



A North Carolina legacy
The late Joseph Bryan Sr. funded groundbreaking research into Alzheimer's disease as well as a Triad-based family foundation.

From the grassroots up

Progressive foundation supports "alternatives"



Leaders of the Fund for Southern Communities include (from left) Jack Beckford, Joan Garner, John Bell and Carrie Friess

Photo courtesy of Fund

The Fund for Southern Communities is as distinctly progressive today as it was 15 years ago when a group of civil rights activists created it to serve groups in the South that tend to be outside the loop of traditional funding.

BY SUSAN GRAY

There was a time when the Center for Community Self-Help in Durham was only a sparkle in young Martin Eakes' eye.

In the early 1980s, Eakes made rounds through the Southeast in an old Volkswagen Beetle, trying to drum up support for his vision of a credit union that would loan money to low-income people.

Eakes and a handful of colleagues craved the backing of a foundation for crucial funds, as well as legitimacy. But many foundations hesitated.

Extending credit to poor people? Many bankers counseled that it would

GRANTMAKING

be pouring money down a drain.

As a last ditch effort, Eakes wrote to the Fund for Southern Communities in Atlanta. The community foundation, which serves Georgia and the Carolinas, makes a habit of giving money to new nonprofits considered too new, too small or too controversial by more traditional foundations.

"We support groups that are considered risky," says John Bell, North Carolina coordinator for the Fund. "We help them get a proven track record."

In 1983, leaders of the Fund saw possibilities in Eakes' idea. They quickly sent Self-Help a check for \$2,500 to help start the credit union, followed by a check for \$2,550 in 1984.

Those grants made all the difference in the world, says Thad Moore, an original Self-Help employee.

"I can't think of a grant that was

more important to us," says Moore, who is vice president of Self-Help's Credit Union, which has been recognized by President Clinton as a model community development bank. "I just remember that grant so well in my mind. They could see our vision. They understood it at a time when we were vulnerable, when we weren't sure we'd make it."

Other grantees of the Fund for Southern Communities echo this story.

Mary Uebelgunne, executive director of Home Street Home - a Raleigh-based advocacy group for homeless people - says the Fund gave her money when other funders wouldn't return her phone calls. "They were wonderful," she says of the Fund's staff, which includes Bell; Executive Director Joan Garner; Program Officer Jack Beckford; and Development Associate Carrie Friess.

"They'd come and interview us on site - clear from Atlanta - and talk to

Look for FUND, page 7

A lifetime of commitment

Bishop Robert Estill honored for social ministry

His efforts to link Episcopal churches with projects helping the poor and disenfranchised has won The Rev. Robert Estill recognition from the Jessie Ball duPont Fund in Florida.

BY VIDA FOUBISTER

Raleigh

Sixty-seven years ago, The Right Rev. Robert Estill's baptismal vows challenged him to strive for justice and peace and to respect the dignity of human beings.

During his 11-year tenure as bishop, a position from which he retired May 1994, Estill has fulfilled this charge through his work to expand the outreach ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. The diocese covers the central portion of the state.

"I think that's what being a Christian is about - that you have to be concerned about the needs of others," he says.

Estill's leadership, which flows from a lifetime commitment to helping disenfranchised people, recently was recognized by the trustees of the Jessie Ball duPont Fund in Jacksonville, Fla. On May 20, Estill was presented with the foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award.

RELIGION

Sherry Magill, executive director of the fund, says Estill was given the award to highlight his efforts to establish a partnership between the church and people who struggle economically and socially. This partnership has been aided by more than \$970,000 in grants to the diocese from the duPont Fund while Estill was bishop.

"He was chosen because he's shown creativity, perseverance and compassion for those less fortunate," Magill says.



Robert Estill

Bob Estill, one of Estill's three children who is a sports anchor on WLFL-TV in Raleigh, shares in the admiration of his father and his work.

"I've only had one hero in my life," he says. "And that's my father."

Estill was born in Lexington, Ky., in 1927 and attended Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Va. He prepared for the ministry at the

Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., and has advanced degrees from the University of the South and Vanderbilt University.

