



# SERVINGS

News from the East Texas Food Bank

EastTexasFoodBank.org/DonateNow



## When my family lost everything, the food you provided kept us going

I'd never imagined what it would be like to lose my home. Now that I've been through it, I wouldn't wish it on my worst enemy. It still hurts to remember the conversation I had with my kids after the foreclosure.

They're both too young to understand what happened. The home they grew up in is gone now, taken back by the lender, and I do all I can to comfort them.

Like I said, I never imagined this. A few months back, life seemed pretty normal.

But suddenly, my husband and I were both out of work. The mortgage payments lapsed and the bills buried us. Now the four of us live in one cramped motel room. It's all we can afford, and the little we have is dwindling.

For now, we're living day to day. Groceries are so expensive—especially the healthy foods my children need. That's why I'm thankful for the East Texas Food Bank.

### You offered us hope on a hot plate

Once a month, I make a trip to the local food pantry that's stocked with produce, whole grains and even proteins. It makes a huge difference for us, especially toward the end of the month when our limited income runs out.

**“When we get back on our feet, I'll pass your kindness forward.”**

—ASHLEY



Back at the motel, we've got a griddle, a hot plate and a slow cooker in our room. It's not much, but I'm able to make the food from the pantry stretch to last of the month.

This food keeps us going, plain and simple. I hate to say it, but we would probably be starving without this help. I can't thank you enough for caring about people like us who are going through the toughest time of our lives.

When we get back on our feet, I plan to pass your kindness forward by volunteering. It's the least I can do, because you've given my family so much hope.

—Ashley

**When families like Ashley's experience an unexpected crisis—the loss of a job, serious medical issues or even foreclosure—your compassion is their safety net. Thank you for continuing to provide healthy, balanced meals for your East Texas neighbors in need.**

Photo has been changed to protect the privacy of the clients.

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## An encouraging word



from the **CEO**

**“With your help, we can meet our goal to provide 40 million meals a year by 2025.”**

Dear Friend,

Moving day is nearly here, and I can feel the anticipation building in every corner of East Texas Food Bank. This spring we'll unveil a new and improved volunteer center and nutrition education center. I couldn't be more excited to share this moment with you.

You may recall that we kicked off the More Space, More Meals expansion back in 2014. Kind, generous donors like you have been with us every step of the way, allowing us to maximize the positive impact for hungry people across our 26-county service area.

As you know, this project's completion means much more than a shiny new building. Our hunger-fighting programs will work even more efficiently and effectively than ever before. Updates to the nutrition education center include a state-of-the-art demonstration kitchen and garden. Not only will we be able to provide healthier food offerings for East Texans in need, but we'll be able to teach them more nutritious cooking practices, too.

Our warehouse now features a larger cold dock, allowing us to store even more fruits and vegetables than ever before. When caring friends donate their time at the volunteer center, they'll do so in a dedicated, safe workspace. All of these improvements add up to a better experience for the hungry folks we serve.

This spring, I encourage you to keep up your crucial support of the East Texas Food Bank. With your help, we can meet our goal to provide 40 million meals a year by 2025.

Gratefully,

Dennis J. Cullinane, CEO

## Senior Boxes sustain me through the month

When you're a diabetic on a limited income, it's hard to find healthy food that's affordable too. I retired from my work as a caregiver a few years ago, and now I pinch every penny.



A friend told me about the East Texas Food Bank and how I can come to the pantry for a Senior Food Box. I opened that first box and got emotional. There was juice, oatmeal, rice, some meat, fruits and vegetables. You get something like that and you know people care about you. It means a lot.

Now I'm living healthier. I'm able to afford my car payment, insurance, the electric bill and those other expenses that add up. Thank you for easing my burden and making the Senior Box Program possible!

—Jo Anna



Theresa helps Jo Anna load her car.

## We would like to thank our East Texas Food Bank Board of Directors

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# Some months you're all I've got

I'm a widow, and it's hard sometimes. We all struggle with expenses, I know that. Having enough money to pay for things like the mortgage and utility bill is more difficult when you're older and alone.

I've known my best friend Donna for 35 years. She helps me, checks in on me and makes sure I'm okay. When she saw I needed help, she encouraged me to come here to the pantry.

Nutrition is important for seniors. Like most, I'm trying to be healthier. There are more fruits and vegetables here than I expected, and I'm so grateful. When I run short of money toward the end of the month, the East Texas Food Bank is here for me. I'll never take that for granted.

## You helped me put my pride aside

At first I was afraid to come here. I didn't want to take food when many people are worse off than me. But the fact is I did need help, and there's no shame in that. I take what I need and no more than that. Lately I've started helping Donna when she makes food deliveries. I've been on both sides of it.

