

# Partners and Heroes

## Collaboration for community health and growth

The East St. Louis Action Research Project is a unique **collaboration among community-based organizations, municipal agencies and university departments** seeking to improve the quality of life in East St. Louis's poorest neighborhoods. ESLARP has established productive collaborations with a variety of local organizations. Working with these groups, ESLARP has been able to assist East St. Louis residents in realizing many of their dreams for improving their community.

## Emerson Park Development Corporation

ESLARP's oldest community partner. During the past eight years, ESLARP students and faculty have worked with EPDC's leaders and members to clean lots of illegally dumped trash, design and build playgrounds, repair homes, establish community gardens, build new housing and create comprehensive plans for the area.

## Lansdowne Improvement Association

The second partner for ESLARP. Over several years, community volunteers and university students have completed a comprehensive plan, cleared trash from vacant lots, rebuilt a deteriorated municipal park, researched abusive urban real estate practices and provided ideas for the development of the Jackie Joyner Kersee Sports Complex.

## Edgemont Citizens for Crime Prevention and Community Development

ESLARP students assisted residents in completing a stabilization plan, conducted outreach activities to expand their membership base, completed a comprehensive property condition survey, and organized the city's first homeowner information fair for more than 125 local residents.

## Olivette Park Neighborhood Association

One of ESLARP's closest partners in recent years. Students helped local residents create a revitalization plan, improve the finances and physical condition of the Katherine Dunham Dynamic Museum, organized summer youth employment for city youth, cleared abandoned structures and established several community gardens.

## Alta Sita Neighborhood Association

New partners. Working together with residents, ESLARP has cleared many trash-filled lots, demolished deteriorated structures, created a vest-pocket park, and improved the East St. Louis Park District's Virginia Park.

## East St. Louis Community Action Network

A city-wide coalition of community-based organizations involved in grassroots organizing. ESLARP has provided issue research, fundraising assistance and legal advice to this new advocacy organization which is currently seeking to ensure the enforcement of the city's municipal sanitation code.

## Community Service Organizations

ESLARP works closely with long-established community service organizations:

- **Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House**
- **Catholic Urban Programs**
- **Land of Lincoln Legal Services**
- **Citizens for the Future**
- **MECCO Operation New Spirit**
- **Project AIM**
- **East St. Louis Community Policing Program**
- **Department of Justice Weed and Seed Program**
- **The Mayor's Youth Commission**
- **East St. Louis Ministerial Alliance**
- **Metro East Lenders' Group**
- **Metropolitan Community College**
- **Katherine Dunham Center for Art and Humanity**

## Municipal Agencies

ESLARP works closely with the administration of Mayor Gordon Bush. Among the longest standing relationships are:

- **Office of the Mayor**
- **Office of the City Manager**
- **Office of the City Clerk**
- **Office of the City Treasurer**
- **City Council**
- **Community Development Block Grant Operating Group**
- **Enterprise Communities**
- **Police Department**
- **Public Works Department**
- **Fire Department**
- **Building Regulation Department**

## An incomplete list of indispensable leaders without whom ESLARP would be lost

- **Representative Younge** for challenging the U of I to work with the people of East St. Louis and their representatives.
- **Former Mayor Carl Officer** and current **Mayor Gordon Bush** for supporting our efforts and understanding, most of the time, our impatience!
- **East St. Louis City Council** for their growing commitment to community-based planning and development.
- **Reverends Herman Watson and Gary Wilson and their congregations** for adopting our flock as their own.
- **Katherine Dunham** and her assistant **Jeanelle Stovall** whose lives of love, service and commitment have touched us all!
- **Ceola Davis** for modeling a committed life of community and public service for our students and faculty.
- **Kathy Tucker** and the men and women from Sterling Caterers for feeding our bodily needs!
- **Former students** who began their professional careers serving the people of East St. Louis: Kirk Goodrich, Donald Johnson, Vickie Forby, Damon Smith, Patricia Nolan, Ishaq Shafiq and Latonya Burton.
- **The Perry Family** for their leadership in the Winstanley neighborhood and generous support for our work.
- **Anna Stevenson** and **Richard Settle**, Emerson Park Development Corporation.
- **Rev. Robert** and **James King**, Lansdowne Improvement Association.
- **Flossie Hunt** and **Fulton Allen**, Edgemont Citizens for Crime Prevention and Community Development.
- **Mamie Bolden**, Olivette Park Neighborhood Association.
- **Rev. Gary Wilson, Carol Perry, Rev. Herman Watson, L.D. Ward, Earl Dobbins, Rev. Cowan**, Winstanley/Industry Park Neighborhood Association.
- **Dr. Helen Hudlin**, Alta Sita Neighborhood Association
- **Dr. Lillian Parks**, Loisel Hills Neighborhood Association

