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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

St. James Mercy Hospital Auxiliary Recognized for Advocacy Efforts

April 19, 2012...Hornell, NY...St. James Mercy Hospital (SJM) Auxiliary was recently recognized by the Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) for its advocacy efforts on behalf of the Hospital.

The annual HANYS Auxiliary Advocacy Recognition acknowledges auxiliaries that have committed significant time and effort serving as advocates for their health care facilities and communities during the past year. To qualify, auxiliaries must meet specific criteria, such as participation in HANYS' legislative letter-writing campaigns and community outreach activities. In 2011, SJM Auxilians advocated with state and federal representatives against cuts to Medicare and Medicaid funding, as well as limitations to the sole community hospital designation.

"Health care auxiliaries play a vital role in New York State's hospitals, health systems, and communities," said Mary LaRowe, President and CEO of St. James Mercy Health System. "They serve as valuable links between communities and the institutions they serve. Our auxiliary is very active in advocating on behalf of SJM. We are so fortunate to have this dedicated and talented group, committed to serving the many needs of people who come to us for care."

Led by co-chairs Lynne Freeland and Nan Racalto, St. James Mercy Auxiliary volunteers contribute thousands of hours each year toward advocacy, fundraising and community service projects. Auxiliary volunteers also manage the gift shops at Mercycare and the Hospital.

"We are grateful for the hard work and creativity of Auxiliary volunteers," said Sylvia Bryant, Vice President of Mission Integration and community Outreach. "In 2011 funds raised through Auxiliary events and proceeds from the Aquinas Gift Shops contributed \$28,000 to the Hospital – the largest gift in the Auxiliary's 105-year history." Funds were used in part to purchase new furnishings for the Mercycare Break adult day program and instructional materials for the School of Radiologic Science.

"There are many meaningful volunteer opportunities at St. James Mercy Hospital, and we welcome anyone who wishes to be of service to consider joining the Auxiliary," said Ms. Bryant. For more information call (607) 324-8240, visit www.stjamesmercy.org/auxiliary.org, or email sbryant@sjmh.org.

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