

Holiday 2010

# generous helpings

houston  foodbank  
Filling pantries. Filling lives.

You're Giving  
HOPE to Hungry  
Southeast Texans!



Look inside to see how your gifts are changing lives this holiday season...

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## HOPE for the Holidays

Dear Friend,

Thanksgiving is almost here! If your family is anything like mine, you're already looking forward to getting together with friends and family for one of the best meals of the year. My wife and I can't wait to celebrate this special season with our two little boys. I wish we could all be as joyful as children during the holidays, don't you?

With 2010 drawing to a close, I can't help but be reminded of how grateful I am for friends like you who have so faithfully supported the [Houston Food Bank](#) this year and in the many years past. When I think about how your partnership directly impacts hard-working parents, hungry children, the homeless and seniors living on fixed incomes, I am truly overwhelmed. It's your compassion that enables us to serve those in need, and I am grateful for your support.

Pretty soon, we'll be able to serve even more hungry southeast Texans. We are pleased to announce that construction has begun on the renovations for our new facility and we now anticipate a move in late spring. The capital campaign is in the closing stages and we recently held a successful employee giving drive.

As you know, our work is never finished. Recent Census Bureau findings report that 1 in 7 Americans are living in poverty. That's more than 14 percent of our country's population – and more than a third of them are children. When people are struggling to pay their rent and utility bills, food becomes a luxury they just can't afford. We simply cannot sit by and watch as our neighbors go hungry.

At a time when no one should go without, I'm thankful that friends like you have chosen to share your resources with those who have less. I hope you and your loved ones have a wonderful holiday season!



**Brian Greene**  
President and CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Greene". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# “Thank you for helping!”

Gerolia has experienced more pain and hardship than most people experience in a lifetime. Her husband passed away unexpectedly when her children were very young, leaving her to raise them on her own. Though Gerolia’s mother-in-law helped her take care of the kids while she worked full-time to provide for them, no one could replace her children’s father – or the person she thought she’d spend the rest of her life with.

Now, Gerolia’s children are grown and have kids of their own – but the pain of losing her companion is still with her every day. She continues to work as a home healthcare nurse, but she just doesn’t earn enough to cover all her monthly expenses – though she earns too much to qualify for food stamps.

Gerolia says she can barely keep up with her rent and utility bills right now, much less buy groceries. But these aren’t her only expenses. Last year she was in a serious car accident,

which left her with painful injuries, prescriptions to fill and a stack of hospital bills that she simply can’t afford.

“I just can’t pay them right now,” she says with tears of frustration.

Every holiday season, Gerolia’s children and grandchildren come to her house for a special meal. But

she wasn’t sure how she’d be able to cook for them this year when she can’t even afford to buy groceries for herself. Her family is also feeling stretched thin and isn’t able to help her like they wish they could. Right now, she just needs a helping hand.

Fortunately, friends like you are making the holidays brighter for families like Gerolia’s this season. Thanks to your gifts to the [Houston Food Bank](#), she can take home free, nutritious groceries from a Food Bank partner agency in her neighborhood. This local food pantry provides important staples and special holiday food to between 20 and 30 individuals and families each day.

Gerolia is so grateful for the food she receives – and she knows it’s your compassion that helps make it all possible. Thanks to you, she’ll have a full table for her family this holiday season.

“Thank you for helping!” she says. “We appreciate it. Please keep donating.”



# You're a Gift to Southeast Texans in Need!



Your gifts enable our community's children to grow to their full potential.

Your compassion feeds seniors in need.

Southeast Texas children have enough to eat, thanks to your generosity.

You bring hope to our hungry neighbors.

You provide healthy groceries for families in need.

## THANK YOU

The Food Bank wouldn't be able to meet its mission of providing food to those in need without the support of these important corporate and foundation partners.

### RELIANT ENERGY



This summer, Reliant Energy partnered with the Houston Food Bank and its donors to provide a matching gift for direct mail donations, up to \$50,000. The match offer resulted in more than \$232,860 in donations totaling more than \$282,860 with the Reliant Energy match! Thanks Reliant!

### JPMORGAN CHASE

In partnership with Feeding America, JPMorgan Chase has donated three refrigerated bobtail trucks to the Houston Food Bank. The vehicles support the Food Bank's Retail Pick-Up program,

a collaboration between the Houston Food Bank and local grocers who donate nonperishable products like meat, baked goods and produce for inclusion in the



Food Bank's prepared meals or delivery to member agencies.

