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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CHEF CHARLIE TROTTER, LEADING CHICAGO WOMEN CELEBRATE EDUCATION,
CHILDREN OF MERCY HOME**

Chicago, IL—**Chef Charlie Trotter** will deliver the keynote address at the Leader Council of Mercy Home's 7th Annual Graduates' Luncheon, Wednesday, May 20, at 11:30 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave. ABC 7 Chicago news anchor **Kathy Brock** will emcee the event for the second year in a row, and WBBM Newsradio 780's **Felicia Middlebrooks** will make a special scholarship presentation.

The Graduates' Luncheon honors the young men and women at Mercy Home for Boys & Girls who have overcome adversity in their lives and are graduating from area elementary schools, high schools, trade schools and colleges. Proceeds from the event support educational programs and tuition for disadvantaged and troubled children who turn to Mercy Home for help.

The Leader Council is a volunteer organization of professional women in greater Chicago who organized in 2002 to increase access to educational and vocational opportunities for the children of Mercy Home. Members come from among the leadership of business and civic institutions throughout the Chicago area. The Leader Council has made it its mission to empower youth through education by donating time, talent, financial support and professional resources to open doors to learning and achievement.

Sue Bettman, who chairs the Leader Council, remarked on the determination of Mercy Home's graduates to succeed, Bettman said, "These young men and women remind us that with the right attitude and the right support, great things are always within our reach."

Among those speaking at the luncheon will be a young woman currently living at Mercy Home who will graduate from high school, as well as a former Mercy Home resident who went on to become a leading pastry chef.

"I am so grateful to members of the Leader Council for their support of education at Mercy Home," said **Fr. Scott Donahue**, President of Mercy Home. "With the funds raised through this event every year, Mercy Home is fostering a culture of achievement among the children who come to us in crisis, and in need of hope. I speak for the entire Mercy Home family when I say 'thank you' to everyone in our shared community who has invested in these young people, and their educations."

Mercy Home for Boys & Girls has been a solution for kids in crisis since 1887. Our residential, aftercare, and mentoring programs provide safety and opportunity for more than 400 kids every year. Mercy Home is 99.7% privately funded and operates two locations – a home for boys at 1140 W. Jackson Blvd. in Chicago's West Loop and a home for girls at 11600 S. Longwood Dr. on the South Side of Chicago

For more information, visit www.mercyhome.org.

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