

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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FEEDING THE GULF COAST RECEIVES GENEROUS GRANT DONATION FROM THE BLUE CROSS & BLUE SHIELD OF MISSISSIPPI FOUNDATION TO HELP ADDRESS THE INCREASE OF HUNGER DUE TO COVID-19.

(April 20, 2020) — Feeding the Gulf Coast is excited to announce a generous grant donation from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation to help provide hunger relief to families in the Mississippi communities Feeding the Gulf Coast serves. With a vision for a healthy Mississippi, the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation has provided generous grant funds to multiple food banks across the state as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Healthy nutrition is an important part of everyday well-being, and COVID-19 is amplifying the need for individuals to have access to healthy foods. Feeding the Gulf Coast will use these funds to specifically support the food insecurity needs of Mississippians stemming from the Coronavirus impact.

“Our service area is experiencing a significantly heightened need from those impacted by COVID-19,” says Dan Emery, newly appointed President and CEO for Feeding the Gulf Coast. “School closures and job layoffs are leading to an unprecedented need for those who typically may not experience food insecurity. Individuals who struggled prior to the crisis are now in an even more critical situation, compounded by the economic stress the COVID-19 virus has created in our communities.”

For all Mississippians impacted and in need of food, the Foundation is responding and connecting to those in need with grant support to Mississippi food banks.

“The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation proudly supports Mississippi’s communities. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the Foundation is supporting food banks across the state so that Mississippians will have access to healthy foods,” says Sheila Grogan, Foundation President. “The Foundation is proud of its partnership with Feeding the Gulf Coast to ensure that food is procured, distributed to 86 food pantries in eight Mississippi counties, and made available to the state’s children and adults who need nutritious food to thrive.”

Feeding the Gulf Coast’s Mississippi service area is particularly vulnerable, where over 80,500 individuals struggle with food insecurity at some point in the year. The generous donation from the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation provides a game-changing opportunity for

Feeding the Gulf Coast to gain access to additional resources that will provide nutritious hunger relief to Mississippians in need. Feeding the Gulf Coast is incredibly grateful for this partnership and support to address the growing health crisis along the Central Gulf Coast.

During this time of uncertainty and crisis, Feeding the Gulf Coast remains dedicated to serving the community. Working with community partners, the food bank will continue to be an organization of hope and support for families facing hunger.

As families are faced with an increased need for food due to school closures, inability to work, or self-quarantine requirements, the "Find Help" feature available at www.feedingthegulfcoast.org, is the best source of information for families and individuals seeking assistance. Individuals can also call (888) 704-FOOD.

To learn more about Feeding the Gulf Coast, visit www.feedingthegulfcoast.org.

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About Feeding the Gulf Coast

Feeding the Gulf Coast, formerly Bay Area Food Bank, serves a 24-county area spanning the Florida panhandle, south Alabama, and south Mississippi. In 2018, the food bank distributed over 22 million meals to over 400 church pantries, soup kitchens, and other nonprofit organizations throughout its service area. The food bank also operates multiple hunger-relief and nutrition programs, including Summer Meals, Afterschool Meal, Backpack, Disaster Relief, Mobile Pantry and Produce Drop Distributions and Nutrition Education. Feeding the Gulf Coast is a United Way member agency and a member of Feeding America. For more information, visit www.feedingthegulfcoast.org.

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About the Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation

The Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation has a vision for a healthy Mississippi and provides targeted grants to fund initiatives and programs to improve the health of Mississippians. Visit www.healthiermississippi.org to learn more about the Foundation's support of Mississippi food banks, or to find additional information about the Foundation.