

2023 ESL IN THE COMMUNITY REPORT

OWNERS' DIVIDEND



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Stephen, ESL customer
Webster

2023 PAYOUT IN JANUARY 2024

\$25 MILLION

TOTAL AMOUNT PAID TO
MEMBERS SINCE OWNERS'
DIVIDEND WAS CREATED IN 1996

\$290 MILLION

Now in its 27th year, the ESL Owners' Dividend is an extraordinary way we give back to our members each year. As part of our mission, we commit to sharing our financial success with members and have returned more than \$290 million in Owners' Dividend payouts through the years. Our success would not be possible without the ongoing trust and loyalty of our members, and one way we can share our earnings with those who help impact it.

We are in a fortunate situation at ESL where we do not have shareholders or investors. Our employees at ESL, our loyal members (you), businesses, community partners, vendor partners, community members, and more are all stakeholders whose best interests we keep close to heart. As a member-owned organization

inspired by the cooperative principles, we work for the benefit and prosperity of the Greater Rochester community.

Again this year, our payout criteria were designed to ensure that all members shared the same starting point to earning an Owners' Dividend by providing \$10 to all eligible members. The \$10 starter payout elevates the Owners' Dividend payout for a significant portion of our members and supplements the earnings members can accumulate based on their partnership with ESL, including loan and deposit balances, debit and credit card transaction volumes, and Wealth Management relationship.

OWNERS' DIVIDEND STORIES

Naomi, ESL personal and business banking member

Naomi has been an ESL member for more than 10 years—for both personal banking and business banking. She's a lifelong Rochesterian and the proud owner of Xstravagance Designs, a clothing and resort-wear boutique with a mission of allowing your beauty to exude inside.

Like many, Naomi's work as a small business owner can be a rollercoaster of ups and downs—including finances. A few years ago, after COVID hit, she wasn't sure how to make ends meet. Until she logged into the ESL Mobile Banking app and saw surprise money in one of her accounts. That Owners' Dividend, she said, brought her to tears. "It gave me a little bit of hope."

Many business owners start without a business degree and haven't taken formal money management courses. Over the years, Naomi has grown through her own "eye opening" moments. Today, she uses more wisdom when

making financial decisions. Her theory today is to "be like the ant": they're always storing up food, constantly working, making a surplus, and saving away. That's what she does with her Owners' Dividend payouts. Having unexpected money in her account supported her through a tough period, and she's stored it away since "for a rainy day."

As a small business owner, Naomi feels like herself. "You feel like you," she said. "Especially for women and their identity, if you have a family or are married, you don't want to lose your sense of individuality. Once I started pursuing entrepreneurship, I felt like me for once."

When the Owners' Dividend first appeared in her account—right when she needed some light and hope—it gave her an opportunity to catch up, and then to get ahead.

"ESL AWAKENED SOMETHING
IN ME. I'VE BECOME MORE
MINDFUL OF WHAT I DO WITH
MY INCOME, AND THAT'S
GOING TO MAKE ME A
BETTER BUSINESSWOMAN."

Naomi, ESL customer
Irondequoit



OWNERS' DIVIDEND STORIES

Debbie, ESL personal banking member of 28 years (and counting)

Debbie has been an ESL member for 28 years. Her father was hired by Kodak in 1964 and was an ESL member from day one. When Debbie graduated from college and moved home, she did what her parents did—she joined ESL, too. And she's stayed with ESL ever since, and for good reason.

Debbie's first Owners Dividend wasn't a lot, because as a recent college graduate at the time, she didn't have a lot. But she remembers it coming right after Christmas, which is exactly what she needed to pay for gifts.

Debbie was so surprised and thrilled that a bank would even be able to do something like the Owners' Dividend for its members. One of the things she appreciates most

about ESL is that the team calls, emails, and checks in with her about her accounts, investments, and more.

Finances can be confusing, but ESL coaches her on where to keep her money—whether in investments, savings, retirement, or other accounts. Debbie recently worked with Jessica from the ESL Chili Office. "She was fantastic!" Debbie said. "We're working on an investment, and it has me nervous, but she is counseling me. Every time I walk away from the branch, I feel better."

"When I think about belonging, it's important to human nature and ESL is doing it."



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ABOUT BELONGING,
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ESL IS DOING IT."

Debbie, ESL customer
Churchville

OWNERS' DIVIDEND STORIES

Mike, ESL Senior Home Equity Underwriter

Mike celebrated his 12th work anniversary with ESL Federal Credit Union in December. He started as a part-time teller at the ESL Webster branch and was promoted to full-time within a few months. From there, he moved to relationship banker at the Chili branch and, after a year and a half, landed in the Home Equity Department.

Today, Mike is in his fifth year as a senior home equity underwriter based on Chestnut Street, where he makes an incredible impact on customers by supporting lending for individuals and families in our community.

"It's not like we're giving someone \$500 to go on vacation," Mike said. "We're giving them substantial money to refinance debt or improve their home. It's life-changing money."

His work with home equity loans is closely connected to the ESL Owners' Dividend program, a payout for members that's based on banking balances and savings accounts, loan amounts, and more. When Mike works with an ESL member on a home-equity loan, that influences part of their Owners' Dividend—meaning more money could show up in their account.

One of Mike's happiest memories of working with an ESL member came early in his career as a teller, when a woman in her 20s came in to make a payment on her auto loan. As they talked, Mike realized she had enough money in her account to pay off her loan that day. Because of the Owners' Dividend payouts that had collected in her account—that she didn't even know were there—she was able to pay off her loan early. Today, she's a proud ESL member, and Mike set her up with a personal banking account.

"ESL HAS GIVEN ME OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT. I WOULDN'T HAVE MY HOUSE OR EVERYTHING I HAVE TODAY IF IT WASN'T FOR THEIR SUPPORT."

Michael (left), ESL employee,
with his partner

