



# food for thought

Wichita Falls Area Food Bank

Fall 2022

*You're Fueling Our Community's Future!*



**Kara Nickens, CEO**

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1230 Midwestern Parkway  
Wichita Falls, TX 76302

# Dear Friend

Back-to-school season is an exciting time for children — new school supplies, teachers and a world of possibilities.

And thanks to friends like you, thousands of local children are better prepared to tackle this new year and thrive in the classroom — and in life.

That’s because your gifts to the Wichita Falls Area Food Bank helped provide nutritious groceries and well-balanced meals when free and reduced-price school meals weren’t available over the long summer months.

Now that fall is here, our PowerPak 4 Kids Backpack program and Kids Cafe remain essential to make sure our community’s children still have enough to eat on weeknights, weekends and holiday breaks, especially as parents grapple with prices continuously rising.

Our neighbors who are living on fixed incomes are also especially vulnerable right now. While costs of food, fuel and most necessities continue to rise, incomes remain the same.

Thankfully, your gifts of food, funds and volunteer time are making a world of difference for our neighbors of all ages. Flip to Page 4 of this fall edition of Food For Thought to read about how you truly are feeding our community’s future leaders!

Thank you for your vital support. You are paving the way for brighter, healthier days ahead for our community.

Gratefully,

Kara Nickens  
CEO

## You Inspire Your Neighbors

This fall, your generosity is both inspiring people and providing a helping hand for neighbors just like Casey at a time of critical need.

We met Casey and her grandmother, Rachel, on a recent visit to a Food Bank Mobile Pantry. Casey lives with her younger sister, who is a full-time college student and works as an EMT. The sisters currently live in a FEMA-provided trailer, which is dependent on a generator for electricity.

Casey says the sisters' bills have skyrocketed and with rising food costs it has become increasingly difficult to afford groceries."

That’s why Casey is so grateful she can visit the Mobile Pantry to help fill the gap in her budget, especially while prices are soaring.

“We are thankful for any help we can get,” Casey says.

Casey currently serves as a universal donor and gives blood often, and she’s so inspired by your support that she is looking for additional ways to



Casey is all smiles as she displays some of the food she’s taking home from a Food Bank Mobile Pantry near her home.

**“We are thankful for any help we can get.”**

give back to our community and pay your kindness forward.

Thousands of neighbors just like Casey can put nutritious food on the table this fall because you choose to give. Thank you for your ongoing and vital partnership.

## Volunteer Sees Fruit of Efforts

Hank Ballinger has volunteered with the Food Bank for the last two years, and he says his favorite part of the experience is witnessing the tangible results of his efforts.

“You give your time and energy and it’s neat to see it all connect together,” he says.

Hank and his family moved to Wichita Falls four years ago and began supporting the Food Bank. Two years ago, they saw a bulletin asking for volunteers to pack PowerPak 4 Kids bags.

“When The Food Bank has food distribution or we see the [PowerPak 4 Kids] bags going out to the kiddos at school or in the summertime, you can see that tangibly,” he says.

Hank says these days he typically uses his lunch break from work to volunteer, and he’s grateful for the flexibility to serve within his availability.

“I’d encourage people to come out, whether it’s for 30 minutes or an hour a month,” he says. “That’s the neat thing about the Food Bank.”

Thank you, Hank and all the amazing volunteers who give their time and energy to help provide nutritious food for children, families and seniors across our community!



**Hank Ballinger uses his work lunch break to help pack PowerPak 4 Kids bags at the Food Bank warehouse.**

# You're Fueling Our Future

Thanks to your generosity this fall, children will not only be able to eat a nutritious evening meal, five days a week, but also learn healthy habits for a healthy life.

"You are feeding tomorrow's leaders," says Barbara Green, branch director for the Central Club branch of Boys and Girls Club of Wichita Falls.

Barbara says the Food Bank provides food for the branch's after-school meals, and the current goal is to encourage the kids to eat healthier food.

"The [nutrition education] program is teaching them how to take care of themselves and giving them the tools they need to survive and thrive," Barbara says.

Kids are taught a curriculum that includes reading nutrition



**A student sits down for a nutritious meal at the Central Club Branch of the Boys and Girls Club of Wichita Falls, a partner agency of the Food Bank.**

labels to look for healthy options and how to "listen to your body." Barbara says some of the kids are also learning to try various food for the first time.

Your generosity also helps make sure children have nutritious meals at the Boys and Girls Club throughout the summer months. Barbara says if it weren't for this program, many

children would risk going without a nutritious meal.

We join Barbara in thanking you for helping provide children with nutritious food and giving kids the tools for successful futures!

***"You are feeding tomorrow's leaders."***

## Welcome David O'Neil!

The Wichita Falls Area Food bank would like to welcome David O'Neil as our Director of Philanthropy. In his role, David will establish new relationships while further strengthening relationships with our existing prospects, donors, and volunteers.

David is a long-time Wichitan, attended Wichita Falls High School, and is a graduate of Midwestern State University. He worked previously in the financial services industry for 40 years, most recently serving as Region Bank President for Wells Fargo in Central Texas.

"I am excited to join the Food Bank in its 40th anniversary and look forward to furthering our mission of fighting hunger with food, education, and advocacy across our 12-county service area," David says.

Kara Nickens, Food Bank CEO, adds, "I am excited to have David join our food bank family! As the need for our services continues to increase, David will be pivotal in helping us expand our outreach to the philanthropic community."

## Stamp Out Hunger

May 14th, 2022 marked the 30th Annual National Association of Letter Carriers Stamp out Hunger event, and we couldn't be happier with the result. It has been two years since the event was last held due to the pandemic but as usual our community came forward to help fill the plates of the over 43,000 food insecure individuals in our 12-county area. We are so thankful for our letter carriers that hauled over 30,300 pounds of food from the mailboxes of our community to help fill the shelves in our warehouse. Thank you to all that have participated and helped make this event a success! We can't wait to do it again next year!



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