

BRAZOS VALLEY FOOD BANK

The Story:

Solving hunger today for a hunger free tomorrow.

HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER 2019

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*You're Sharing Hope
for the Holidays
Through Your Support*



Theresa Mangapora
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Dear Friend,

Holidays are usually a joyful time, with breaks from the routine, meals with loved ones and maybe even some gifts. But for many families in the Brazos Valley, the season comes with intense stress: one in five households can't afford enough food.

Holidays aren't all parties, treats and special meals for everyone — they're about hunger, too.

So, what can be done? Doubling up food-filled BackPack distributions before each break and providing older adults with two Senior Bags before a holiday are important strategies that you help make possible through the Brazos Valley Food Bank (BVFB).

Additionally, Thanksgiving in the Brazos Valley, a partnership between Epicures Catering, Chartwells, Duncan Dining Hall and the [Brazos Valley Food Bank](#) ensures that, on Thanksgiving Day, anyone in need can have a traditional meal delivered for free.

And Blessings in Bags, a project the Food Bank is involved in, connects Bryan and College Station ISD families with two full bags of groceries when holiday break starts in December.

None of this would be possible without your generous support!

The holiday season is the perfect time to reflect on our blessings and seek out ways to make life better for those around us.

I want to thank you for giving of your time, collecting food and donating dollars so that fewer families face empty plates in their futures.

Happy Holidays,



Theresa Mangapora
Executive Director

“Food is our common ground, a universal experience.”

— JAMES BEARD

Thank You for Ensuring Families Are Fed



“Folks are living on a really tight budget,” Tara Dupper says of the families she serves. “We have people who are struggling so much, just offering cans of food is significant.”

Tara shares groceries, clothing, school supplies and other essentials with her local community through Project Hope, a Bryan ISD program that partners with the [BVFB](#) to support the needs of students and their families.

Some of the individuals who benefit from Project Hope are grandparents who are now raising grandchildren on limited, fixed incomes. Tara remembers one such grandmother who called Project Hope about help with food. Tara, unfortunately, wasn't able to help her that day, and when the woman replied, “That's ok, I'm pretty sure I have food for tonight,” Tara went out of her way to deliver groceries to the family. She says she was struck by how dire some of her students' circumstances are.

Many Brazos Valley families truly live day to day, without the security of knowing they'll have access to food tomorrow. That's

why caring people like you are so greatly appreciated, and so greatly needed.

You change lives for the better — during the holidays and throughout the year. Thank you for your partnership in this important work.

Shelly's Family Is Changing Lives

Shelly Janac has been part of the BVFB family for nearly a decade. She volunteers her time with both the [BVFB](#) and a local partner agency, served on the Board of Directors of BVFB from 2012 to 2018 and, along with her husband, Keith, financially supports the fight against hunger locally.

Shelly first got involved with BVFB when she saw how many BackPack Program bags lined the shelves at her kids' elementary school.

“I was totally unaware that there was this need at our own school,” she remembers.

Because she knows how vital healthy food is to children's learning, development and well-being, Shelly wanted to help. She started giving her time at BVFB through Project Serve, a group of mothers working to improve the community by inspiring the next generation to help. Now that her children are older, Shelly volunteers at BVFB with her children, Dillon and Carly, through local chapters of the Young Men Service League and National Charity League.

While on the Board at BVFB, Shelly used her skills as a financial analyst to help plan BVFB fundraisers. She most appreciated the opportunity to advocate for her hungry neighbors by telling others about BVFB's work.

“I now have an awareness about food insecurity that I can share with other people,” Shelly says.

We are so grateful for Shelly and her family's efforts to alleviate hunger in our community. Thank you for your dedicated service!





Elizabeth's Family Gives Thanks for You

Elizabeth and her husband, Samuel, are doing their very best to provide for their little ones — Logan, 3, Abby, 4, and Maddy, 8.

They're raising their family in Madisonville, but Samuel makes the long drive to Houston to work in the oilfield as a welder. Like so many other mothers in the area, Elizabeth stays home with Abby and Logan to save on childcare costs until they're old enough for school.

Unfortunately, the couple's budget took a recent hit. Samuel's hours were cut, then Elizabeth became seriously ill, requiring a hospital stay. This loss of income, coupled with expensive medical bills, meant something had to give. Scared and overwhelmed, Elizabeth understood that finding money for food for her family was a serious challenge.

Because you choose to give, Elizabeth and so many others have somewhere to turn. Elizabeth's mother told her about [BVFB's](#) Mobile Food Pantry that shares fresh, healthy groceries near her home in rural Madisonville.

Maddy, Abby and Logan are big vegetable eaters, and it gives their parents peace of mind to know they can provide them with balanced meals. They look forward to celebrating the holidays together around a full table — thanks to caring friends like you.

"Thank you," Elizabeth says. "My kids are well taken care of because of you."

You're making the holidays and all days brighter for your neighbors at risk of hunger. Thank you!

Special Holiday Projects

THANKSGIVING IN THE BRAZOS VALLEY (WITH CHARTWELLS & EPICURES CATERING)

NOVEMBER 28

1,500 meals delivered Thanksgiving Day to those in need

BVFB secures the food for the meal from local businesses

BLESSINGS IN BAGS

Close to 1,900 families receive multiple food bags over December break
BVFB sources, receives and stores food until offsite volunteer packing

Upcoming Events

SANTA'S WONDERLAND CHRISTMAS MILE & 5K FUN RUN

November 16 & 17

Santa's Wonderland, College Station

EMPTY BOWLS

November 21, 6 p.m.

St Andrews Episcopal Church, Downtown Bryan

KBTX MEDIA'S FOOD FOR FAMILIES FOOD DRIVE

Wednesday, December 4

Brazos Center, 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Kimbrow Center, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Navasota Valley Electric Coop, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

St. Mary's Parish Gym, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Mid-South Synergy, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Hearne Railroad Depot, 6 a.m. - 7 p.m.



**BRAZOS VALLEY
foodbank**

Contact Us:

(979) 779-3663

www.bvfb.org

Physical:

1501 Independence Avenue

Bryan, TX 77803

Mailing:

PO Box 74

Bryan, TX 77806



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