

Fall 2009

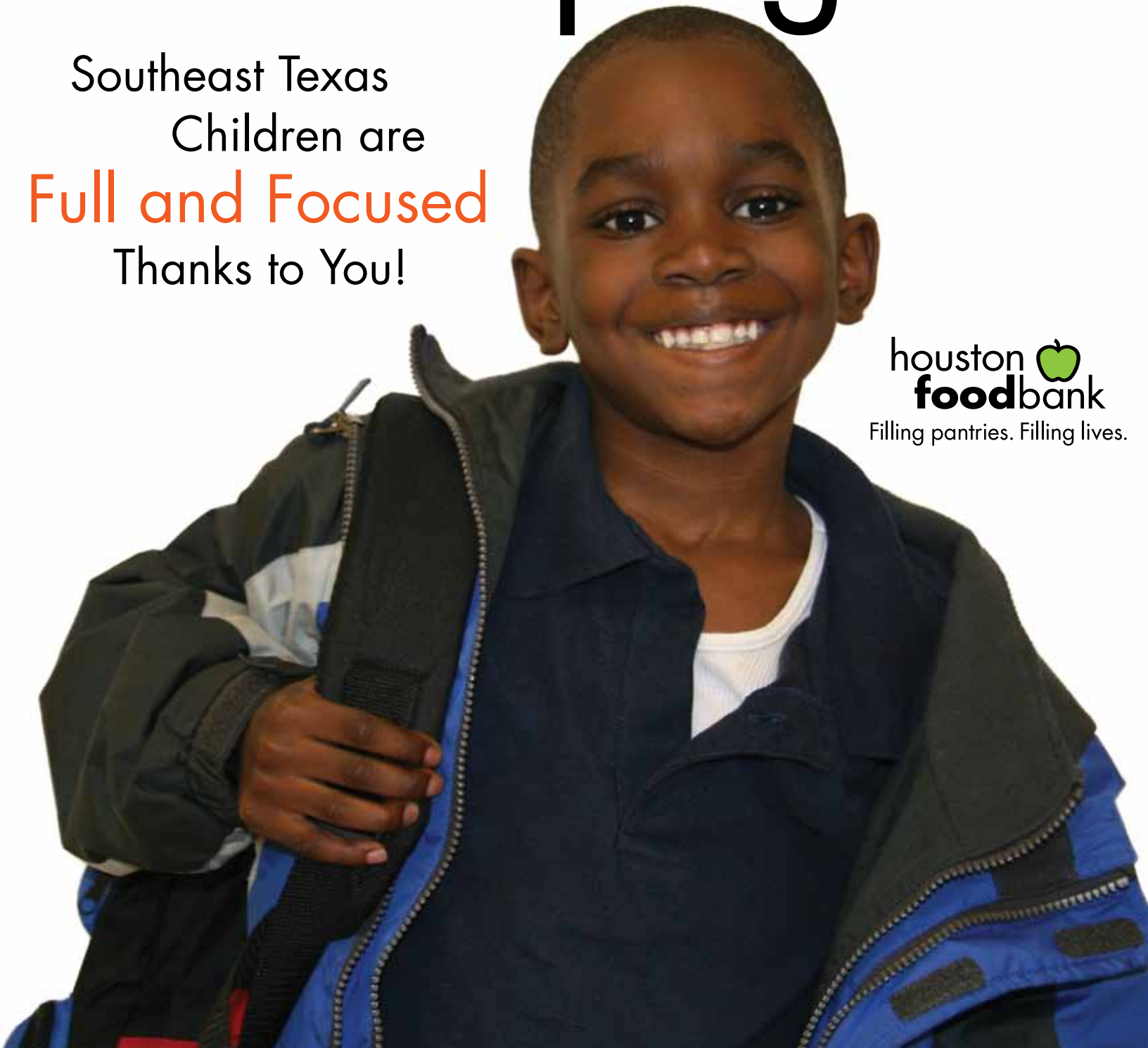
generous helpings

Southeast Texas

Children are

Full and Focused

Thanks to You!



houston 
foodbank

Filling pantries. Filling lives.

