

Children's Mercy Kansas City

SHARE @ Children's Mercy

Posters

5-2024

Children's Mercy: Dedicated to All Children, Everywhere

Heather Steel

Katie Dayani

Julia McBride

Keri Swaggart

Kim Weir

Let us know how access to this publication benefits you

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlyexchange.childrensmercy.org/posters>



Part of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine Commons

Background

Children's Mercy Kansas City was founded over 125 years ago with the mission of caring for all children. Due to politics and segregation, the hospital was not able to treat Black children. To circumvent this problem Dr. Katharine Richardson partnered with Dr. John E. Perry to establish the Mercy Model Ward, the first pediatric ward for Black children in the nation.

Founders

Children's Mercy Kansas City was founded in 1897 by sisters Drs. Alice Graham and Katharine Richardson. Their primary objective was to create a hospital where the children of Kansas City and surrounding areas could be treated regardless of their religion, race, or ability to pay.

Wheatley Provident was founded by Dr. John E. Perry in 1910 as a private hospital for Black citizens of Kansas City, MO.



Children's Mercy: Dedicated to All Children, Everywhere

Heather Steel; Katie Dayani; Julia McBride; Keri Swaggart; Kim Weir
Children's Mercy Kansas City

Training School



Dr. Katharine Richardson (center, next to top step) and Dr. Robert Schauffler (right, seated on ledge) gather with the medical staff at Wheatley Provident Hospital, including Dr. John E. Perry (center, top step).

Dr. Richardson persuaded her clinicians to volunteer to train the staff at Wheatley Provident. Black Medical Schools, such as Howard and MeHarry, did not provide pediatric training for physicians. To overcome this gap in education, the training school at Wheatley Provident was developed to provide this instruction and ensure quality care for all children in Kansas City.



Dr. Robert Schauffler leads the first clinic for the Mercy Model Ward for the staff at the Wheatley Provident Hospital, including Dr. Perry and Dr. Thomas Unthank in the first row.

Model Ward

After establishing the training school, Wheatley Provident opened a small clinic for children to be seen and treated. The clinic was a success and needed to be expanded. Dr. Richardson worked with philanthropists in Kansas City to donate land and money to build a new annex to the hospital. This annex became the physical extension of the pediatric clinic at Wheatley Provident and was known as the Mercy Model Ward. This ward was the first in the nation to focus care on Black children. Both the physical set up and the care provided in the model ward were based on Children's Mercy.

Bending the Rules

Dr. Richardson was known for her commitment and dedication to care for children. This sometimes meant bending the rules to provide this care. An example of this was the No Color Line Bed at Children's Mercy. This was an endowed bed that allowed any child to be treated at Children's Mercy, regardless of their race.



Nurses attend a young Black patient in "The Emma W. Robinson Free Bed NO COLOR LINE" bed.

More Information

Check out our digital history exhibit or contact us at library@cmh.edu



Children's Mercy
KANSAS CITY
Library Services