



ESM NEWS

**1st Quarter
July 2008**

From the Executive Director

And the people asked him, saying, 'What shall we do then?' He answereth and saith unto them, 'He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none: and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.' Luke 3:10-11



ESM's 2007-08 program and fiscal year ended on June 30th, 2008. What a blessed year we had!

We started the year celebrating our 25th Anniversary with a series of open houses inviting friends, volunteers, church members and supporters to tour our facility and receive an update on new and improved programs and services. We made and renewed many friendships through these successful events.

Here are some of the program highlights of the year:

- We served over 18,000 clients providing 50,834 services with a value of \$1.2 million!
- 216 dedicated volunteers worked with staff to provide these critical services to our clients.
- The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program prepared 1,590 tax returns for clients, who received over \$1 million in State and Federal tax refunds.
- We enrolled 560 people in our budgeting classes, a requirement for receiving housing assistance.
- We began the planning process for a new special event, the *Festival of Trees*, to be held November 21st and 22nd of this year.
- We received \$75,000 from El Paso County Community Partners to expand the Jobs Program, including new GED classes.
- We produced an Annual Report highlighting ESM successes and acknowledging contributors.
- We developed a new ESM brochure detailing our programs and services.

These are just a few of our successes this past year, but these are *just numbers*. Important numbers, but only part of the real measure of success for ESM.

Because we are called to serve the poor, the important value of this past year was the generosity, love, compassion and understanding volunteers, resource supporters, and staff provided to the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the desperate, the lonely and to those with no hope. I am a great believer that nothing happens by accident. God has a plan for all of us, and because of His plan we are part of this great faith-based organization. The Board, staff and most importantly, the clients thank all of you for your support. When ESM counts our blessings, we count you.

Challenges Coming in the New Program Year: Food Pantry Needs

Food seems to be the most talked about need today and indeed, many food pantries and food banks are struggling to keep their shelves stocked. This includes ESM. In addition to the generous donations of our churches, community partners, Care and Share Food Bank, and individuals, ESM spent more money than ever before buying food to supplement donated food. As we go forward, we will be looking at new ways to secure more food. This will include asking churches who are not currently providing food to conduct food drives. Also, in partnership with Care and Share, we hope to have a live remote broadcast from ESM on a Saturday asking the public to stop by with food.

The goal of all these ideas is to keep our pantry well-supplied so that we never have to turn away anyone who is hungry. With God's help and the commitment of Board, volunteers, staff and the community we will always strive to help the most impoverished in their struggle for self-sufficiency.

We start a new year with renewed hope and dedication. We know God will provide the resources we need to serve His children; He has never failed us. God bless you. I hope you enjoy the rest of your summer.

Yours in Christ

Carolyn McDole
Carolyn McDole



**Board of Directors
July 2008-June 2009**

Officers

Rev. Benjamin J. Broadbent, President
First Congregational Church

Rev. Kent Ingram, Vice President
First United Methodist Church

Angelina Adams, Secretary
First Congregational Church

Tad Goodenbour, Treasurer
First Lutheran Church

Senior Pastors

Rev. Dr. Michael O'Donnell
Grace & St. Stephens Episcopal Church

Dr. Paul R. Peel
First Lutheran Church

Rev. Francisco J. Quezada
St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral

Dr. Michael D. Saylor
First Baptist Church

Dr. Jim Singleton
First Presbyterian Church

Rev. David J. Van Heyningen
First Christian Church

Lay Representatives

Susan Buenger
First Presbyterian Church

Sherry Clarkin
First Presbyterian Church

Moe Graham
First Baptist Church

Terrence Lilly
Grace & St. Stephens Episcopal Church

Hans Matthiesen
First Presbyterian Church

Dave Munger
First United Methodist Church

Dave O'Keeffe
St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral

Pat Snepenger
First Christian Church

Carolyn McDole
Executive Director, ESM

A Profile of Online Donors - Dr. Brian & Lola Printz

Dr. Brian Printz, Executive Director of Special Programs for Fountain-Ft. Carson School District #8, and wife Lola Printz, a school psychologist also with the school district, have been donors to ESM for the past seven years. They are members of First Presbyterian Church. Here's why they support ESM as online donors.

Q. Why do you support ESM?

A. Lola and I attended First Lutheran Church from 1997 through 2006 and have been attending First Presbyterian Church since that time. As a strong supporter of ESM, First Lutheran and Pastor Peel encouraged the participation of his congregation in support of ESM. Pastor Singleton at First Presbyterian has also provided this same passion and encouragement for congregant support of ESM. While many charities provide much-needed financial resources as well as food and clothing for those in need, we have given to ESM because it serves those in our community and it emphasizes helping others to become economically independent.