...look inside for stories of lives changed by your generosity.

Officers

Chair of the Board
Scott McClelland, H-E-B

Vice-Chairs
Armando Perez, H-E-B

Welcome Wilson, Jr., GSL Welcome

Secretary
Sondee Hatcher, Community Volunteer

Treasurer
Leslie Nelson, Randalls Food Markets

President and CEO
Brian Greene, Houston Food Bank

Board of Directors

Andrew Alexander, Weingarten Realty Investors

Larry Blackerby, KPRC-TV

Bill Boyar, Boyar and Miller

Janet Bryan, TR Moore & Company

Charles Caldwell, Vinson & Elkins

Mary Chitty, Campbell Sales Co.

Robert Del Grande,
Schiller-DelGrande Restaurant Group

Maria Francis, RRP Insurance Services

John N. Goodpasture, TEPPCO Partners L.P.

Cary Hoffman, Schoenmann Produce Co.

Gary Huddleston, The Kroger Co.

Mike Julian, M-C McLane International

Andrea Kates, SUMA Partners, L.P.

Christine Macan, JP Morgan

Ron Messner, Gulf Winds International

Jim Mills, The Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa

Samantha Murray*, Junior League of Houston

Jamey Rootes, Houston Texans

Benjamin Samuels, Victory Packaging

Yvonne Schneider, American Express Travel
Related Services, Corporate Services

Albert Tabor, Vinson & Elkins

Matthew Winter, American General Life
Companies

*Ex-Officio

You're the Key to Classroom Success



Brian Greene
President and CEO

Dear Friend,

The beginning of a new school year is usually an exciting time for children and families. But thousands of kids in our community are at risk of starting school at a serious disadvantage because they aren't getting enough to eat. In fact, **one in four** children in Harris County lives at or below the poverty level – meaning they likely don't have regular access to nutritious food.

As southeast Texas children head back to school, it's essential for them to have enough to eat so they can succeed in the classroom. Without proper nutrition, kids are at risk for behavioral problems, developmental delays and potentially life-altering academic obstacles.

That's why your support of the Houston Food Bank is so important. Your gifts help enable special programs like Kids Cafe, which serves healthy after-school meals to children in need. You also help us provide backpacks of nutritious weekend food to chronically hungry elementary school children through the Backpack Buddy Club. You can read more about how your gifts are making a difference for our community's children through these programs in this fall issue of *Generous Helpings*.

I'm grateful for your continued partnership as we work to provide food to families, children and seniors in our community. Your generosity is making a real and significant difference in the lives of those in need – thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Greene".

“Thank you so much!”

When Michelle moved with her two children from their home in Denver to the Houston area two years ago, she knew the transition wasn't going to be easy. But she never imagined she'd find herself struggling to feed her kids.

Michelle moved to Texas to take care of her elderly father, who is very sick with emphysema. Though she cares for him full-time, she is only paid for four hours of work per week through a home healthcare company. The family's only other source of income is her father's small Social Security check. But with two growing children to feed and her father's medical expenses, it's not nearly enough to make ends meet.

Taking care of her father for the past two years has really taken a toll on Michelle. She loves her family more than anything and only wants to provide the best for them – but right now, her resources are stretched beyond what she can handle. She just needs a little extra help to feed her kids and her sick father.

Thanks to friends like you, food is one thing Michelle doesn't have to worry about anymore. Your gifts to the Houston Food Bank make it possible for her to come to the Vietnamese American Community Center for nutritious groceries when she needs them. This Food Bank partner agency provides fresh produce and other important staples to community members in need like Michelle. They also serve a nutritious lunch to seniors each day.

Michelle is so grateful for the food she receives – and for the generosity of friends like you.

“Thank you so much!” she says. “Without your help, I don't know what I would do. I don't know where I would be.”



THANK YOU FOR FEEDING OUR HUNGRY NEIGHBORS!



You provide healthy after-school meals and snacks for hungry children.

Southeast Texans in need are so grateful for your compassion.

You're feeding the future of our community.

Hungry seniors have plenty to eat thanks to you.

You provide nutritious groceries for families in need.

