

Summer 2008

generous helpings

You're *helping*
fight
summer
hunger!



houston 
foodbank

Filling pantries. Filling lives.

Children, families and seniors have hope because of you...see inside!

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Breaking the Cycle of Summer Hunger



Brian Greene
President and CEO

Dear Friend,

Summer is finally here! Temperatures are climbing and children have been anxiously awaiting the end of the school year.

But not every child looks forward to summer. In fact, for many southeast Texas families, the summer months are the most difficult time of year. When schools close for the summer, parents whose children are on the free and reduced-price school meal program during the school year must work even harder to provide breakfasts and lunches every day at home. With the rising costs of fuel and food, families everywhere are finding it even more challenging to provide for their children.

Senior citizens living on fixed incomes are also at risk of going hungry this summer. As Texas temperatures soar into the triple digits, electric bills skyrocket, forcing many seniors to choose between paying for electricity and medications or buying groceries.

The good news is that the Houston Food Bank is making significant strides to break this cycle of summer hunger – thanks to friends like you. Because of your support, we are able to distribute food to Boys and Girls Clubs, food pantries, senior centers and other summer feeding programs that serve our neighbors in need during these hungry summer months. We are feeding more hungry southeast Texans today than ever before – and with your help, we will continue to provide even more of those in need with access to nutritious food.

I am so grateful for your partnership as we work to fight hunger here in our community. Thank you for your commitment!

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

“Thank you. You’re wonderful!”

“The thought of a child going to bed hungry is just horrific to me,” says Jackie Dann Knipple, volunteer director of the Alvin Community Food Pantry in Alvin. “I can’t imagine anything worse.”

That’s why the Alvin Community Food Pantry, which is a partner agency of the Houston Food Bank, works so hard to provide nutritious groceries to more than 600 hungry families per month. Danielle’s family is just one of the many who have been given new hope through the food they receive.

Danielle is raising her 4-year-old son on her own. Recently, a friend and her two children needed a place to stay. Both women had been earning decent salaries, so the new living situation was going to make life easier. In fact, Danielle had enough money in reserve to go back to school full-time to earn a college degree so that she could make a better life for herself and her son. And with a second income in the household to

help pay the bills, Danielle was able to leave her job and focus on her education.

But when Danielle’s friend lost her job, things became very difficult very quickly. Neither woman receives food stamps and right now they have no source of income. Danielle’s little boy recently had a birthday and it broke Danielle’s heart that she wasn’t going to be able to afford a birthday party. She’s worried about how she’s going to feed everyone this summer when the children are out of school and aren’t receiving free school meals. In fact, there was nearly nothing left in her pantry or refrigerator.

“We’re down to two pounds of hamburger right now. No eggs, no milk,” she says.

Fortunately, friends like you are helping families like Danielle’s every day. Thanks to your gifts to the Houston Food Bank, she has access to nutritious groceries from the Alvin Community Food Pantry when she needs help with food this summer. She even received a birthday cake for her son. She’s so grateful for your compassion.

“Thank you. God bless you,” she says. “You’re wonderful!”

Danielle takes groceries – and a birthday cake – home to her son.



FILLING FOOD BRINGS SUMMER SMILES

You provide nutritious groceries for families in need.

Kids have full stomachs all summer long thanks to you.

Your gifts mean filling meals for hungry children.

Seniors are so grateful for your compassion.

You provide healthy meals through Kids Cafe.

THANK YOU!

MAZON: A JEWISH RESPONSE TO HUNGER

Thank you to MAZON for generous financial support and for helping the Houston Food Bank make connections in the Jewish community. The group generously gave \$10,000 to support our Mobile Pantry program, a mini "food bank on wheels" delivering nutritious produce, non-perishable food items and other necessities to neighborhoods in need. Thank you, MAZON!

SHARE OUR STRENGTH'S TASTE OF THE NATION

Thank you to the many volunteers who organized this year's Taste of the Nation event, sponsored by Share Our Strength. This year's theme was "Bon Voyage to Hunger," featuring great restaurants, caterers and others bringing their best food and beverages for a wonderful evening.

STAMP OUT HUNGER!

Thank you to the National Association of Letter Carriers for making this year's "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive such a success! We'd also like to thank our generous sponsors for being part of the largest one-day food drive: KPRC-TV Local 2, radio stations 93Q, The Point and K-HITS, *The Houston Chronicle*, Kroger, Campbell's, and the United States Postal Service. And thank you to everyone who participated by placing food by their mailboxes!

