

ESR

The WORKS!

www.esrworks.org

East Suburban Resources

January 2009

ESR awarded \$35,000 in grant money to sustain, expand its services

Three grants totalling more than \$35,000 will provide much-needed assistance to help ESR maintain and enhance its services.

A \$15,000 grant from the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging will help sustain ESR's Chore Services. The program pairs adults with developmental disabilities with seniors in the community who need help with household chores. The grant allows ESR to support the

program and offer a minimal wage to consumers (those served by ESR) who provide the labor.

Renewal of a United Way grant of about \$12,000 allows ESR to continue offering community integration activities. The grant helps support a part-time position to coordinate nonwork activities.

A third grant provides \$10,000 in matching dollars for ESR to purchase mechanical lifts to

enhance the safety of staff and consumers. Two floor lifts will be purchased for the Forest Lake and Stillwater sites, and an in-ceiling lift will be installed at the agency's Cottage Grove site.

"These grants make initiatives possible that ESR may be unable to provide on its own," said Executive Director Ed Boeve. "We are truly grateful to the granting agencies for their partnership and support."

Fundraiser a rousing success

Night of Dreams celebrates working together on behalf of adults with disabilities

The happy smiles left in the wake of ESR's Night of Dreams in early November prove that dreams can come true.

"This year's event exceeded expectations in many ways," said Event Chair Joe Jungbauer, "including increased attendance, more pledges and a healthy bottom line that will significantly decrease the deficit left from high gas prices earlier this year. It was a terrific event."

Included in the festivities were several awards given to honor area businesses and individuals for their work supporting adults with disabilities.

Honored for their commitment to a diverse workplace and for providing opportunities for adults with disabilities were EmbroidMe of Stillwater, Running Aces Harness Park in Columbus, Medical Graphics in St. Paul, and Perkins in Cottage Grove. The



employment opportunities provided by these employers include hiring individuals to serve in independent jobs, retaining crews where a small group of ESR consumers (those whom the agency serves) work together under the supervision of a job coach; or providing employment opportunities in one of ESR's three production centers, where consumers receive individualized support to earn an income.

Night of Dreams to Page 3

From the director

2009 dawns with recognition of success and hope in future

As we celebrate the New Year, we join with others to reflect on 2008 and look forward to 2009.

Memories of 2008 will include economic hardship, the rise and fall of gas prices, and the elimination of jobs in our community. An historic election took place with the winner promoting change and hope for the future. As of this writing, our senatorial election result remains in doubt, and it appears the courts will determine the identity of the winning candidate. The losing side will believe they were robbed of the seat regardless of the outcome.

Although there are worries, there are also reasons to celebrate. Many consumers not only maintained employment, but flourished in their community in 2008. Service demand remains strong with steady growth, and referrals/inquiries continued at a good pace. Individuals supported by ESR received about 200 job offers, a reduction from the prior

year, but still a number to be proud of considering the job market. Positive staff retention statistics reflect a stable workforce ready and able to provide needed consumer supports. We were successful in soliciting grant resources to supplement services, with donations and fundraising contributions reaching new highs. Full three-year accreditation was received from CARF with commendations from the surveyors.

Even as we celebrate, we know there are challenges ahead. Everyone is concerned about the large state budget deficit and potential cuts in rates and allowable service levels. Energy costs are a concern as supply is tenuous and demand worldwide continues to increase. People worry about their business or job stability and respond with reduced spending. Business struggles as a result and the cycle spins downward. ESR is impacted

by these challenges and is taking steps to protect consumer supports in light of anticipated cuts.

Despite the challenges, we remain hopeful. Our hope springs from our belief in the strength and vitality of our community. Even though January is dark and cold, we know April is coming. Flowers will bud and bloom, the snow will melt, the economy will recover. Jobs will become available and our community will continue to include more consumers as active participants in the rhythmic pattern of life.

Community support for ESR has never been stronger. Based on that reality, we are humbly, but steadfastly, hopeful.



Ed Boeve

Stillwater Culver's honored for work with adults with disabilities

The Culver's in Stillwater, an ESR business partner, is one of 11 Minnesota businesses recognized by the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities for their innovative approaches toward employing people with developmental disabilities.

Employers were recognized for providing:

- Unique types of job or work;
- Recognition of employees' unique skills or abilities;

- Innovative use of technologies;
- Unique approach to including employees as part of the greater work teams or employee groups;
- Other creative or innovative accommodations.