HOUSTON RESTAURANT WEEK

It's not too late to dine out to help fight hunger in Houston through Houston Restaurant Week! From now until August 23, more than 70 area restaurants are offering fixed-price menus, with \$5 of each \$35 meal benefitting the Houston Food Bank. Check out www.houstonrestaurantweek.com for more information.

THANK YOU!

CHANNEL 11 SPIRIT OF TEXAS FOOD DRIVE

Huge thanks to all who participated in this year's Channel 11 Spirit of Texas Food Drive! Whether it was sponsoring a food drive in your workplace or church group, donating food through the Red Barrels in your local grocery store or donating money to help feed those in need, your support makes a big difference in the lives of our hungry neighbors. We are especially grateful to thank Channel 11

for their gracious ongoing support through this fantastic annual event. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE!

RECIPE FOR HOPE LUNCHEON

Save the date for the Food Bank's Recipe for Hope Luncheon honoring Patricia Reckling Taylor October 22. Please visit houstonfoodbank.org for more details soon!

CANSTRUCTION 2009

Mark your calendars now for Canstruction 2009, sponsored by the Society of Design Administration. Come out to Centerpoint Energy at 1111 Louisiana November 8 through 13 to see larger-than-life structures built from canned food by local architects, engineers and design firms. All food is donated to the Houston Food Bank when the displays are taken down.

FALL CHARITABLE GIVING CAMPAIGNS

Please remember the Houston Food Bank when electing charities to support through employee elected charitable giving campaigns this fall. Your support makes such a difference for hungry families, children and seniors in southeast Texas!

TEXANS TASTE OF THE NFL

Mark your calendars for the Texans Taste of the NFL on October 26 at Reliant Stadium! Meet your favorite Texans players, ambassadors and cheerleaders as you sip wine and sample food prepared by some of Houston's top chefs! Additional information will be available on the Houston Food Bank website in September.



RED BARRELS GET A NEW LOOK!

Be on the lookout for our new and improved Red Barrels in your local grocery store! While you're there, please help us fill the barrels with nonperishable food and grocery items to help feed the growing number of people in need here in southeast Texas. Purchase specially-packaged bags of food, or drop in individual cans or boxes.

“You can have fun *and* do good at the same time!”



Few members of the congregation at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Houston remember exactly when they started volunteering as a group at the Houston Food Bank. But they do know it's been at least 20 years – one church member said she and her husband – who was her fiancé at the time – went on volunteer dates together at the Food Bank through Christ the King as long ago as 1989!

Anna Stock has been serving as the church's volunteer group organizer for the past five years. She says the group had dwindled to

just five people when she first took over, but now they have 123 volunteers in their ranks. In 2007, Christ the King received the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Food Bank, and in 2008 its members served a total of 369 volunteer hours.

“I just think it's remarkable that we've grown so much,” says Anna. “We're proud to do it, and we look forward to 30 years!”

Anna says Christ the King puts a strong emphasis on supporting domestic and global hunger relief in their community, so volunteering with

the Food Bank fits perfectly with its mission. In addition to serving at the Food Bank's warehouse, they also run a ministry called “Feed the Hungry” for young single adults to pack meals for the homeless with food provided by the Food Bank.

Anna says volunteering at the Food Bank has made a big difference in her life and in the lives of her fellow church members.

“It's given me a broader group of friends and it's made me a happier person,” she says. “This is one of the main things that Christians are about – lifting the burdens of other people and demonstrating our capacity for compassion.”

Anna encourages others to give back to the community in any way they can.

“You can get to know a whole cross-section of people. You can have fun and do good at the same time, and make a really fine organization even better!” she says.

We are very grateful to Anna and the entire congregation of Christ the King Lutheran Church for their steadfast partnership in the fight against hunger here in our community.

THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIETY YOU WILL EVER JOIN

The Houston Food Bank's Full Plate Society recognizes and honors the generosity and vision of those who have made a lasting commitment to fighting hunger through a bequest or other estate gift to the Food Bank. Full Plate Society members receive special recognition and invitations to annual Food Bank events. Induction into this honorary society is simply a matter of notifying the Food Bank of your legacy gift, such as a bequest in a will or trust, a Charitable Remainder Trust, or designation as a beneficiary in a Life Insurance Policy or Retirement Plan. Please remember the Houston Food Bank in your will or estate plan.

