



Misericordia University

FEBRUARY 2023

Ruth Matthews Bourger: Women with Children Program

Luzerne County, PA

THE PHARE PROGRAM: AT A GLANCE

The PHARE Act was established in 2010 to provide the funding throughout the Commonwealth to assist with the creation, rehabilitation, and support of affordable housing. Currently, the program is funded by two funding sources, the Realty Transfer Tax Fund and the Marcellus Shale Fund.

REALTY TRANSFER TAX FUND

- ❖ Available in all PA Counties.
- ❖ Awarded 883 grants since 2016.
- ❖ 396 projects completed to date.
- ❖ \$149,865,897 funds awarded to date.

MARCELLUS SHALE FUND

- ❖ Currently available in 32 Counties.
- ❖ Awarded 393 grants since 2012.
- ❖ 267 projects completed to date.
- ❖ \$70,123,466 funds awarded to date.

“Housing Is Pivotal. It’s the Anchor to our whole Program. –Katherine Pohlidal

The Director of the WWC program at Misericordia University, Katherine Pohlidal interviewed with PHFA to highlight the community impact of the \$300,000 grant that was awarded to Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children program in 2020.



Established in 2000, this unique two-generation model is the only university-based, single-mother housing program in the state of Pennsylvania. that supports mothers and their children. The program provides a four-year higher education, meal plans, holistic wrap-around services, and housing at the university. Countrywide, there are only 7 other university-based programs that offer housing services.

With the support of PHARE funds, The Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program assisted 16 single-mother households with housing assistance and financial counseling and education.



Participants of the program have suffered situations such as domestic violence, homelessness, food insecurity, and other situations that are commonly present at the poverty level such as a widowed mother in her mid-thirties who went through the program with young twins. With no prior higher education experience and limited experience in part-time retail, she found herself unable to support her family. Through hard work and dedication and support from PHARE grant funds, she was able to obtain her degree and is now a media marketing coordinator living independently in Luzerne, Pennsylvania with her two sons.

As of academic year 2021-22, 42 families have graduated from the WWC program and have gone on to professional placement in their respective career paths with 80% of the graduates achieving their master’s degree or higher.

