



wtxfoodbank.org

COMMUNITYDISH

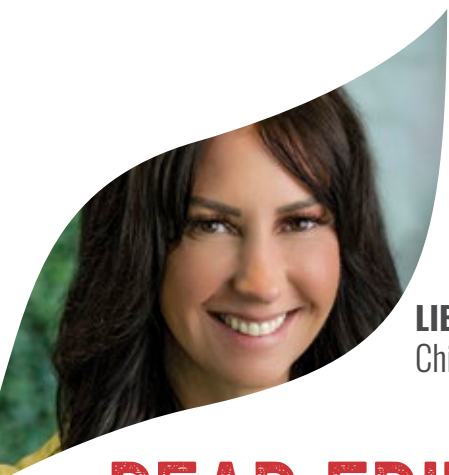
Feeding More Than *Hunger*.

HOLIDAY 2024

A close-up photograph of a young girl with light brown hair, wearing a black jacket and a colorful beaded necklace, sitting in a car seat. She is holding a baby doll with blue eyes and a pink outfit. The background is dark, suggesting the interior of a car.

THANK YOU
FOR SHARING
HOPE FOR THE
HOLIDAYS

MEMBER OF
**FEEDING
AMERICA**



LIBBY STEPHENS
Chief Executive Officer

DEAR FRIEND,

I am thankful to count you as a partner in all that the West Texas Food Bank does each day, and for your generosity and compassion during the holiday season.

As we settle into this special time of year, my thoughts turn to the many families and individuals across the Permian Basin who are having an especially difficult time making ends meet right now.

While the cost of living remains high for yet another year, many West Texans are at a critical risk of hunger even during this special season of celebrations.

But thanks to support from friends like you, our neighbors across 19 counties will have access to nutritious food — including food that makes a meal feel like a real holiday celebration.

In this special holiday issue of *Community Dish*, I hope you'll enjoy reading stories of our neighbors just like Maite (page 4) who shares gratitude for friends like you this holiday season.

There's also a spotlight on our friends at H-E-B that drives home how — together — we are all neighbors helping neighbors.

Thank you again for your generous support that is renewing hope for so many West Texans.

With gratitude,

Libby Stephens
Libby Stephens
Chief Executive Officer

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MIDLAND MOBILE REACHES LOCAL FAMILIES

Daniela's sweet smile melts every heart on a visit with her parents to the Midland Mobile Food Distribution.

At 3 years old, Daniela is quick with a smile and excitedly shares she is looking forward to starting pre-kindergarten and welcoming her little brother who will be born in just a couple of months.

Daniela likes to play and color for fun, and the family enjoys visits to the park together when there's free time.

Her dad, Luis, works hard washing cars, but his income isn't always enough to keep enough healthy food on the table. That's why Daniela's parents decided to visit the Midland Mobile Food Distribution.

The family is especially grateful for both the warm welcome they receive at the distribution and for the abundance of fresh produce and additional healthy food they receive that will help stretch their budget.



Daniela visits the Midland Mobile Food Distribution with her parents.

"The people here who help are very family-oriented and kind," Luis says. "We really appreciate what they do for us."

On behalf of all our West Texas neighbors, thank you for supporting West Texas Food Bank's vision of a West Texas without hunger!

THANKS A MILLION, H-E-B!



H-E-B has long been a cornerstone of support for the West Texas Food Bank, demonstrating a steadfast commitment to alleviating hunger in West Texas.

Over the years, H-E-B has made generous donations and volunteered extensively, impacting countless individuals and families in our communities who are facing food insecurity.

Recently, H-E-B made a remarkable commitment to provide over 1 million meals to families facing hunger across the Permian Basin.

Danny Flores, Senior Manager of Public Affairs at H-E-B, highlighted the company's mission, stating, "At H-E-B, we believe in the power of community and the importance of supporting our neighbors. Our ongoing partnership with the West Texas Food Bank reflects our commitment to addressing food insecurity and making a tangible difference in the lives of those in need."

In addition to financial support, H-E-B employees have actively participated in volunteer efforts at the Food Bank, dedicating their time and energy to sorting, packing and distributing food.

This hands-on involvement further illustrates H-E-B's dedication to creating a stronger, healthier community for all. Our heartfelt thanks go out to H-E-B employees and leadership who truly care about West Texans who are facing hunger!

Feeding **More Than** *Hunger*.

A WEST TEXAS FAMILY THANKS YOU

With children ranging in age from 13 to just 2, Maite can tell you that one of her children is always asking for food.

Her older children, Ernesto and Ricardo, are both in middle school and are very active, too. When they're not playing soccer, the two can typically be found playing at the park. That means hearty meals, so her children stay healthy.

Maite works hard cleaning trucks, but until her young ones are in school, part-time work is the most she can manage. She receives some SNAP benefits and child support payments, but putting enough food on the table is still a challenge.

"We used to be able to get food at the grocery store five years ago and now we can't," Maite says of the huge increase in the cost of groceries over the years.

A few months ago, a friend recommended that Maite visit the food pantry at St. James Missionary Baptist Church. Having access to healthy food has been a huge help in stretching Maite's budget and helping her have ingredients on hand to cook nourishing meals for her



Maite and her toddlers visiting the food pantry at St. James Missionary Baptist Church.

children — including favorites like rice, beans, salad and eggs.

"This place helps a lot," Maite says gratefully.

Thank you for standing with West Texas Food Bank to put nutritious food on every table today and throughout the holiday season!

In Memory of Alyssa Owens

Alyssa Owens, a beloved member of the West Texas Food Bank board, tragically passed away in 2023.

Known for her unwavering commitment to serving neighbors throughout the community, Owens played a pivotal role in the Food Bank's mission to alleviate hunger and support the community.

To honor her memory, the Food Bank has dedicated a special area in the Odessa Innovative Gardens'

pollinator garden. This peaceful space features a commemorative bench, serving as a tribute to Owens' remarkable contributions and caring spirit.

In addition to this heartfelt tribute, H-E-B has pledged a generous monetary gift to establish a butterfly education program in her honor. This initiative aims to educate the public about the vital role of butterflies and other pollinators in our ecosystem. By

supporting this program, H-E-B ensures that Owens' passion for community engagement and food insecurity will continue to inspire and benefit future generations.

Through these memorials, Alyssa Owens' legacy will endure, reflecting her deep dedication to community service. Her impact on the Food Bank and the broader community will be remembered and celebrated through these meaningful tributes.