Thank you for this blessing of food. You're helping so many people, and you should feel good about that!

—Rose



**“There are more fruits and vegetables than I expected, and I'm so grateful.” —ROSE**

## Volunteer Spotlight

# Your kindness motivates my volunteer work

For Donna, helping others makes life complete. That's why she volunteers monthly with Community Care Pantry, an East Texas Food Bank partner agency. Donna uses her own car to deliver food directly to folks with transportation challenges. Many of them are seniors like her friend Rose (featured above), and most struggle with physical ailments.

“I hear the gratitude in their voice,” Donna says. “It's the best part of this volunteer work. I love seeing people get the help they need, especially since I've been in that position myself.”

## Paying It Forward

During particularly lean months, Donna has been able to supplement her meals with food from the pantry. Now she sees it as her



**“I hear the gratitude in their voice. That's the best part.” —DONNA**

responsibility to make sure neighbors in need experience that same access to healthy, balanced meals.

“I look at this as sharing with people who cannot help themselves right now,” Donna says. “It tends to be a temporary thing. A phase. They'll get back on their feet and give back when they're able.”

Through it all, Donna never loses sight of her passion in life: helping others. “I always think of families with little babies at home whose stomachs are hurting,” she says. “It's a painful image. But the work we're doing with your support means that happens less and less.

People can move past the survival stage and work to improve their situations in a permanent way.”



## Your support nourishes East Texas neighbors in all stages of life

Here at the East Texas Food Bank, we're continuing to shape and grow our hunger-fighting programs according to the needs of an increasingly diverse community. Your ongoing support makes that evolution possible.

On any given day across our 26-county service area, we provide life-sustaining food for children, families, seniors, and individuals facing disabilities. No matter their circumstances or stage of life, the East Texas Food Bank is here to meet their need for healthy, balanced meals.

One in 5 East Texans, including 1 in 4 children, are at risk of hunger, and your next gift could help provide the nutritious food they need. Many of these children rely on our Backpack Program to stave off hunger during the weekend, when school meal programs aren't available. Your compassion fills the gap.



Your gift could feed a family that's down on its luck and in need of some relief. Emergencies like the loss of a job, a home or even a medical complication can wipe out struggling East Texas families' meager savings in the blink of an eye. When that happens, your generosity creates a safety net to catch and support them in times of crisis. The meals you provide in the short term can help get families back on their feet.

Of course, your gift could help nourish and energize an aging member of our community. Our Senior Box Program is designed to improve the health and nutrition of senior citizens in our area. Without your help, they would be forced to make unthinkable choices—like paying for essential medications or purchasing groceries.

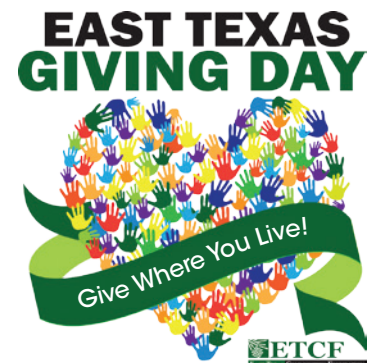
**Please give generously to help feed East Texas neighbors in need—no matter their stage of life. Donate online at [EastTexasFoodBank.org/DonateNow](http://EastTexasFoodBank.org/DonateNow) or return the enclosed reply slip with your kind gift.**

## Coming Soon—East Texas Giving Day!

On April 30, the third annual East Texas Giving Day will kick off. This 18-hour day of giving provides critical funding for dozens of area nonprofits, and it's the perfect time to take our fight against hunger to the next level.

That's why we're urging loyal friends and partners like you to band together with like-minded members of the community and help raise money for the East Texas Food Bank.

Be sure to spread the word ahead of time, and bookmark [EastTexasGivingDay.org](http://EastTexasGivingDay.org) in your browser of choice. Thank you in advance for your generous support on April 30!



**Connect with us!**



## MY SPRING GIFT—\$1 provides food for up to 8 meals

**YES, Dennis, I want to help fight hunger and feed families and seniors who are struggling in East Texas.**

Enclosed is my gift of:

☐ \$150 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **I want to become a Meal-A-Day donor with a monthly gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.**  
My first gift is enclosed.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to:

**EAST TEXAS FOOD BANK**  
3201 Robertson Road  
Tyler, TX 75701-2532



To charge your gift by phone, call 800.815.FOOD.

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Give online at [EastTexasFoodBank.org/DonateNow](http://EastTexasFoodBank.org/DonateNow)

Your donation is tax-deductible as permitted by law. The East Texas Food Bank will send you a receipt in gratitude for your kindness to the individuals and families in East Texas who rely on us for food.



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**Connect with us!**