Culver's, owned and managed by Steve and Rita Rasmussen, was one of 45 businesses nominated for the award. Said Rita, "We feel that by example we are making sure that we do not hold these employees back from their potential."

Two ESR-supported consumers work at Culver's, where Steve describes them as "great members of our team."

"Culver's is a terrific example of what can be accomplished when we work together on behalf of adults with disabilities," said Ed Boeve, ESR executive director. "We are proud to count Culver's among our business partners and congratulate them for receiving this honor."

Night of Dreams *Continued from Page 1*

"We are honored to work with ESR to provide opportunities for adults with special needs," said Deborah Pensini, director of human resources at Running Aces, as she accepted the award. "We have benefitted from this partnership and know we can count on the ESR supported employees and on the agency itself."

Running Aces has an ESR-supported crew on site to provide janitorial services, Pensini explained. "The cleaning crew and their ESR job coach do great work. They are very committed and dedicated to their jobs."

In introducing the awards, ESR Executive Director Ed Boeve said, "Our business partners are a vital piece of what we do. Without them, we simply could not provide



Deborah Pensini

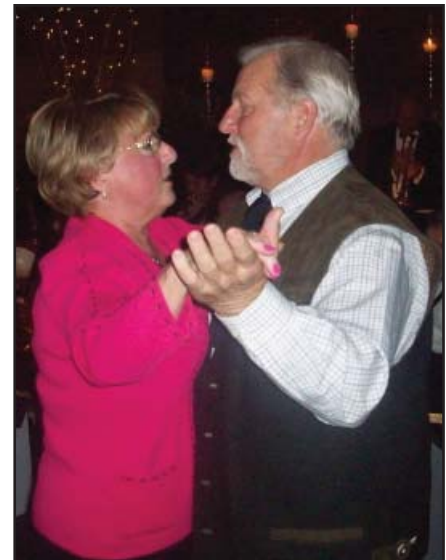
the services that we do for adults with disabilities. We appreciate their partnership in creating opportunities for employment and community integration for those we serve."

Also honored for her work serving adults with developmental disabilities was ESR employee Sara Hasslen, who serves as director of operations. She was given ESR's American Dream Award, the agency's highest honor.

"Sara consistently shows outstanding commitment to those we serve by going well above and beyond what is required in her job," said Boeve in presenting the award. "Our agency, the people we serve and our communities are



better off because of Sara's efforts over the years. We appreciate her commitment and dedication. She is truly deserving of this recognition."



Top right: Sara Hasslen was given ESR's American Dream Award, the agency's highest honor, by ESR Executive Director Ed Boeve. **Middle right:** Sandie and Gary Woeltge could not resist the dance floor and toe-tapping sounds of the Minnesota Jazz Orchestra. **Front page photo:** The Minnesota Jazz Orchestra got folks moving with their upbeat music.



The silent auction was a popular destination and had a huge variety of choices available for bidders.

The *WORKS!*

Providing quality support in employment and community for people with disabilities and other special needs!

ESR Board organizes for coming year and elects new member

In reorganizing itself for the coming year, the ESR Board of Directors elected officers and planned to welcome a new director in January.

Janelle Erickson will complete the nine-member board. She and her husband are business owners in Cottage Grove and partner with ESR to provide employment

opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Currently, they have one ESR consumer on staff.

For the coming year, Marti Fischbach retains her position as Board chair. The vice-chair position will be filled by Jim Thommes, who will then, per board agreement, move into the chair position in 2010 after Fischbach's term expires.

The current treasurer/secretary, Richard Halverson, retains this position for an additional year.

The ESR Board meets the third Monday of most months at 5 p.m. in meetings that are open to the public. The Board exists to provide governance and oversight to ESR finances and activities. For more information, visit www.esrworks.org.

ESR Works! is published quarterly for the friends of ESR by its Marketing/Development Office, 1754 Washington Avenue, Stillwater, Minnesota 55082.



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ESR Board of Directors

Marti Fischbach (Chair)	Jerry Jungbauer
Kim Carolan	Vicki Nelson
Richard Halverson	Jim Thommes
Bob Haskins	Vicki Strong

Your partners for success in employment and community.

ESR

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Please renew your financial support to ESR as we continue offering programs to support people with disabilities and special needs.

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