In addition to the three vehicles, JPMorgan also provided the Food Bank with an operational grant of \$41,635 for the Retail Pick-Up program. Thanks, JPMorgan Chase!

### BANK OF AMERICA

The Bank of America Charitable Foundation is helping human service providers deliver much-needed assistance through health care, job training, hunger relief, shelter, childcare and youth programs through its Emergency Safety Net program. In August, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation awarded the Houston Food Bank a \$200,000 grant from this Safety Net program. Thanks, Bank of America!



### TYSON

In celebration of Tyson's 10th year of fighting hunger, the company donated more than 17,000 pounds of food to the Houston Food Bank on October 1st. In addition to this donation, Tyson has already donated well over 1 million pounds of food this year. Thank you, Tyson, for your many generous donations and your continued partnership!

## SAVE THE DATE

### SHARE YOUR HOLIDAYS PHONE BANK

December 6 - 11

Are you looking for a great volunteer opportunity during the holiday season? If so, sign up to answer phones during the Share Your Holidays phone bank at the Houston Food Bank. Evening and weekend shifts are available. For more information, contact Matthew Marcinek at 713-547-8608.

### CHEVRON HOUSTON MARATHON

January 30, 2011

Join us at Mile 4 as we cheer on those who will "Run for a Reason" at the Chevron Houston Marathon on January 30 to raise critical operating funds for the Houston Food Bank.

### SOUPER BOWL OF CARING FOOD DRIVE

February 5 - 6, 2011

Don't forget to support the Houston Food Bank as you shop for the big game during the largest food drive in the state of Texas. Look for Souper Bowl of Caring displays in your local grocery store, or contact Venniece Robbins at 713-547-8609 to find out how you can volunteer to help.

# “It’s a very powerful feeling to know you’ve helped feed someone”

The [Houston Food Bank](#) is privileged to have the partnership of many dedicated community organizations in the fight against hunger. One of these unique corporate partners is BHP Billiton.



BHP Billiton employees box food for those in need.

For the past few years, BHP Billiton has encouraged employees to give back to their community by participating in the company’s annual “Season of Sharing,” a fall fundraising drive benefiting several charities, including the Houston Food Bank. Employees are challenged to give food and funds to the Food Bank with the incentive

that the company matches their financial gifts, dollar for dollar. This year was the most successful yet with employee and company giving totaling \$240,000! Since 2008, BHP Billiton and its employees have given an incredible \$345,000.

As this year’s food drive champion, BHP Billiton President of Production Tim Cutt helped spearhead the effort to collect food and funds for the Food Bank. He says his colleagues

look forward to the food drive every year. Not only do they enjoy giving back to help those in need, but they love the team-building experience the drive fosters in their workplace.

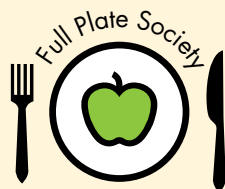
“We view giving back as a critical piece in the company’s overall performance,” says Tim. “People are better when they have a

full way of living their lives. It creates happy employees and operates as a wonderful team building exercise.”

Tim says the satisfaction of helping our less fortunate neighbors is an unparalleled feeling, and he encourages others to get involved in the fight against hunger in any way they can.

“At the end of the day, the feeling that you know you’ve helped to improve someone’s way of life is immeasurable,” he says. “Knowing my own children have been well cared for, it is sad to think of [a] child not having anything to eat. It’s a very powerful feeling to know you’ve helped feed someone.”

The Houston Food Bank is very grateful to Tim Cutt and his colleagues at BHP Billiton for their continued generosity and partnership in the fight against hunger. We simply couldn’t do the work of feeding hungry families, children and seniors without the support of our many volunteers and community leaders. Thank you!



## LEAVE A LEGACY WITH THE FULL PLATE SOCIETY

The Full Plate Society is an honorary society recognizing individuals who have included the Houston Food Bank in their estate plans through a will, trust, life insurance gift or other planned gift. To help you as you plan for a way to preserve your resources and values and pass them on to your family and community, the Houston Food Bank now offers a free **Personal Estate Planning Course**. This is a home-study course designed to help you achieve a smart, effective legacy plan that meets

your philanthropic and financial goals. To sign up, please contact Amy Ragan at 713-547-8629 or [aragan@houstonfoodbank.org](mailto:aragan@houstonfoodbank.org). You can also find answers to some of your gift-planning questions at [houstonfoodbank.org](http://houstonfoodbank.org) – just follow the link to “Donate” and click on “Donate Money,” then click on “Gift Planning/Wills.” As long as there are hungry people in our community, the Houston Food Bank will be here to serve them – and your commitments will allow us to continue fighting hunger for years to come.