Q. Why do you chose to donate online to give to ESM?

A. Like many of our other household financial transactions, in the past few years we have been giving to ESM through their Website. The Website is easy to use and allows for us to contribute with our credit card. The Website allows us to give one-time donations but also allows for automatic and periodic contributions. We can give regularly and schedule gifts when paying our other bills online.

Visit www.ecusocmin.org and click on "Donate" to make a secure online donation by credit card. Did you know you can set up your credit card donation as a recurring gift, so that each month a specified amount is charged to your card? It makes your gift-giving easier and you don't have to remember to mail in your donation each month. Plus, you can save on postage, and help keep ESM's administrative costs to a minimum. Please consider making your online donation today!



Have you ever considered an estate gift to ESM?

A charitable bequest provides an opportunity to give something back to your community and ensures the long-term funding stability of ESM, helping our programs and services long into the future. We would be

honored by your support.

Please feel free to contact the Development and Communications Director at (719) 228-6795 with any questions.

Gifts large and small are important. **Charitable giving is not only for the wealthy!**



Program News



\$1 Million returned to the local economy!

Volunteers at ESM were once again a part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for this past income tax season. The existing VITA program administered by the IRS originated with the Tax Reform Act of 1969 as part of the increased emphasis on Taxpayer Education Programs. The program offers free tax help to low-to-moderate income individuals who cannot afford professional fees.

ESM has run the VITA program on-site for eight years. As part of the Jobs Program, clients are helped on a first-come, first-serve, walk-in basis January through April. Assistance is also offered year-round by appointment.

Volunteers undergo a rigorous training process conducted by the IRS. In addition, tax returns are filed electronically on secure computers provided by the IRS. Nearly all the VITA volunteers at ESM return year after year to help clients file their tax returns.

This year was the busiest year ever for the VITA program at ESM, partly due to the Economic Stimulus Package which required people to file an income tax return. As a result, over \$1 Million was contributed to the local economy of Colorado Springs!

Earning a high school diploma through GED training classes

In keeping with the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency for clients, ESM began offering GED classes in April as part of the Jobs Program. In partnership with Colorado Springs School District 11, these classes are free to low-income clients. Students pay a nominal fee for the placement test as well as the GED test. All other materials are supplied at no cost.

When first announced, ESM received over sixty (60) interested participants for the program. Forty-three (43) individuals were tested for placement, resulting in fifteen (15) entering the first class. As individuals graduate from the classes, others are rotated in.

Classes are held every Monday and Wednesday morning from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. An additional class is scheduled to be added in July on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The teacher tests the students regularly to help determine when they are ready to take the GED test. Since initiating the class in April, one student has completed her GED and graduated, with seven more students almost ready.

Students must be 17 years of age in order to participate in GED classes. Many of them are pursuing their GED after dropping out of high school for various reasons including unplanned pregnancies or to help support their families.

VITA by the numbers

Clients served

1,534 clients received tax assistance
 1,340 returns were filed electronically (87%)
 432 additional clients served partly due to the Economic Stimulus Package requirements
 Average income per client: \$14,373

VITA Statistics

Total value of in-kind services provided by VITA: \$306,800 (based on \$200 per return per client)

Total number of VITA volunteers: 16

Returns Filed

1,261 State returns filed (Colorado and 12 other states)
 85 returns were filed for back years (2004, 2005, and 2006)

Refunds

Total Federal refunds issued: \$871,641 (includes \$521,886 of Earned Income Credit)
 Total State refunds issued: \$103,549



Program News

Learning to make wise food choices

In partnership with the Colorado State University Extension Office, ESM began requiring classes in nutrition on July 8th. Targeting those who have received three emergency food baskets and prior to receiving their fourth and final food basket for the year, the classes will teach clients about basic nutrition, meal planning and grocery budgeting. Upon completion of the class each client will receive a cookbook, some small kitchen supplies and a bag of groceries. In keeping with

ESM's self-sufficiency goals, the classes are designed to help clients make better food choices within their budgets while providing nutritious meals to their families.

ESM already requires a budgeting and money management class for clients receiving assistance through the Housing Department. These efforts and more are underway to carry out the goals of increased self-sufficiency outlined in the strategic plan.

Thank you!

Food drive at First Congregational Church

First Congregational Church, one of ESM's founding churches, has raised over \$3,800* in cash, food items, and toiletries! That is enough to provide 76 families with an emergency food order, or 3-day supply of food. Their goal is to help a total of 100 families by August 31st. Pictured here are members of the Middle School Youth Group: Annika, Grace, Talley and Jillian. They and other members of their group, with leaders Jeff Dodson and Pat Dolin, made a giant check and walked to ESM singing Christmas carols to present it to Carolyn McDole, Executive Director.



