



A Message from the Executive Director ~

WELCOME TO ESR !!!

Thank you for visiting ESR's website. We want to reach out to clients and the community in every possible way, and the internet is among our key vehicles.

Today's ESR offers a menu of cutting-edge social service programs to move our clients forward in their lives, and to keep our agency in the forefront of fighting poverty and homelessness, even as we honor and celebrate our varied and unique 45-year heritage.

The agency was chartered in 1964 and has served the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County community for more than 40 years, working to eliminate poverty and homelessness, and helping people help themselves. Like its sister Community Action Agencies (CAA's) across the nation, ESR was born of the Equal Opportunity Act of 1964, the economic twin to the Civil Rights Act. In North Carolina, ESR was one of the original 11 CAA's supported by Governor Terry Sanford's North Carolina Fund.

Throughout its history, ESR has been a beacon of hope in the community; but like any harbinger of safe harbor, it must from time to time test the waters and set its direction anew. Over the years, ESR has reconstructed the architecture of its programs and re-envisioned its service delivery in an effort to stay abreast of changing times, changing needs, and the changing face of poverty. This work has seen us through the years—from the War on Poverty to Welfare Reform.

During 2006, ESR engaged in a Strategic Planning Initiative designed to chart the agency's course for the remainder of the current decade and beyond. Under the leadership of Retired SaraLee/Hanesbrand Executive Chuck Chambers, this process has been conducted with full participation by ESR's Board, Management, and Staff; as well as Key Community Leaders, Partners, Funders, Supporters, and Clients.

In 2007, we introduced our new identity of "Cost-Effective Empowerment," building toward the future on the cutting-edge programs and services we have built over the last decade in the areas of Economic Self-Sufficiency, Transitional Housing, Asset Building and Homeownership, the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Program, and—most recently added to our portfolio—Permanent Supportive Housing for the Chronically Homeless.

We wish to express our gratitude to everyone who has kept ESR near and dear to their hearts these many years. To our funders, contributors, board members, and other supporters, let me express to you the fact that we would not have been able to sustain the critical work of ESR without your continuing assistance and encouragement throughout this year and every year. The lives of thousands of residents have been impacted as a result of your undying commitment, and our community is likewise a better place to live and work because of your dedication. In addition, we have been able to take the agency's engagement with the overall community to a new and gratifying level, thanks to your efforts and perseverance.

As we have begun to implement our latest Strategic Planning Initiative and

started exploring a potential Capital Campaign by conducting an official Feasibility Study, we have been reminded of the historic strength of ESR and the success we continue to enjoy today. We rightly take pride in the legacy, expertise, and accomplishments that will provide the foundation for moving into the future within our strategic framework of cost-effective empowerment. This theme expresses both the value of our programs to the families and individuals we serve directly, and the equal benefit that accrues to the community in return for the investment it makes in the work we do.

During 2008, we continue programmatically to build on asset accumulation and financial education for our clients through homeownership, savings, and tax services; and we will continue to help grow the community's new "10-year plan to end chronic homelessness."

In addition, we are engaging in two major initiatives leading up to a potential Capital Campaign at the end of this decade—a leadership development program to strengthen our board and add a community leadership advisory council, and a major marketing and education drive to increase awareness of ESR among communities in which we are less well known. As always, as community services continue to grow and change, ESR will strive to stay on the cutting edge of these trends as we continue to empower, advocate, and lead in our community.

We at ESR look forward to our next 45 years in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, and to continuing to work together with you to fulfill the dream.

Twana Wellman-Reebuck
ESR Executive Director