**Volunteer by visiting**  
**[houstonfoodbank.org](http://houstonfoodbank.org)**  
**or contact Volunteer**  
**Services at**  
**713-547-8609**

# “The healthy food makes us strong!”

The [Houston Food Bank](#) provides food to more than 137,000 different people each week. Many of these are senior citizens who have worked hard their whole lives to contribute to their communities and provide for their families – but now have only a small Social Security check on which to live.

Song and Cach immigrated to the United States from Vietnam almost 20 years ago. Song had been a political prisoner for 10 years and they felt very fortunate to be able to come to America to escape the oppression. After becoming U.S. citizens and spending a few cold winters in Massachusetts, Song, Cach and their seven children moved to Houston where the warmth and humidity made them feel right at home.

Though the couple has no regrets about their decision to move to the States, they admit it was a hard transition. It was challenging for Song and Cach to provide for their family in a new culture, but they worked very hard to contribute to their new community.

Now that they're retired, the couple has only a small monthly Social Security check on which to live. They

receive a small amount of food stamps to help with groceries, but this assistance isn't nearly enough to get them through each month. Song and Cach need regular access to nutritious food so they can stay healthy. But they simply can't make their fixed income stretch to cover rent, utility bills, prescriptions and healthy food.

Fortunately, friends like you are helping seniors like Song and Cach every day. Thanks to your gifts to the Food Bank, they can come to the

Vietnamese American Community Center in Houston for a nutritious lunch each weekday. This Food Bank partner agency serves traditional Vietnamese food, so seniors like Song and Cach feel right at home! They also receive boxes of fresh produce, which they really look forward to.

“The healthy food makes us strong. It's so good!” says Song. “Thank you.”

It's your gifts to the Food Bank that enable us to provide agencies like the Vietnamese American Community Center with nutritious food so our community's seniors can stay strong and healthy. Thank you for your generosity!



## HUNGER CAN'T WAIT

A Campaign to Grow the Houston Food Bank

### HUNGER CAN'T WAIT:

Update on the Campaign to Grow the Houston Food Bank

Our goal of feeding more hungry southeast Texans than ever before is within reach! We have received the demolition, civil and structural permits and have started the interior demolition of the new building. The demolition of exterior walls to expand the front of the facility will begin soon, and roof work has already started. We've also begun installing the supports for plumbing and electrical materials and equipment. Check out this section in each issue of *Generous Helpings* for ongoing updates, or visit the "Hunger Can't Wait" section of [www.houstonfoodbank.org](http://www.houstonfoodbank.org)!

# “Thank you for feeding us”

“I’ve never done this before,” says Norberto as he and his family wait patiently to receive their bag of groceries from a [Houston Food Bank](#) partner agency in Kingwood. “I never thought I would have to.”

Norberto, his wife Delidia and their children moved to the Houston area from their home in Indiana six months ago. They wanted to be closer to extended family and Norberto hoped to find a better job. But despite a strong background in restaurant management, he’s been coming up dry in his search.

The couple’s children are very young, so Delidia cares for them full-time right now. But even if she wanted to find a job, she’d be very limited in what she could do – she was badly injured in a recent car accident, making it painful for her to walk or stand for very long.

The family has now gone more than six months without any source of income, so they’ve fallen behind on rent and utility bills. They receive food stamps, but Norberto says this assistance rarely stretches through to the end of the month – especially with growing children to feed.