The award from the duPont Fund includes a \$40,000 grant to the diocese, which will be shared by five social outreach programs, and a \$10,000 discretionary grant to Bishop Estill.

Although Estill is free to spend the discretionary grant on himself, he says he has other plans for the money.

"What I'd really like to do with that is to look and see if there's something that needs starting," he says.

The projects the diocese chose to pursue under Estill's leadership were challenging and, at times, controversial, says The Rev. Jim Lewis, who served as the director of Christian social ministry for seven years during Estill's tenure.

For example, the diocese's efforts to establish a home for people living with AIDS was fought by residents of the Raleigh neighborhood for which it was planned. Despite this opposition, Husted House was successfully established about five years ago and is now well integrated and received in the neighborhood.

Estill also supported projects that attempted to go beyond basic chari-

ty, by working to teach people how to help themselves, Lewis says.

Helping Hands, for example, is an ongoing effort to help poultry workers organize, address concerns about safety and get adequate medical coverage.

Because North Carolina is a right to work state that makes union membership voluntary, this effort also has faced challenges, Lewis says.

Look for ESTILL, page 7

Bishop Robert Estill

Birth: Sept. 7, 1927; Lexington, Ky.

Education: Bachelor of Arts, University of Kentucky; Bachelor of Divinity, Episcopal Divinity School; Master of Sacred Theology, University of the South; Doctor of Ministry, Vanderbilt University and the University of the South.

Experience: Instructor, Divinity School, Duke University, since 1991; Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina, Raleigh (1983-94); Rector, St. Michael and All Angels Church, Dallas, Texas (1976-80); Director, Center for Continuing Education, Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Va. (1973-76); Adjunct Professor of Liturgics, Virginia Theological Seminary (1969-76); Rector, St. Alban's Church, Washington, D.C. (1969-73); Dean, Christ Church Cathedral, Louisville, Ky. (1963-69); Rector, Christ Church, Lexington, Ky. (1955-63); Rector, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Middlesboro, Ky. (1952-55).

Military service: Served in the U.S. Navy during World War II (Asiatic-Pacific Theater).

Volunteer work: President, Province IV of the Episcopal Church (1991-94); President, North Carolina Council of Churches (1990-91); Board Chairman, Thompson Children's Home (1983-94); Board Chairman, Penick Home and Conference Center of the Diocese of North Carolina (1983-94); Member, General Board of Examining Chaplains of the Episcopal Church (1973-78); Member, Standing Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Church (1967-79); Member, Chair, Kentucky Commission on Human Rights (1955-63).

Family: Married Joyce Haynes in 1950. Three children and six grandchildren.

BRIEFLY

Foundation tours Smart Start

Representatives of the Carnegie Corp. in New York toured several Smart Start programs and met with state legislators and community leaders last month to gather background information on the initiative. Foundation officials say they want Smart Start to submit a proposal this fall for "catalyst grants."

Foundations support nonprofit initiative

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Ford Foundation have provided support for the first phase of a six-year nonprofit research initiative. The Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action aims to strengthen research through collaborations between academic and professional organizations.

Foundation issues call for health-care proposals

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in New Jersey has issued a call for proposals under its Local Initiative Funding Partners and Service Credit Banking in Managed Care programs. The Initiative program offers matching grants to agencies that are seeking to meet unmet health-care needs. The deadline for proposals is

Dec. 7. The Service Credit program recruits volunteers to provide non-medical services such as transportation or housekeeping that allow ailing elderly residents to remain in their homes. Proposals are due June 30. For information, call (609) 452-8701.

Trust funds statewide health initiative

The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust in Winston-Salem has approved funding to expand a health-care program for low-income, elderly and disabled adults. Grants totalling \$869,000 have been approved to put into effect the Medicaid Community Alternatives Program for Disabled Adults in 12 counties.

Foundation awards incentive scholarships

The Foundation for the Carolinas will give 22 high school seniors the 1995 Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Scholarship Incentive Program Award. The award is sponsored by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and funded through a \$1 million anonymous gift to the foundation.