Strategic Giving Charity Evaluation

Mercy Chefs

ROG Rating: “A” Charity, “Strong” Fit for Sample Family

**Charity Core Mission**: “We exist to provide professionally prepared, restaurant-quality meals to victims, volunteers, and first responders in natural disasters and national emergencies, and we partner with existing like-minded organizations to further their mission by providing food service in underserved communities across the country.”

**Locations Served:** 14 States **Year of Founding:** 2006

**Official US Incorporation Name:** [Mercy Chefs Inc.,](https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/detailsPage?ein=205050449&name=Mercy%20Chefs%20Inc.&city=Portsmouth&state=VA&countryAbbr=US&dba=&type=CHARITIES,%20COPYOFRETURNS&orgTags=CHARITIES&orgTags=COPYOFRETURNS) EIN 20-5050449

**Affiliations:** Independent, Names of Affiliates

**Current Total Annual Revenue:** [$6.4M in 2020](https://mercychefs.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2020-Form-990.pdf) ([2020 IRS 990 Form](https://mercychefs.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2020-Form-990.pdf))

**Recent Updates and Accomplishments:**

* Served a record-breaking 7.8M meals in 2020 across disaster zones, along with additional meals for families in need.
* [Recipient of the Land Rover Defender Service Awards, November 2022.](https://www.landroverusa.com/experiences/events-and-sponsorships/defender-service-awards/index.html)
* [Gary LeBlanc, founder, was profiled on PBS News Hour.](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/brief/398728/gary-leblanc)

**Notable Charitable Partners:** Hands of Hope, Smithfield, Sysco ([Full Corporate Partner List](https://mercychefs.com/become-a-corporate-partner))

**Charity Reputation:**

* [GuideStar “Gold” Rating](https://www.guidestar.org/profile/20-5050449)
* [Charity Navigator 93%, 4-Star Rating](https://www.charitynavigator.org/ein/205050449)
* [Charity pays substantial attention to transparency](https://mercychefs.com/financials/) and offers ample publicly-accessible data.
* Charity reported net assets of $1.8M after liabilities in 2019. This is a relatively low amount compared to annual operating costs, but this charity’s model is to utilize contributions immediately.
* Charity received significant additional funding in 2020, doubling previous year’s fundraising.

**Impact Stories:**

* [Extensive impact report provided by charity.](https://mercychefs.com/financials/)

**ROG Evaluation Notes:**

* **A contribution to this organization will save and greatly improve lives.**
* **This charity has experienced massive growth during the challenging periods of the pandemic and natural disasters, stepping up during a key time of need.**
* This charity’s operating costs are in fitting with its complicated, on-demand and multi-location mission.
* **Administrative and fundraising costs for this charity are reasonable, and they provide a high level of donor service.**
* Initial data indicates that fundraising and administrative costs exceed our benchmark 7% threshold, but President and Co-Founder pay are held to 5%. The multi-location and high logistic burden of the services for the charity justify higher administrative expenses.
* Mercy Chefs receives grants from a wide range of supporters. This includes The Christian Broadcast Network, and other grantors who are known for values-based contributions and statements. Donors should be aware of these associations when considering a high profile gift. An extensive list of corporate partners is evidence that Mercy Chefs has avoided controversy.
* Mercy Chefs pledges to keep donor lists private and not resell lists of supporters. Note that grants from foundations may be subject to IRS-mandated disclosure.
* A large gift to this charity will improve their long-term sustainability.

**Summary ROG Evaluation:** In our opinion, this is an “A” rating charity. Contributions will have proven, life-changing impact and a very high percentage of contributions go directly to the core need.

**Impact to the Sample Family’s Philanthropic Mission:** This charity is a strong fit for The Sample Family’s charitable goals.

*Note: ROG ‘s research team works hard to present the best available information on this charity at the time of publication. However, we can’t know everything, so this report is subject to Return on Good’s full legal disclaimer, which you can access at ReturnOnGood.org*