EMPTY BOWLS

Thank you to all who participated in our 4th annual Empty Bowls! Guests received a delicious lunch of soup and bread and were invited to select a bowl handcrafted by one of our talented area potters and ceramists. Thank you to all the local artists who donated their time and talents to this year's events! Special thanks also go out to Whole Foods Market for hosting a Community Giving Day to benefit the Food Bank, generously donating five percent of the day's sales from all five Houston-area locations!

“Only as you give shall you receive”

At YES Prep public charter schools in Houston, service is a virtue. In fact, it's in their name.

YES is an acronym for Youth Engaged in Service. This free, open-enrollment public school system serves more than 2,000 low-income minority students in grades 6-12 at five different campuses throughout the Houston area.

In addition to regular curriculum and college prep activities, students devote one Saturday of every month to community service. This year, students from all five YES Prep schools have been learning about the importance of giving back to the community by giving of their time at the Houston Food Bank.

Michael Morris, Eighth Grade Chair of YES Prep's Southeast Campus, says

his students have been significantly impacted by volunteering at the Food Bank.

“The reward that our students receive from service work is a deep appreciation for the value and virtue of benevolence,” he says. “One of the underlying mantras at YES is that ‘only as you give shall you receive.’ It is our constant mission to give each student the opportunity to experience the truth of this lesson.”

Michael emphasizes the importance of instilling the virtue of service in children at a young age, and

encourages others to make a difference in the community.

“Once [young people] have the experience of [serving], they will understand its value and, hopefully, make it a life-long commitment,” he says.

We are so grateful to the students and faculty of YES Prep schools for their hard work and dedication, as well as the many other volunteers and community leaders who help make our work possible.



YES Prep students bag rice at the Food Bank.

JOIN US!

SPIRIT OF TEXAS FOOD/FUND DRIVE FRIDAY, JULY 11

Watch KHOU-TV Channel 11 all day for opportunities to make financial donations to the Houston Food Bank. If you're interested in holding a food drive for Spirit of Texas, contact Margaret Anne Ryburn at 713-547-8670, mryburn@houstonfoodbank.org.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOOD BANK IN YOUR WILL

You may not consider yourself wealthy, but believe it or not, you could still make a significant financial impact in the fight against hunger. There's an exciting new resource on the Houston Food Bank website to help you plan for your future, that of your family and ways in which you can help the charitable community many years into the future. Check out the new Gift Planning/Wills section on our homepage at houstonfoodbank.org. This special new resource features a helpful estate-planning gift calculator, up-to-date tax information, sample language for bequests and so much more.

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

“It really makes a difference in a person’s life”

When Derrick got married, he knew his life would change – especially since his wife has five children from a previous relationship. While Derrick has grown to love his stepchildren as though they were his own, he never imagined that one day he’d have to care for them all by himself.

Unfortunately, Derrick’s wife is separated from the family right now and Derrick has become a single dad. While things were already challenging, he’d managed to make ends meet. But he recently lost his transportation and subsequently his job.

Derrick is looking every day for a new full-time job, but with five children to take care of, it’s hard to find the time. He’s working part-time at a moving company to help make ends meet, but the hours aren’t very dependable. He’s worried about how he’s going to feed the children when they’re out of school for the summer.

Fortunately, he knows he can come to Interfaith Caring Ministries in his home town of League City when he needs extra help with food. This

partner agency of the Houston Food Bank provides nutritious groceries, rent and utility assistance and an after-school program for kids. Thanks to your support of the Food Bank, this agency gives groceries to more than 130 families per month just like Derrick’s.

Derrick is so glad to know he has a place to go when he needs help to feed his children this summer.