Volunteer by visiting houstonfoodbank.org or contact Volunteer Services at 713-547-8609

“You’re saving my life!”

“Look at this wonderful food!” says Rita as she examines the inventory of her bag of groceries from Bear Creek Assistance Ministries, a Houston Food Bank partner agency. This is only Rita’s second time to come to this food pantry – until very recently, she’d never needed help with food before.

Rita was happily married and made a good living working as an accountant. But in 2003, both of her parents became ill, so she left her job to take care of them full-time. Shortly after they passed away, her husband became ill, too. She stayed by his side, caring for him until his death just a couple of months ago. Rita is still heartbroken and misses him terribly.

Not only is she dealing with the unspeakable pain of losing both her husband and her parents in such a short period of time, she’s also struggling to make ends

meet after years without earning an income. She says she and her husband used up what little savings they had while he was sick.

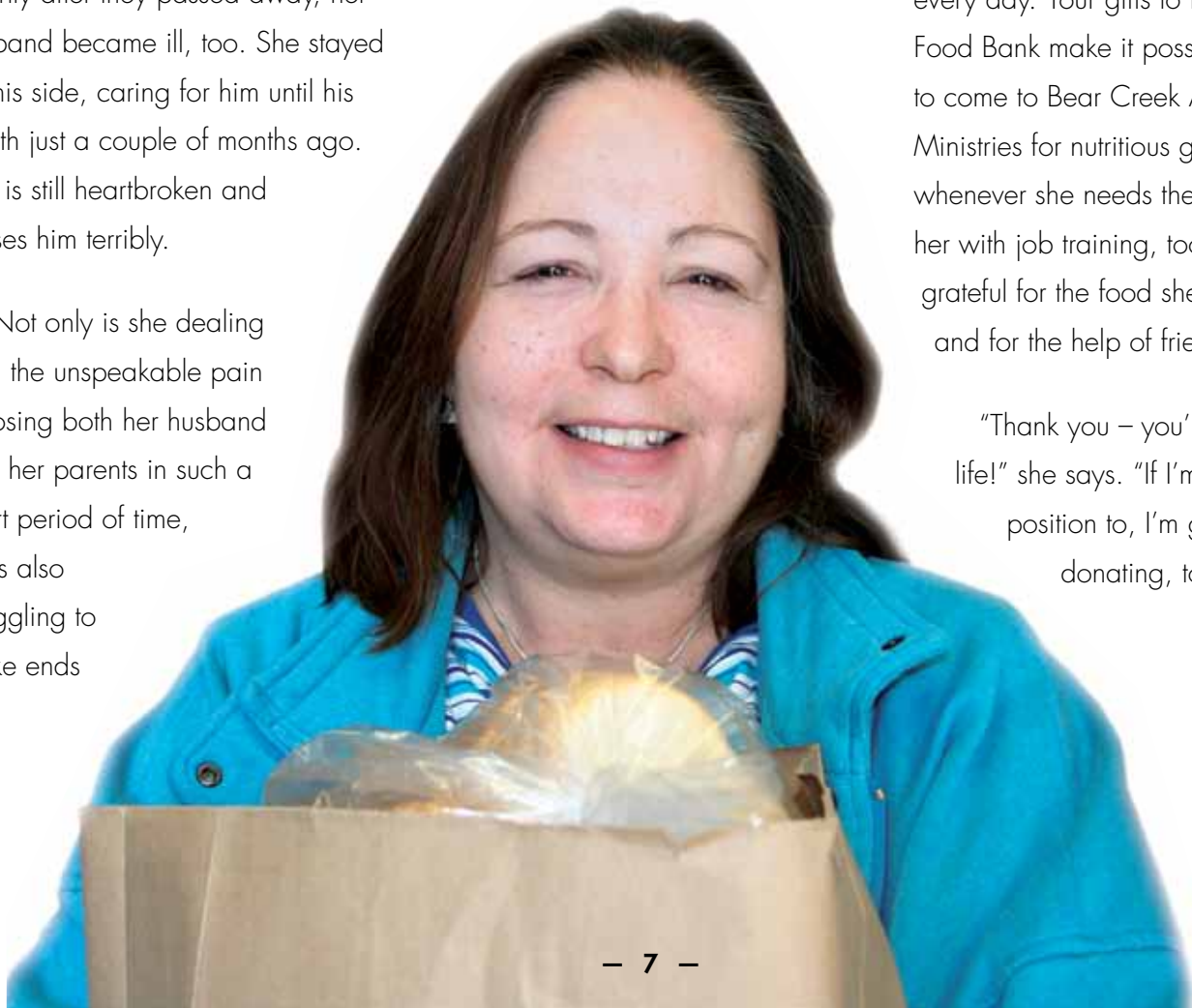
“We had very little money in the bank...not enough to buy food,” she says.