Thanks to their inspiring example, ESM hopes to motivate other churches and organizations to consider holding similar drives to keep our dwindling pantry supplies stocked and ready for the many needy families in crisis.

** as of July 21, 2008*

“Above & Beyond“ at First Presbyterian Church

An additional “thank you” goes to First Presbyterian Church, another ESM founding church. After the call to action by Care and Share asking businesses and organizations to consider doing food drives to assist in stocking pantries, First Presbyterian conducted a food drive for ESM on Sunday, July 20th. This was their second food drive of the month. Thank you to the staff and congregation for going “Above and Beyond” for the clients of ESM.

Volunteer News

2008 "Good Samaritan Community Service Award"

On June 13th, volunteer John Kieft was recognized as one of four finalists for the 2008 "Good Samaritan Community Service Award" given by the SET Family Medical Clinic at a luncheon held at the Antlers Hotel. John is truly a "good Samaritan" who is described as an unselfish helper. He closely resembles the passer-by in the New Testament (Luke 10:30-37) who was the only one to stop and help a man who had been robbed and beaten.

John began volunteering at ESM in early 2002 with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. When not providing assistance with tax returns, he brings his kindness, compassion and generosity to help clients who visit the Jobs Department. ESM is thankful to have such a humble and dedicated person within its volunteer ranks.

Congratulations John and thank you for your dedication and service!

Volunteer Spotlight ~ Erylene Snow

Erylene Snow is a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church and has been volunteering in the Direct Services Program since January 1982.



She is one of ESM's original volunteers, serving for 26 years. Erylene recalls that she heard about ESM through a radio announcement urging the public to volunteer for the new organization. When she attended the orientation back in 1982 there were only three staff members.

Erylene says that she has always had a desire to contribute and assist in the community and continues to take pleasure in volunteering at ESM.

In addition to her volunteer work, she works at the Arati Artist's Gallery in Old Colorado City. She also plays tennis twice a week and enjoys traveling.

Erylene is eagerly awaiting the arrival of her first great grandchild who is due to arrive in December 2008!

Volunteer Milestone!

Diana and Mike Buckler are celebrating their 42nd wedding anniversary! For the past 1^{1/2} years, Diana has been volunteering with the Housing Program. Congratulations to Diana and Mike!

Volunteer Birthdays July, August & September

July 1	Fred Vickers John Chatfield
July 3	Harold Schwandt
July 9	Matt Shoemaker
July 11	Edwina Burdekin
July 18	Audrey Wilcher
July 20	Sharon Haynes
July 22	Kurt Hanson
July 21	Duke Wattle
July 25	Linda Ochs
July 29	Elva Wilson
July 31	Norma Hook John Kieft
August 2	Debra Brokaw
August 9	Parisse Wattle
August 12	Marshall Bradley Arne Erickson
August 16	Mickie Kleager
August 22	Joe Watkins
August 26	Laura Martinez
August 29	Dave O'Keeffe
August 31	Janell Robinson
Sept 2	Hannah Dixon
Sept 5	Arline Nelson Agnes Paulsen
Sept 7	Erylene Snow

Happy Birthday to all!



Colorado Springs Ecumenical Social Ministries
201 N. Weber Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Colo. Springs, CO
Permit No. 918

Ecumenical Social Ministries (ESM)

Mission and Purpose

In response to the Gospel, ESM promotes self-sufficiency and restores dignity by providing food, medicine, housing, job placement, educational programs, and spiritual encouragement.

Our purpose is to provide a collaborative Christian response to low-income and homeless people in crisis.

ESM News is published quarterly.

Editor: Christine A. Bucher

Tel: (719) 228-6781

Email: cbucher@ecusocmin.org

Printed by Centennial Reproduction Center

Summer Office Hours

During the summer (June through August) the ESM office will close at 3:00 p.m. on Fridays. All other office and client hours remain the same. If you have any questions, please call (719) 636-1916.

Festival of Trees is coming!

On November 21 and 22, 2008, ESM will hold its first special event at the ProRodeo Hall of Fame. At the Festival of Trees guests will have the opportunity to purchase professionally decorated trees for their homes or offices, and to bring their families to the Festival to enjoy a festive holiday experience. Watch for more information in future newsletters or visit www.ecusocmin.org/festivaloftrees.



Our Inaugural Sponsor:



Additional Sponsors:



- * Rothgerber Johnson & Lyons, LLP *
- * Hoff & Leigh * Murphy Construction *
- * O'Brien's Carpet Outlet *