

“Hunger doesn’t take a holiday.”

As a single mother, nothing matters more to Vanessa than her children. She works hard to support her two teenaged daughters, yet even with a full-time job, it’s a huge challenge to provide for all their needs.

“I feel I’m a good mother and I work hard, but it’s just so difficult to make ends meet,” she says.

Vanessa doesn’t qualify for food stamps, so buying groceries is an expensive prospect for her and with the coming holidays, she wants to be able to make a special meal for her girls. She needs a little extra help just to feed her family.

Fortunately, friends like you are helping families like Vanessa’s every day. Through your gifts to the Houston Food Bank, partner food pantries like West Houston Assistance Ministries provide southeast

Texans in need with nutritious groceries throughout the holiday season and all year long.

“The kids like the food, and I feel welcome and not embarrassed,” says Vanessa. “This place makes me feel good about being here.”

Pantry Director Louise Houser says they serve nearly 30 families a day, and now that the holidays are here, they’re expecting to give special food boxes to more than 175 families throughout this busy season.

“Hunger doesn’t take a holiday,” says Louise.

Thanks to your generosity, thousands of individuals and families in southeast Texas have access to nutritious food this

holiday season and throughout the year. Your compassion has already made a difference in the lives of Vanessa and her daughters.

“Thank you!” she says. “This is like a sign from God.”



generous helpings

Give the gift that gives life this holiday season.



houston foodbank
Filling pantries. Filling lives.

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a member of
America's Second Harvest
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your donations are welcomed at houstonfoodbank.org

...see inside for stories of lives changed by your generosity!

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The Joy of Giving

Dear Friend,

It's been a big year for the Houston Food Bank as we have celebrated a special milestone: our 25th anniversary of service to the southeast Texas community. As we approach the end of 2007, I reflect on the important work of the past 25 years and the dedicated volunteers, donors and staff who have made it possible to feed hundreds of thousands of hungry people over the last quarter-century.

It's been a milestone year for me personally as well. I've been looking forward to this time of year more than ever because my wife and I will celebrate our first holiday season with our newborn son. We can't wait to have our own new family traditions!

I am overwhelmed with gratitude for generous friends like you whose partnership is invaluable as we work to help even more hungry southeast Texans in the coming years.

While our mission remains the same after 25 years, many things have changed – including the newsletter you're reading right now. We want to do a better job of sharing with you the stories of the lives you've impacted by being a part of the work of the food bank. To accomplish this goal, we've reformatted our newsletter so you can clearly see just how important your role is in bringing hope and happiness to southeast Texans in need. I hope you'll be encouraged as you read the stories and see the smiling faces on the following pages - knowing that each one is living a better life because of you. We couldn't do it without you!

I hope you and your loved ones have a very happy holiday season. Thank you for all you do for our neighbors in need.



Brian Greene
President and CEO

Brian Greene
President and CEO

“There are so many people who would go without food, if it weren't for you.”

Cindy and her husband Ronnie know that raising three children is no easy task. Providing for their family has become even more difficult recently with the stress of moving, starting new jobs and encountering unexpected expenses.

Cindy and Ronnie both just found new full-time jobs after working low-paying jobs for several months. They're thankful for these new opportunities, but it is taking longer than expected to get caught up on bills and get back on their feet. The family recently downsized to a more affordable apartment in order to stay ahead of the bills.

Cindy and Ronnie are working hard to make ends meet, but in order to pay the bills on time and keep enough food in the house for five people, they need a little extra help. Cindy says for the first time ever, they've completely run out of groceries.

“There is no food in the house,” she says.

“Seeing my kids hungry hurts.”

With thanks to friends like you, Cindy and Ronnie don't have to worry about how to feed their children.

Your gifts to the Houston Food Bank enable our partner agencies like the food pantry at the Bridge Church of Freeport to provide nutritious groceries to individuals and families in need. Because of your compassion, Cindy's family and hundreds of others will have plenty to eat during the holidays.

“I don't know what we would do without the help,” she says gratefully. “I would be really upset if I didn't have food to cook for Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner for the kids.”

Your support is giving Cindy's family hope for a better future. She says she plans to finish school and start her own business so she and Ronnie can save enough money to fulfill their dream of sending their children to college.

“I really appreciate the help!” she says. “There are so many people who would go without [food] if it weren't for you.”



Cindy and two of her children

You're a Gift to Southeast Texans in Need!



You provide healthy after-school meals for kids

Parents have nutritious groceries for their families, thanks to you

You give hope to those in need

Seniors in need are so thankful for your compassion

Hungry children have full stomachs because you care

THANK YOU!

Construction

Thank you to the Society of Design Administration for recruiting teams of architects, engineers and professionals in construction to build structures made out of canned food for this year's Construction! At the event's conclusion, more than 49,000 canned food items were donated to the food bank. Thank you to everyone who participated!

JOIN US!

