



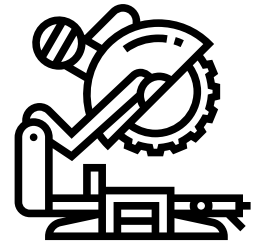
BACKGROUND & HISTORY

THE INITIAL IDEA for Mercy Goods was envisioned by Zach & April Lambert in 2016. Their concept involved hiring men who had finished their program at a Drug Treatment Center, training them in **furniture design, providing mentorship, and offering them their first work experience**. Zach, who was already a carpenter running his own business, aimed to make a positive impact in his community by using his skills to provide **job-training and support workforce development**.



ZACH'S DREAM was temporarily halted as his family transitioned from the Austin area to Fort Bend County to plant a church. Shortly after the move, Zach and his wife April, an art teacher at Lamar Consolidated High School, **noticed high school students dropping out** due to the need to assist with home repairs or work after Hurricane Harvey. Zach played a crucial role in providing disaster relief in the Richmond area, **forming connections** within the community that later paved the way for the creation of Mercy Goods.

AFTER A SERIES of divine appointments and in ways only God could orchestrate, Mercy Goods started shifting from **dream to reality**. The original vision shifted as well, as Zach spent more time with students in LCISD, he felt called to create a program that would **benefit the at-risk youth in his community**.



FOLLOWING FORTUITOUS MEETINGS with local nonprofit **Attack Poverty** and through relationships with the economic development director of the City of Richmond, county commissioners, as well as a few supportive and well-connected friends, Zach was introduced to St. John's Methodist Church who had an empty building on the corner of **Morton and 5th Street in downtown Richmond**. This building, previously a youth facility, had fallen into disrepair and required significant renovation. Due to its prime location in the historic downtown Richmond area, Mercy Goods successfully **applied for a grant** from the City of Richmond, which generously funded 50% of the renovation costs. The building was transformed into not only a **woodshop and metal shop, but also a storefront** with ample retail space to showcase Mercy Goods furniture and merchandise, all **handcrafted by Mercy Goods employees**.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS & IMPLICATIONS

FROM SEPTEMBER 2019 TO MARCH 2024 , Mercy Goods operated under Attack Poverty's umbrella.

Within this period, Zach assumed the role of Communications Director at Attack Poverty. While in this position, he not only oversaw Mercy Goods but also took on various responsibilities such as Area Director and managed the operations of Attack Poverty's domestic sites. His efforts primarily shifted towards the organization's overarching mission and collective efforts.

Zach found himself in the unique position of being tasked with responsibilities spanning two distinct roles within Attack Poverty. While fully committed to contributing meaningfully to both Attack Poverty's mission and objectives as well as Mercy Goods, being in two roles hindered his ability to effectively discharge the duties of both roles simultaneously. The primary contributing factor to this challenge was the inherently demanding nature of both roles, which required significant time and attention to execute effectively. Despite earnest efforts to allocate resources and manage time efficiently, Zach found himself stretched thin, unable to devote the requisite focus and energy to each role adequately.

These factors have contributed to a slow growth rate for Mercy Goods, as evident in the available PNLs. On March 8, 2024, Attack Poverty revealed a significant leadership change and financial constraints that necessitated a shift in operations. Following a restructuring and organization-wide layoffs, Mercy Goods separated from the umbrella of Attack Poverty.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

Mercy Goods is in the process of obtaining a 501(c)(3) designation and executing a donor solicitation campaign to secure the necessary operational funds to support the mission during this transitional phase.

WHERE WE'RE GOING

Creating employment and achieving greater impact by serving more kids, more often. This will be done by holding fast to our strategic priorities and goals.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

SERVE MORE STUDENTS, MORE OFTEN

Strengthen existing partnership with LCISD to identify at-risk youth with the potential of dropping out.

Maximize our storefront to provide retail space and opportunities for student artisans to produce, create, and sell their goods.

ACHIEVE GREATER IMPACT WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Create additional opportunities for employment, job-training and mentorship for at-risk adults in our community.

Develop and implement a community building strategy that includes paid Make-It and Take-It workshops lead by Mercy Goods artisans.

INCREASE RETAIL AND ONLINE SALES

Develop a marketing and social media strategy to increase organic foot traffic inside the Mercy Goods storefront as well as drive online sales.

Collaborate with other independent makers and small-business owners to showcase their goods in store.

REALIZE A STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION

Build a robust giving program tailored towards high-net worth individuals, with emphasis on planned giving.

Secure corporate partnerships with the goal of leveraging the full scope of their assets to support our mission priorities.

STRATEGIC GOALS

SHORT TERM GOALS

ESSENTIAL STAFF & PAYROLL REQUIREMENTS

FULL TIME DIRECTOR

FULL TIME MAKER

PART TIME STUDENT MAKER

PART TIME OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

TOTAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR PAYROLL:

\$164,060

STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL BY 2025

ESSENTIAL STAFF & PAYROLL REQUIREMENTS
PLUS 5 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PROGRAMMING AT ALL TIMES

FULL TIME DIRECTOR

FULL TIME MAKER

FULL TIME OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

5 PART TIME STUDENT MAKERS

TOTAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR PAYROLL:

223, 340

PROJECTED MONTHLY SPEND (BASED ON SHORT TERM GOALS)

Mercy Goods is estimating total operating expenses to be \$20,000 per month. We will meet our budget with a combination of donor support and furniture and retail sales.

| FIXED COSTS | COSTS |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Salaries & Wages | \$13,670 |
| Insurance | \$300 |
| Rent | N/A |
| Advertising | \$250 |
| Office Expenses | \$50 |
| Utilities | \$550 |
| Internet Expenses | \$70 |
| Bank & Merchant Fees | \$200 |
| Depreciation Expense | \$100 |
| Payroll Taxes | \$850 |
| Program Supplies | \$3,500 |
| Other Expenses | \$000 |
| TOTAL FIXED COSTS | \$19,540 |

| 2023 RETAIL SALES | TOTALS |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| GROSS SALES | \$80,232.00 |
| Goods Sold | \$80,232.00 |
| Discounts | \$18,529 |
| Tax | \$4,246.58 |
| NET SALES 2023 | \$61,907.32 |

| BEST SELLERS | TOTALS |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Furniture | \$45,005 |
| Candles | \$12,819 |
| T-Shirts | \$4,915 |
| Cutting Boards | \$2,675 |
| TOTAL SALES REVENUE | \$65,414 |

By holding fast to our strategic priorities to **realize a strong financial position** and **increase online and retail sales**, we are confident in our ability to achieve our short term revenue goals.

SUPPORT OUR WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

WHAT WILL YOUR DONATION GO TOWARD?

\$200

FUND A STUDENT MAKER FOR A WEEK

\$500

SPONSOR A TEEN MOM NIGHT

\$1,000

PROVIDE RESOURCES & BASIC NEEDS FOR OUR STUDENTS

\$5,000

FUND ONGOING COSTS OF MAINTAINING TOOLS & PURCHASING PROGRAM SUPPLIES

\$10,000

FULLY FUND A STUDENT THROUGH OUR PROGRAM FOR ONE YEAR!

\$ ♥

MERCY GOODS RELIES ON YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS TO EXPAND OUR PROGRAMS. WE ARE THANKFUL FOR ANY AMOUNT YOU CAN GIVE!