Although Rita currently lives virtually rentfree in a home owned by her husband’s family, she says they’re going to sell the house soon and she’ll need to find a new place to live. She wants to go back into

the accounting industry, but she’s missed a great deal of technological developments after being out of the workforce for six years. She knows it’s going to be hard for her to find a job – especially with the difficult market. With these odds stacked against her, she’s nervous about how she’s going to afford a place of her own once she has to move out of her current home – much less afford things like utility bills or food.

Fortunately, friends like you are helping neighbors in need like Rita every day. Your gifts to the Houston Food Bank make it possible for her to come to Bear Creek Assistance Ministries for nutritious groceries whenever she needs them. They help her with job training, too. Rita is so grateful for the food she receives – and for the help of friends like you.

“Thank you – you’re saving my life!” she says. “If I’m ever in a position to, I’m going to be donating, too.”



“It takes everyone’s help to make a brighter future for the children”

With seven brothers and one sister, 8-year-old Katie* doesn’t always get enough to eat at home.

“We haven’t been going to the grocery store lately because my mama and papa haven’t been getting paid,” she says, without knowing the impact of her words.

Katie and her siblings are being raised by their mother and grandfather. And she’s just one of the many children in our



community who don’t have regular access to the food they need to stay full and focused at school.

That’s why Katie’s school, Bastian Elementary School in Houston, implemented the Houston Food Bank’s Backpack Buddy Club program. This program identifies chronically hungry children and provides them with a sack full of nutritious, kid-friendly food each Friday to last through the weekend. Since the majority of Bastian students come from low-income families – 97 percent of students participate in the free or reduced-price school meal program – the Backpack Buddy Club is a lifeline for many kids and their families, including Katie’s.

Communities in Schools Project Manager Christine Bell helps operate the Backpack Buddy Club at Bastian Elementary. She says the food the kids receive has made a huge difference in their behavior and concentration in class.

“Teachers are seeing kids more alert in class, and they’re doing better [academically],” she says.

“They’re good kids and they really need this program.”

Ms. Wiggins has been teaching third grade at Bastian for six years and had five students in her class who received food from the Backpack Buddy Club last year. She echoes Christine’s sentiments, noting a significant change in these students’ demeanors now that they have regular access to nutritious food.

“It gives them a little more confidence,” she says. “They feel at ease knowing there’s an outlet for them to get what they need – what they don’t have at home. And with that need being met, they have more time to worry about their education and not where their next meal is coming from.”

It’s your gifts to the Houston Food Bank that make it possible for students at Bastian Elementary and 75 other schools here in southeast Texas to come to school Monday morning full and focused – and they’re grateful for your compassion.

“Thank you. Sometimes without you we wouldn’t have anything to eat,” says Doris, a grandmother and faithful Backpack Buddy Club volunteer raising her two grandchildren on her own. Before the Backpack Buddy Club started she says her family would run out of food. “We didn’t have anything. The backpack helps a lot!”

**this name has been changed.*

houston 
foodbank
Filling pantries. Filling lives.

3811 Eastex Freeway
Houston, Texas 77026
Phone: 713-223-3700
Fax: 713-223-1424

houstonfoodbank.org

FEEDING
AMERICA

your donations are welcomed at houstonfoodbank.org