ABC-13 Share Your Holidays Food Drive

Don't miss the ABC-13 Share Your Holidays Food Drive December 5! Food will be collected from 6 a.m. - 6 p.m. at Fonde Recreation Center, a City of Houston Parks and Recreation facility located just west of downtown Houston at Memorial and Sabine, and at H-E-B stores and other locations all around the greater Houston area.

Gift of Produce

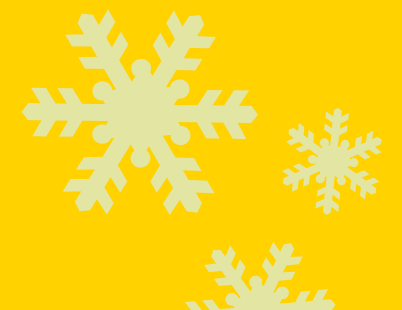
Come on out to Minute Maid Park at 10 a.m. December 20 as the Houston Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association rallies membership to donate massive quantities of produce to the food bank to provide a nutritious holiday season!

Chevron Houston Marathon

Join the Houston Food Bank team January 13, 2008 to "Run for a Reason" and raise money to feed the hungry at the Chevron Houston Marathon! United Space Alliance is sponsoring the food bank team. Visit houstonfoodbank.org for more information.

Souper Bowl of Caring

Thousands of volunteers are needed to staff food collection locations at H-E-B, Kroger and Randalls stores for this city-wide food drive February 2 - 3, 2008. Call 713-547-8609 if you're interested in volunteering.



“It makes me happy that I can make other people happy!”

As the Houston Food Bank wraps up its 25th year of service to the southeast Texas community, we are especially grateful to the many dedicated volunteers who have helped make the past quarter of a century so meaningful.

Katie Vaughan is just one of these special volunteers. Her tireless efforts as the volunteer director of the Airline UMC Food Pantry in Houston from 1992 until this past February have helped hundreds of hungry southeast Texans receive the food they needed. Having volunteered at the pantry for a total of 30 years, Katie says there is no work she enjoys more than giving back to the community.

“I enjoy helping people,” she says. “It makes me happy that I can make other people happy!”

In her 30 years at the pantry, Katie has seen countless lives changed through the transformative power of nutritious food. She remembers one large family, several of whom were disabled, who needed food for the holidays last year. Only one person in the household of 12 was able to work to provide for the family, so they were very grateful for the holiday food Katie was able to give them.

“Sometimes it’s heartbreaking to hear the stories, but I’m glad to know I can help,” she says.

Although Katie has retired her volunteer position at the food pantry at the age of 79, she encourages everyone to give back to the community by volunteering. She says that over the years she has seen the need for food continue to



increase. It’s more important than ever to give back.

“If you like to do good things for people and you want self satisfaction, then volunteering is what to do,” she says.

Thank you to Katie and our many other volunteers who work hard everyday to end hunger in southeast Texas.

Donor Spotlight

The Houston Food Bank is grateful to AIG American General for its continued generous support of the Backpack Buddy Club program. AIG AG has graciously given an additional \$50,000 to send hungry children home with backpacks of nutritious, kid-friendly food each weekend

throughout the school year. Special thanks to AIG AG President Matt Winter, food bank board member and champion for the backpack program.

Project Holiday Cheer

Let the Houston Food Bank send your holiday cards this year! For a minimum donation of \$12 per card,

we will send our beautiful holiday cards to your friends and loved ones throughout the holiday season. If you would like to order more than 10 cards, please include labels with your request. Checks can be made out to The Houston Food Bank, or you may pay by credit card. For more information, please contact Olivia Siner-McDaniel at 713-547-8623.

“Thank you for everything!”

Twenty-year-old Jenny is used to doing things for herself. She’s lived on her own since age 15, pays all her own bills and has a full-time job.

But being independent at such a young age is never easy.

Jenny works full time as a night security guard and takes classes during the day. She’s working hard to finish her GED with the help of special classes offered at Gulf Coast Community Services Association, a partner agency of the Houston Food Bank. Once Jenny takes the GED exam, she is already set to begin her training to become a police officer.

Jenny is an ambitious young woman with many hopes and dreams for the future; but she needs help just to get through the day sometimes. She works hard to support herself, but sadly, her income just isn’t enough to pay for expensive utility bills and groceries each month. She says that food is often the first thing to get cut from her monthly budget.

With the holidays just around the corner, being hungry is the

last thing Jenny wants to think about.

Thanks to the generosity of friends like you, Jenny doesn’t have to worry about where her next meal will come from. Through your support of the Houston Food Bank, Gulf Coast Community Services also provides nutritious groceries to southeast Texans in need. This partner food pantry supplies vegetables, pasta, beans and other healthy items throughout the holidays and all year long. Jenny is grateful for the food she’s received.

“Thank you for everything!” she says. “Before, there was nothing in my

refrigerator. I really, really appreciate this!”

You’re changing lives every day with your compassion. When you give to the food bank, you’re not just giving food to those in need; you’re giving people like Jenny a chance for success and hope for the future.



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