

A Profile of DESC



Households Served (2010)

- Food - 3,763 households
- Clothing - 4,238 households
(73,000 clothing items distributed)
- Emergency Financial Assistance - 168 households
- Information/Referrals - 6,263 households
- Other Items - 992 households
- *TOTAL households helped by DESC in 2010 – 15,424*

Staffing

- Executive Director – Mary Spuhler
- Clothing Center Manager (part-time) – Beth Wilson
- Three caseworkers, who share one and a half full-time positions
- Volunteers (15-20/week) who answer phones, sort food and clothes and help provide for those in need

Annual Operating Budget (FY2010)

- Total revenues = \$275,000
- 45% from foundations/grants
- 42% from individual/other organization gifts
- 13% from Board member/member church contributions

History

- **Founded in October 1981** by eight downtown churches seeking a way to provide for those in need in the urban core. The first “staffers” were retired ministers and a seminary intern. The late Sylvia Mathis was DESC’s first Executive Director.
- **Mary Spuhler** began as Executive Director in 1985 and has been Executive Director ever since – 26 years and counting.
- **DESC** has been located in the basement of First Presbyterian Church, 215 N. Ocean St, Jacksonville, FL 32202, since its founding.
- **Fundraising** began in earnest in the late ‘80s, with FEMA grants increasing each year. The additional funding provided more for clients, which meant more work to be done, so a caseworker position was created to help handle the load. DESC now raises more than \$275,000 annually (see sources above) to fund its food, clothing and emergency financial assistance ministries.
- In the fall of 1996, what over the next decade and a half became DESC’s major fundraiser, the **Catch Bubba Fishing Tournament**, began. A generous friend of DESC offered his land and resources to put on a “catfish tournament and bar-b-q hoedown.”
- In 2005, DESC opened its **Clothing Ministry**. Working in close partnership with the Sulzbacher Center, Dignity U Wear and other sources, DESC receives, handles, repairs clothes when needed. In 2010, DESC distributed over 70,000 articles of clothing to those in need.