



### **Family Services Celebrates 100 Years**

On March 8, 1905, a group of people concerned with helping impoverished families gathered in the YMCA offices atop the Brown & Rogers Hardware Store at the corner of Fourth and Main Streets in downtown Winston-Salem. Their mission: to bring together the many churches, organizations and individuals conducting charity work in Winston (which at that time had not yet merged with Salem) under one umbrella.

That forward-thinking group founded the Associated Charities, the forerunner of today's Family Services. For its first few decades under the leadership of "Miss Annie" Grogan, the Associated Charities essentially served as the "welfare department" – dispensing emergency aid in the form of food, clothing, shelter and monies for rent and other basic human needs. In fact, whenever the subject of poverty came up in conversation, it was common for residents, whether joking or serious, to say it was time to "go see Miss Annie."

On one occasion according to Sam Dalton, Miss Annie heard about a carpenter who, along with his wife and two children, was very sick. Miss Annie asked for help from a local dairy farm owner and prominent businessman Thurmond Chatham, who agreed to give the family a cow. "She knew all the clergy, doctors and police in town, and she called on them regularly for help, as well as anyone else she knew," Sam said.

Today, Family Services, with a budget in 2004 of approximately \$7.2 million, provides family and individual counseling, pregnancy support, adoptions, the Head Start program, the Battered Women's Shelter, assistance for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, the Ways-to-Work program, CONTACT Helplines and Volunteers services.

Last year, Family Services provided counseling for 2,702 individuals, enrolled 569 children in the Head Start program, answered more than 7,000 crisis phone calls and offered shelter for 284 abused women and children.

About the only thing constant about families and the agencies that serve them is change, said Al Renna, President of Family Services since 1995. "Since 1990, the Winston-Salem community and Family Services have undergone dramatic changes in population and in the way nonprofits are funded," he said.

Funds from government sources, and even private resources, decreased dramatically during the 1990's and early 21<sup>st</sup> Century. "Only about half of the funds needed to run Family Services programs are currently paid for with government money, and that percentage is likely to decrease even more," Al added.

Family Services works hard to be accountable for funding it receives from all sources and has used Butler + Burke for several years to conduct the organization's annual audit. "David Burke and the others at Butler + Burke really are much more than auditors to us," he said. "They provide a wealth of information on the nonprofit sector and are great about meeting with our staff and board to provide consultation on crucial financial matters and a wide range of other organizational issues."

Among the issues facing Family Services is the evolving definition of "family" itself. When Associated Charities began in 1905, generations of family members usually remained in the same town – or even the same home. Modern families are often spread far apart geographically, seeing each other only during the holidays or other special times. This has resulted in many people looking closer to friends and neighbors as "family."

"The piece of 'family' that seems to stay the same is the bond, a caring bond that is expanding beyond blood relatives," Al said. "The fact is that families are constantly changing and we at Family Services are constantly changing to meet their needs."

From *E-News* – October 2009

### **Family Services is LEEDing the Way**

More than a year ago, Family Services, Inc. completed construction of the organization's new primary headquarters office in the Southeast Gateway of Winston-Salem. In keeping with Family Services' vision "strong families in healthy communities," the project team designed the building to be environmentally-friendly and cost-conscious.

"We believe that it's important for a non-profit agency like us to be both good stewards of the natural and monetary resources at the same time," Family Services Chief Financial Officer Javier Vasquez said. "Our hope was that the Family Services headquarters would be recognized by the U.S. Green Building Council as a LEED certified building, a rigorously reviewed national rating system that evaluates projects that claim to be 'green.'"

Javier's hope has now come true. Family Services received official notification in September from the U.S. Green Building Council that the headquarters is LEED-Silver certified. It is the first newly constructed LEED certified building in Forsyth County.

Congratulations, Family Services!