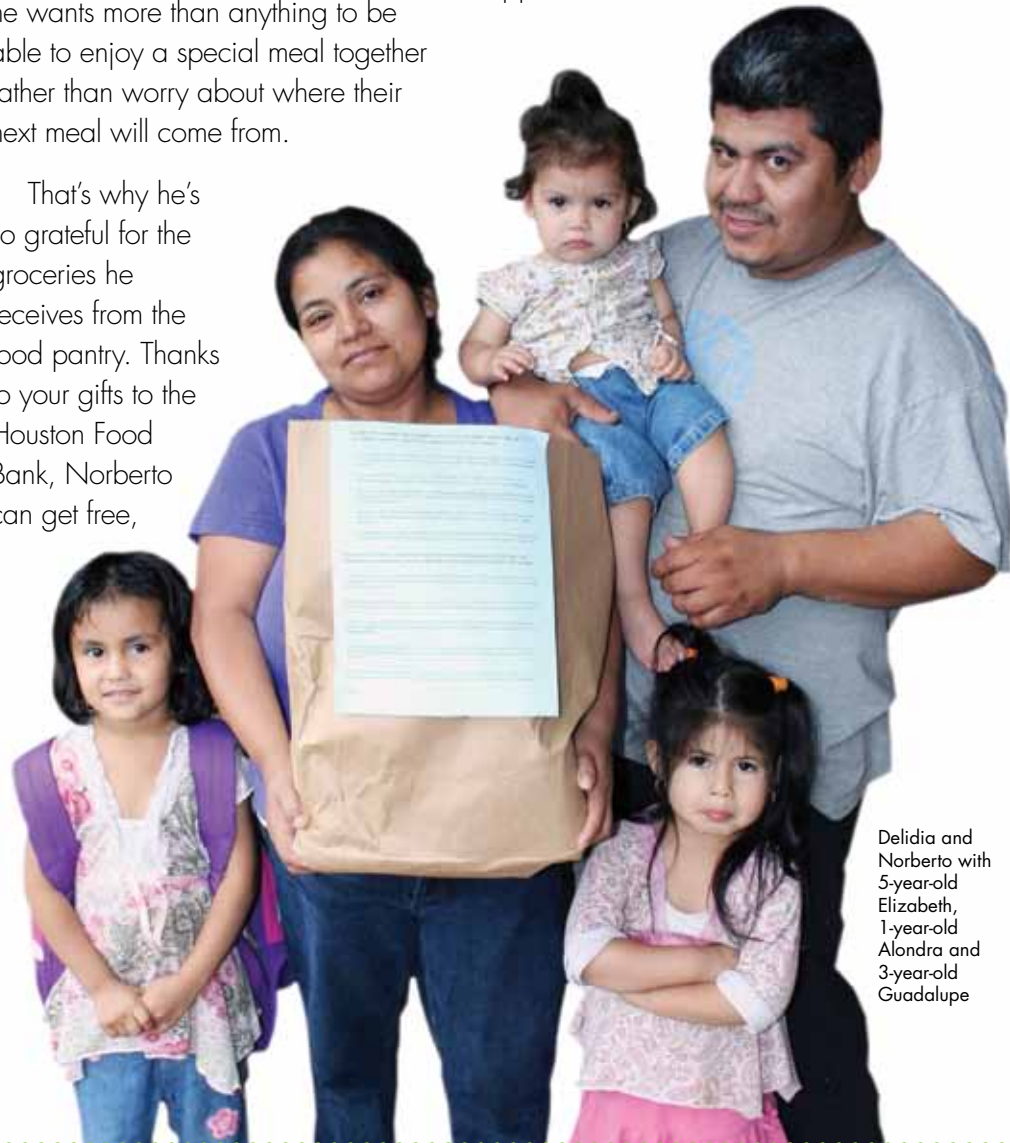
“It always runs out,” he says. “Food is very expensive.”

Norberto hates that he can’t provide for his family like he always had. With the holidays approaching, he wants more than anything to be able to enjoy a special meal together rather than worry about where their next meal will come from.

That’s why he’s so grateful for the groceries he receives from the food pantry. Thanks to your gifts to the Houston Food Bank, Norberto can get free,

nutritious food to take home to his family – including special holiday food. You’re helping his family get through this tough time by making it possible for them to have a full table this holiday season – and he’s beyond grateful.

“Thank you for feeding us – for feeding everyone. I hope God gives you more,” he says with genuine appreciation.



Delidia and Norberto with 5-year-old Elizabeth, 1-year-old Alondra and 3-year-old Guadalupe

houston  **foodbank**

Filling pantries. Filling lives.

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

[houstonfoodbank.org](http://houstonfoodbank.org)

 **FEEDING  
AMERICA**

your donations are welcomed at [houstonfoodbank.org](http://houstonfoodbank.org)