

SUMMER 2012

# NEWS

## Executive Director's Message

by Mary Spuhler

Mother Teresa, when asked about her holiness or saintliness, always answered in a matter-of-fact way that "holiness is a necessity of life, not a luxury of a few." It "depends on God's grace and our will...Holiness is for everyone."

One of the ways in which I believe Downtown Ecumenical Services is unique, is the manner in which the staff and volunteers approach their work: It is a ministry to each of us, not a "job." We follow a Savior that commands us to love our neighbor and assist those in need whether we feel like it or not.

We don't "love" everyone in a deeply felt sort of way. However, we are asked to act as if we do, because Jesus was the model for us during His time on earth. If

we do this enough times, if we take time to actively listen to people in need, and if we greet people with a smile that values their being, we can actually become a nice and giving person.

Believe me, it happens. I have had to learn this by praying without ceasing for God's grace. It is never a question that I want to serve the Lord, daily. Rather, it's a question of needing the "heart" to do so. It indeed is a matter of God's grace and my will. We only need to ask God to touch our hearts and speech, and God does it.

So many times each week at DESC, it is the faith of the client that sparks us to raise the bar of our interactions. Before us stands Jesus, and the words of gratitude and sustenance that are spoken are inspiring. We hear laughter and joy in a life that would pull

Households Touched by DESC*	
Info/Referral	2,159
Clothing	2,152
Groceries	1,499
Other Items	427
Financial Aid	98
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,335</b>

\* YTD as of May 31, 2012

many of us down. What a wonderful environment in which to work!

There is a "culture" of fun and joyful service at DESC. Others have told us this about being at our ministry. We are glad that it shows!

-- Mary

## DESC Board Affirms Agency's Mission

At its May 24th meeting, the Board of Directors of DESC voted to approve a slight change in the agency's mission statement.

## Our Mission:

**DESC seeks to proclaim the love of Jesus Christ by providing for the basic needs of those in emergency situations.**

*The DESCades crowd having a great time.*

*Mike Davis, Board Treasurer, presents a check for \$100,000 to Mary Spuhler, Executive Director.*

## **DESCades Birthday CelebraPon Raises \$100,000+ for DESC**

On April 19, 2012, more than 320 friends, supporters, employees and volunteers gathered at the Garden Club to celebrate DESC's 30th Birthday.

In addition to being an evening of great fun and fellowship, thanks to the generosity of sponsors, donors and in-kind supporters, the DESCades event raised more than \$100,000 --- all of which will be used to support the mission of the agency.

*Jeff Meyer shared stories and fun facts about the history of the Catch Bubba tournament.*

**View more pictures at [descjax.org/30th--birthday--party](http://descjax.org/30th--birthday--party)**

*Jeff Matthews, Board President, thanked Julie Handley for her leadership of the DESCades event.*

*Students from Riverside Presby. Day School, created special "canstruction" table decorations for the DESCades event.*

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## **CelebraPng Three DESCades Special Thanks to Our Sponsors**

*Presenting Sponsor*  
Dedicated Supporter of DESC

*Give Hope Sponsor*  
Anonymous with Love

**Keep the Faith Sponsor**  
Lucy Gooding Charitable Founda on Trust

**Fight Hunger Sponsor**  
Percy and Dot Rosenbloom, Jr.

**Light it Up Sponsor**  
Mark and Beverly Alexander  
Ida M. Stevens Founda on  
Synod of South Atlan c (PCUSA)

**Help Clothe Sponsor**  
*Anonymous*  
Bap st Health  
Hud and Rolly Berrey  
Pete and Marilyn Carpenter  
The Community Founda on (MKL Fund)  
Gardner and Martha Davis  
Mike and Marcia Davis  
Bill and Judy Fackler  
Gordon and Newsom, PA  
In Memory of John Handley  
Chuck and Sandra Hedrick  
Meeks & Associates, CPA, LLC  
Linda Moseley  
Al and Carole Poindexter  
Pruden al Founda on  
Jack and Mary Ann Richardson  
South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church  
Timucuan Asset Management  
St. John's Cathedral  
Bill and Peggy Scheu  
Warner and Sherrie Webb

*Millie Bonilla (right), DESC client, is "interviewed" by Jen Waugh, Channel 4 anchor and event MC, about how DESC has helped her family and friends.*

*Woods & Bridges provided bluegrass accompaniment while a slideshow of Catch Bubba tournaments gone by plays behind them.*

*Friends and supporters of DESC came out to enjoy a great dinner and share warm memories of the 30 years that DESC has been providing for those in need in Jacksonville.*

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## Volunteer Corner: *Serving and Growing*

by Susan Humes

In my months as a volunteer at DESC, I've probably talked with 1,200 individuals, mostly on the phone, some in person. I've fielded calls, packed groceries and sorted clothing.

Clients have brought me to tears with their stories of medical problems, family issues and financial reversals. Some start crying themselves, like the grandmother who was so happy when I told her we could clothe the grandchildren she had stepped in to raise. Men and women come into the clothing center carrying all their belongings after a night spent on the ground.

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Needs are great and resources are finite.

Many times I have to say no. When I get a call on Tuesday from someone whose electricity is scheduled to be shut off the next day, I have to say that we can only set up appointments for financial assistance on Monday. I always try to point the callers to additional sources of support. I remind them that we can provide them with food and clothing.

And almost always, they say, "Thank you."

I've learned and grown in my faith by trying to help others.

*Susan volunteering at DESCades*

I find myself returning to the verses in Maahew where we are told "...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink...I was naked and you clothed me." (Maa. 25:35, 36.)