

# The history of ESA

In 1929, ESA was chartered in Jacksonville, Texas for the purpose of preparing its members to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. More than 80 years later, ESA continues to meet this original goal through the educational, leadership, and service programs that were born through the organization's commitment to making a positive difference for its members and the causes they support.

Adelia Prichard, a national president of Business and Professional Women's Clubs is credited with being the founder of ESA. The organization's original program focused on studying a series of great books, "The Writings of Mankind," to provide educational benefits to its members. In time, ESA developed its own "What to Read News," a magazine featuring writings from members and other prominent writers from around the world.

As World War II changed life, ESA expanded its educational focus to include philanthropic projects and public service activities. Among ESA's first service projects were the USO (United Service Organizations) and the American Red Cross.

After the war, ESA became one of the first organizations to support the March of Dimes, participating in the Mother's March – the first, largest concerted philanthropic effort to conquer polio. ESA also organized a number of international chapters.

ESA continued to develop its interest for serving others, especially children. In 1972, ESA adopted St. Jude Children's Research Hospital as its first international service project, and ESA continues to be the largest third-party donor to the hospital. Local chapters also are encouraged to support state and local charitable projects. Today, ESA continues to take an active role in hands-on projects such as "Hope for Heroes" to benefit military personnel and their families. ESA also established its own "Care Connection" to assist members and close friends and family in times of personal need.

In 1988, the first collegiate chapter of ESA was colonized on the campus of Ball State University. Since that time, many more collegiate chapters have been colonized. The growth of these chapters has been impressive. Collegiate ESA is known for setting high standards for leadership development and service on campuses across the nation.

ESA continues to bring good people together to prepare them to develop their positive potential through both good and difficult times. ESA's network of nearly 800 local and campus chapters and its nearly 10,000 members continue to create a better world through excellent work locally, nationally, and internationally.

## **Change lives – including your own.**

Join today. Participate on your terms. Make a positive and long-lasting difference.