

# Feeding Hope

November 2024

## A Story of Resilience and Gratitude

*Thanks to our donors, volunteers, and staff, families like Evelyn's have the resources they need to thrive*

El Pasoans Fighting Hunger (EPFH) serves as a vital resource for families and neighbors facing challenging times. Neighbors like Evelyn, a mother of two young children.

"EPFH has helped me with food for the week," Evelyn shares. "I'm not able to buy much, so this helps my family a lot." EPFH ensures Evelyn can provide nutritious meals for her children, a constant concern for many parents.

No matter what challenges she faces, Evelyn's love and dedication to her family remains unwavering. Her primary focus is caring for her children and ensuring their well-being, but having young kids at home means she's unable to work.

She's grateful she can access necessities at EPFH that many take for granted. The support



**Evelyn has access to the food her children need, with help from donors like you.**

from EPFH is crucial for Evelyn and alleviates some of the stress and worry she feels. "I am here for assistance with food since I don't have much and need to feed my kids," she says.

Evelyn's gratitude to donors like you is heartfelt. "I would like to say thank you because they help so many families who don't have much," she says.

**Evelyn's story is a reminder of the difference community support can make in the lives of individuals and families. EPFH is more than just a food bank; it is a beacon of hope for those facing food insecurity.**

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## A Message From Susan

Dear Caring Friends,

As I read through this newsletter and look ahead to Thanksgiving, one word goes through my mind: *gratitude*.

I'm forever grateful for people like you who support El Pasoans Fighting Hunger. Without you, the work of helping people facing hunger just wouldn't get done. But thanks to you, our neighbors are finding the help and hope they need this season.

I'm also grateful as I read the stories in this issue about people who are directly helped by your generosity. Stories of neighbors who can put meals on the table this Thanksgiving and beyond. Food is at the heart of every holiday. And thanks to you, more families will have access to the foods that make this time of year special.

As I sit down with my family this Thanksgiving, I will give thanks for you, for a community that cares so deeply about its neighbors, and for the people you help.

Right now, with a special match, **every \$1 you give may double to help provide enough food for 14 nourishing meals**. Thank you for your kindness!

Gratefully,

# "It Does Help Me a Lot"

## Thank you for helping neighbors like Julia care for multiple generations

Julia is a devoted granddaughter and mother. She first discovered the support of El Pasoans Fighting Hunger through her grandmother, who received not only food but a sense of community and care during a difficult time.

"It does help me a lot, mostly my grandma," Julia shares. "Her husband passed away a couple of years ago, so this really helped us a lot to keep her going. She really enjoys this."

Balancing the responsibilities of caring for her grandmother and her baby girl, Julia finds solace in the assistance provided by EPFH. It helps ensure her grandmother's well-being and happiness. And the convenience and accessibility of EPFH's services are crucial for people like Julia who juggle multiple responsibilities to provide for loved ones, especially around the holidays.

"I help my grandma whenever I can," she says. "My grandma is out of food, and right now I can't go too much out of my way. I still have to go to work," Julia explains.

To donors like you, she says, "Thank you! Thank you so much for everything you guys do. You have no idea how much you guys help us, and honestly, God bless your hearts and souls and have all this multiplied by 10 because you guys really help us a lot!"

**Julia's story is a reminder of the impact we can have when we come together to support one another. Thank you for the relief you help provide for countless neighbors through your gifts to EPFH.**



Julia is grateful for the food she can access for her family and her grandmother.



Mikaila's commitment to serving the community reflects her desire to contribute positively to society.

## A Path of Service and Growth

*Meet a young volunteer who found a passion for serving*

Mikaila's introduction to volunteering started as a school requirement but quickly evolved into a passion fueled by genuine enjoyment and a desire to make a difference.

"My mom first encouraged me to start volunteering," Mikaila shares. "I needed hours for school, so I began coming whenever I was out of school. Soon after, I fully completed all my hours, but I really enjoyed helping and doing something with my spare time."

Mikaila has helped at the Mercado-style food distributions, ensuring neighbors receive the items they need with dignity and care. She's also repacked bulk food items for distribution and helped pack senior and emergency boxes.

Through her volunteer work at El Pasoans Fighting Hunger, Mikaila fulfilled academic requirements and discovered a sense of purpose in helping those in need — and being part of a larger effort to combat food insecurity.

"I've met so many people while volunteering," Mikaila says. "It also helped me get out of my comfort zone."

For Mikaila, volunteering became an opportunity for personal growth. Stepping out of her comfort zone allowed her to develop

new skills, build confidence in interacting with diverse groups of people, and cultivate empathy and understanding.

Driven by her positive experiences, Mikaila set a personal challenge to complete the most volunteer hours possible before she graduates. This new goal not only motivates her to continue her service but also inspires those around her.

***"Small actions ... can lead to big changes in someone's life."***

***— Mikaila***

"I want to make a meaningful impact and leave a positive mark," Mikaila explains. "Volunteering here has shown me how small actions, like helping someone in the distribution line or preparing an emergency food box, can lead to big changes in someone's life."

**We appreciate our volunteers and love to welcome new volunteers! To sign up to volunteer, please visit our website at [elpasoansfightinghunger.org/volunteer](http://elpasoansfightinghunger.org/volunteer).**

# Empowering Futures

*Your support helps provide the training that leads to success*

In June, EPFH launched the Spark! Training Program, designed to provide individuals with the skills and certifications needed to thrive in the logistics and warehousing industry.

The program is now in its third cohort, with 20 enrolled trainees. With approximately 40 graduates thus far, the program is steadily growing and creating a significant impact in the community.

Trainees come from diverse backgrounds with unique challenges and goals. They take part in a comprehensive curriculum that equips graduates with the certification and expertise needed to excel, enhancing their employment and career prospects.

One unique aspect of the Spark! Training Program is the hands-on experience trainees gain during the eight-week session. They contribute 2,560 hours of work to EPFH's operations, playing a crucial role in our day-to-day functions. This practical experience reinforces learning while instilling a sense of purpose and accomplishment in serving the community.

While specific statistics on job placements and pay increases are not yet available, the food bank helps many of the program's graduates secure meaningful employment. In fact, EPFH itself hires some of these skilled individuals,

further integrating them into the organization's mission to combat hunger in El Paso.

As the program continues to grow, EPFH aims to expand its reach and impact, empowering more individuals with the skills and opportunities needed to build better futures. The food bank is also working to gather data on job placements and salaries for its graduates, which will provide valuable insights into the long-term benefits of the program.

The Spark! Training Program is a testament to EPFH's commitment to addressing food insecurity while fostering long-term economic stability and growth in the community. By equipping individuals with valuable skills and certifications, we're creating pathways to employment and self-sufficiency.

**We look forward to the continued success of the Spark! Training Program and our graduates, and we are eager to share stories about the impact you've helped make on their lives. Together, we are building a brighter, more resilient future.**



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▼ PLEASE CUT OFF THE REPLY FORM BELOW AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR GIFT. ▼

## HELP PROVIDE TWICE THE FOOD THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



**Yes, Susan!** I want to provide support and food for neighbors facing hunger, so I'll give today.  
*Here is my gift of:*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help feed as many families as possible

**2X**  
THE IMPACT  
WITH OUR  
MATCH!

My check payable to El Pasoans Fighting Hunger is enclosed.

**FROM:** NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/STATE/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ automatically each month using my credit card.

Please charge my credit card.

VISA  MasterCard  AMERICAN EXPRESS  DISCOVER NETWORK

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_