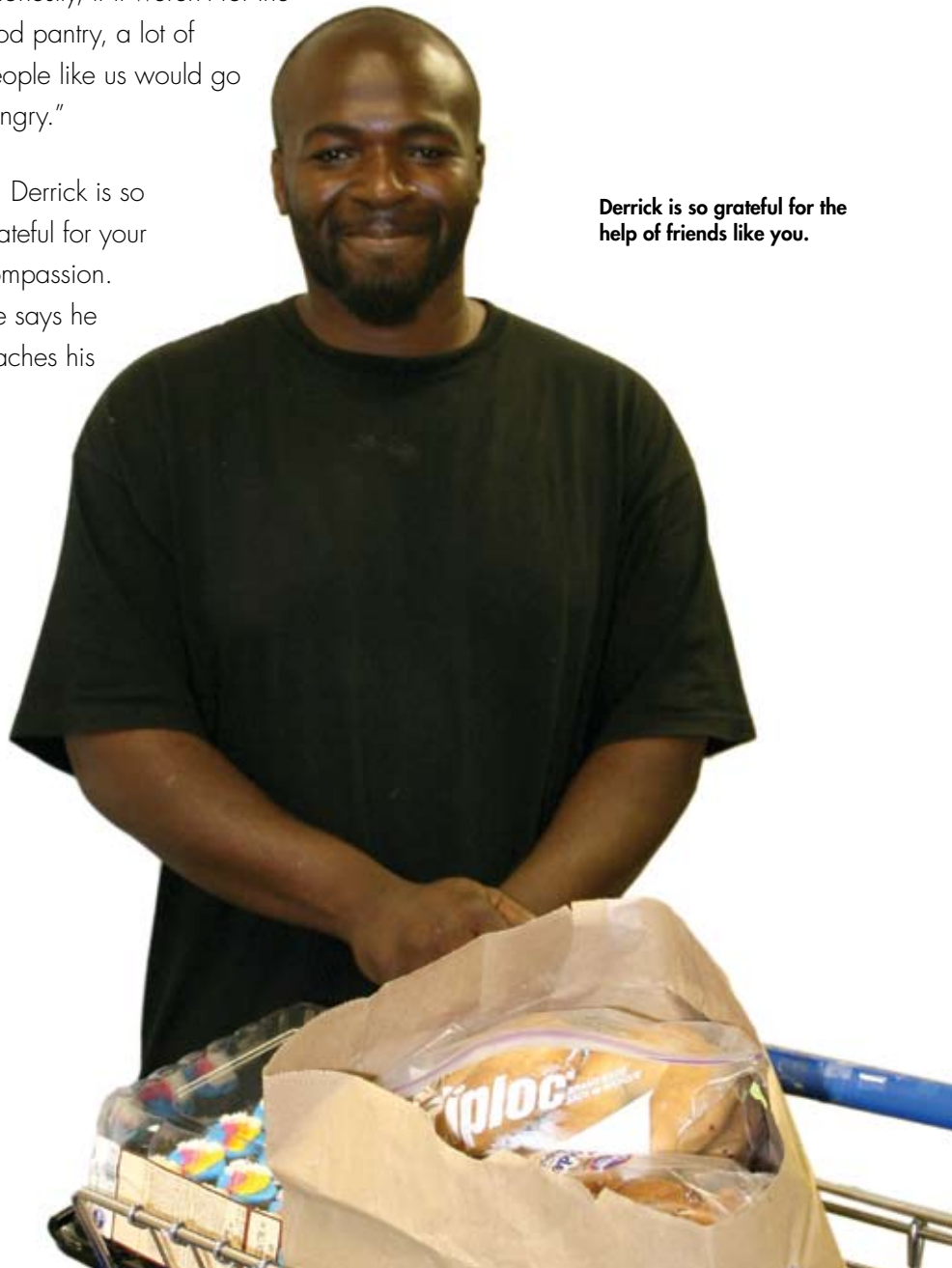
“It’s very helpful,” he says. “Honestly, if it weren’t for the food pantry, a lot of people like us would go hungry.”

Derrick is so grateful for your compassion. He says he teaches his

stepchildren about generosity by telling them about gracious friends like you who have given to help families in need like theirs.

“It means a whole lot to me,” he says with genuine appreciation. “Trust me, it really makes a difference in a person’s life. It helps a whole lot!”

Derrick is so grateful for the help of friends like you.



“Thank you for feeding these children!”

When a child is hungry, playing with friends and enjoying the summer sunshine are overshadowed by worrying about when she'll get to eat again.

Fortunately, the Clayton Homes Unit Boys and Girls Club in Houston works hard to make sure southeast Texas children don't spend their summers with growling stomachs. This partner agency of the Houston Food Bank provides lunch to anywhere from 80 to 100 children ages 7 – 17 every day during the summer months.

Branch Director Tamika Green says the summer meals are a lifesaver for the children they serve. In fact, the need is so great that before Clayton Homes had a Kids Cafe, Tamika says she would pay for the kids' snacks and meals out of her own pocket.

Most of the children they serve have working parents who aren't home during the day to prepare nutritious meals

and snacks, and many just don't have enough food at home.

“[This program] helps save money in the families' budgets,” says Tamika. “It's a great big help!”

Tamika says one single mother is especially grateful that her 10-year-old daughter can come to Clayton

Homes for nutritious lunches every day during the summer. Since she works full-time, she's so glad to know that her daughter has a safe place to go for a hot meal while she works hard to provide for her family.

Your willingness to share your resources with those who have less is giving hungry children access to the food they need to stay healthy and happy all summer long. These children and those who serve them are so grateful for your help.

“Thank you for opening up your hearts and feeding these children!” says Tamika.



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foodbank
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houstonfoodbank.org

a member of
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your donations are welcomed at houstonfoodbank.org