

COMMUNITY DISH

Summer 2018



You Are Bringing Hope
to Children and Families
This Summer!



Dear Friend,

This summer, folks like you are a true lifeline to our neighbors with school-age children. As you know, summer hunger is a growing problem in our community. When classes let out for the long break, kids who rely on free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch programs at school do not always have reliable access to food. Families struggle to pay the added cost of these meals, in addition to higher summer A/C bills and increased cost of living throughout the Permian Basin.

That is why your partnership is so greatly needed — and deeply appreciated! You are helping connect families across the Permian Basin with balanced meals and healthy groceries through summer meal sites, mobile distributions and local food pantries.

I hope you will take some time to learn about the incredible impact you are making in this summer edition of *Community Dish*. On the following page you will meet Alicia, who is working through a family crisis with help from friends like you.

I love to hear inspirational stories from our network of partners and programs — and I hope you do, too. Remember that your gifts helped put that bright smile on Alicia's face.

Beyond providing relief for parents who are struggling to fill their tables, you are paving the way for a better community for us all by nourishing growing children. Thank you for the vital role you play in alleviating summer hunger!

Gratefully,



LIBBY CAMPBELL
Executive Director

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Families Like Alicia's Are Grateful for You!

When you give to the West Texas Food Bank, you ensure caring parents across the communities we serve — like Alicia — are able to feed their children healthy foods.

Alicia had been stressed about how she would afford enough food for her growing boys this summer since her husband is no longer able to work. He suffered a severe back injury on the job, and Alicia says it does not seem likely that he will ever be able to go back to work. The family struggles to make his limited disability checks stretch.

Without their free school meals to depend on, the couple's sons — Levi, 6, Troy, 10, and Abram, 12 — are at serious risk of hunger this summer.

We met Alicia as she filled her bag with healthy groceries at Martin County Community Fund Pantry, a [Food Bank](#) partner near her home in Stanton, and she told us

how helpful the pantry had been for her family. Her boys all have hearty appetites, and it gives Alicia peace of mind to know she can prepare balanced meals for them.

She was excited to tell us she had just been hired to work full-time at a local hotel. She is hopeful her family will soon no longer need to use the pantry

but has so much gratitude for the nutritious groceries you have helped provide.

"Thank you," Alicia says to friends like you. "[The pantry] has helped when we are struggling."

Your gifts bring hope to caregivers who strive to provide nourishing meals for their kids. Thank you for sharing what you have!



Alicia at Martin County Community Fund Pantry in Stanton.

Volunteer of the Quarter: Odessa High School's National Honor Society

"Even simple acts of kindness can make a big change," says Shivani Alur, a senior at Odessa High School and president of its National Honor Society (NHS) chapter. "When we come together, it really makes a huge difference."

Shivani and her fellow NHS

members are regular volunteers here at the [West Texas Food Bank](#). These dedicated students help ensure children have healthy food to share over the weekend by packing Food 2 Kids sacks for distribution at local elementary schools.

NHS members focus on community improvement projects in an effort to uphold the organization's four key pillars: leadership, scholarship, service and character.

For Shivani, volunteering with the Food Bank has been eye-opening. She also gives her time personally — most recently at our Empty Bowls event — and says these experiences have made her realize the scope of hunger, a problem she had not known existed in her community.

In addition to volunteering with the Food Bank and other organizations, NHS members are an active group at Odessa High. They plan various events and activities including awarding an annual Golden Horseshoe Award to inspiring teachers.

It is truly encouraging to see young people like Shivani and others who are part of NHS making the effort to learn about issues like hunger and committing to help create change. Thank you for your service!



Angel is grateful to take home nutritious food from the Food Pantry of Jeff Davis County in Fort Davis.



Thank You for Ensuring Parents Can Fill Their Kids' Plates

On a recent visit to the Food Pantry of Jeff Davis County, a [Food Bank](#) partner in Fort Davis, we had the chance to speak with Angel, who was there for help with food.

Angel told us her family was having a hard time. She is helping her brother, Stephen, who is a single parent, raise his growing children — Alyssa, 5, J.T., 10, and Sian, 12.

Stephen works for a satellite company and is constantly on the road. Unfortunately, his income does not go very far. After the rent and bills are paid, he can typically just afford a week's worth of food.

Angel hopes to get a job this fall when little Alyssa will be old enough for school. Right now she relies on a small disability income — Angel has spina bifida, which limits her endurance and causes a lot of pain and discomfort.

A few years ago, Angel took some courses in medical billing and hopes to find work in the field eventually. But in the meantime, she says it is truly a relief to be able to get help from her local West Texas Food Bank partner agency.

She was glad to have a chance to share her thanks with the people who help stock its shelves, though she said there just are not enough words to describe her gratitude.

“Without you, we would not be able to keep our kids fed,” Angel says.

Thank you for helping families like Angel's make it through hard times with access to healthy food. You make such a difference!

Forever Full Margarita Fiesta

WTFB hosted our first annual Forever Full Margarita Fiesta fundraiser. The event, presented by Concho, took place on March 24th at the Wagner Noel Performing Arts Center.

We welcomed 350 guests with delicious food catered by Eddie Deen's and a performance by the Spazmatics was enjoyed by all. All the money raised from this year's event benefits WTFB and the thousands of hungry people we serve. Many thanks to our underwriters and sponsors that made this event possible!



Food 2 Kids

Once again, WTFB is very grateful to have received



a \$25,000 challenge grant benefitting Food 2 Kids from The Carl C. Anderson, Sr. and Marie Jo Anderson Charitable Foundation. Food 2 Kids serves elementary students who have been identified by school counselors and teachers as being at risk for hunger. During the 2017-2018 school year WTFB delivered roughly 1,300 Food 2 Kids sacks per week to students in Midland, Odessa and Pecos. Your generosity helps make it all possible!