

As part of F·E·G·S's 70th Anniversary, we will be sharing a series of historical perspectives that relate to the development, achievements and growth of the Agency.



# 1934 → 40

## OUR BEGINNINGS

*To all who need the chance to work . . .*

*To the young, people with disabilities, the aged . . .*

*To all who must use their productive and creative skills*

*Here is hope . . . here is an understanding heart.*



*FES helped thousands of unemployed men and women find career paths and employment opportunities during the depths of the Depression.*

**O**ur roots are deep. We were born while the winds of worldwide economic depression were sowing the seeds of World War and the Holocaust. Anti-Semitism and discrimination added an additional burden to the unemployed seeking a livelihood.

Federation Employment Service opened its doors in September, 1934, in the depths of the Great Depression. The Federation of Jewish Philanthropies merged six small vocational services to create a new organization that began with a budget of under \$20,000.

Our mandate was clear: *to assist young Jewish men and women to identify, prepare for and find suitable jobs; and to reduce discrimination in employment.* The founders made another, more personal commitment – to become leaders, innovators and role models in their field.

Within a few years, FES's leadership was well recognized. Jewish communities from across the nation sought our counsel on vocational problems in their cities. Other religious and not-for-profit organizations, as well as governmental agencies, asked FES for assistance in improving their own employment services. **By 1940, FES was serving more than 10,000 people a year on a budget close to \$60,000.**