



## Meeting the Challenge Overcoming a Difficult Season

**M**y [late] husband was the breadwinner, and he passed away last July. He had a heart attack. He wasn't even 50. It has been rough working through the grief, and I am not making enough money to pay bills and buy food. That is why I have been waiting in line for food from Feeding the Gulf Coast. I have three kids; they are seven, nine, and thirteen. I am from Oregon and don't have family here or much support. I overcame addiction. It has been a rough year from [coping with] the death of my husband, the Coronavirus, and trying to keep my family together, but I have stayed clean." – Trina\*

Trina told us her story while waiting in a line for food at a large scale distribution this year. The line snaked the parking lot as many in similar situations waited for their turn to receive food. "A friend is letting us rent a room. We would be homeless without that," continues Trina. "I am in between jobs, but I have been doing odd jobs and yard work in the neighborhood. I have done outside sales and phone work."

In a world of curveballs, 2020 has thrown far more than its share. For so many individuals who are fighting against hunger and challenging circumstances like Trina, the pandemic is another layer of stress to cope with, in addition to their daily struggles to make ends meet. This active hurricane season has left our Gulf Coast communities picking up the pieces of their homes and lives as both Hurricanes Sally and Zeta created additional turmoil during an already hectic year.

**Since March 13 when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, Feeding the Gulf Coast has distributed over 22 million meals to address the increase in demand due to the pandemic and recent storms, Sally and Zeta.**

Feeding the Gulf Coast is anticipating distributing over 35 million pounds of food this year as the food bank continues to work with community partners to address the ongoing crisis created by the pandemic and recent storms. We know these challenges are temporary struggles, and we are prepared to support families and our community through these difficult times.

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Volunteers loading cars during a Hurricane Sally distribution.

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**It has been rough working through the grief and I am not making enough money to pay bills and buy food.**

LEARN HOW YOU CAN HELP

Visit our website  
[feedingthegulfcoast.org](https://feedingthegulfcoast.org)





## FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

It is hard for me to believe that I have already been in my new position for over four months.

It has been a tumultuous time due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Hurricane Sally and Hurricane Zeta. Fortunately, I have been working alongside a very dedicated team and our board throughout all of it.

Feeding the Gulf Coast has provided **more than 20 million pounds of food** since the start of the pandemic and several million pounds more in response to the two hurricanes that have struck our region. This is only possible because of your support and our team's efforts. So many things must happen to accomplish this mighty task, such as food sourcing, transportation and logistics, agency support and coordination, warehousing, administrative support, food safety programs, fundraising, "paying the bills" and so much more.

I am constantly amazed at the level of detail involved in pulling all of this together to achieve our shared goal of helping those who face hunger.

While the economic strain of the pandemic and natural disasters have resulted in a significant increase in the number of individuals and families facing hunger, we have seen **our neighbors step up at every turn to meet the need!** As we anticipate 2021 with a mixture of hope and uncertainty for what the upcoming months will hold, I know we will continue to make a difference because of your support. **We are truly stronger together.**

MICHAEL LEDGER

PRESIDENT & CEO, FEEDING THE GULF COAST

### OUR GOAL

## Reduce Food Insecurity

### FROM SCARCITY TO ABUNDANCE

**We're providing more people with needed meals.**



## Thankful for You Because of You, People Prosper

**R**eflection. It happens a lot this time of year. As families gather to celebrate the season, gratitude warms our hearts and well-seasoned [or dry] turkey fills our stomachs. This season many of us are reflecting on the quirks and caveats this year has created. We will continue to remark on just how crazy a year it has been. Between hurricanes and wildfires, toilet paper fiascos and learning how to sew a mask out of an old t-shirt, this season's holiday gatherings will not be short of conversation starters.

But for many this season, the uncertainty of the year has only compounded the struggles they face daily. And the holiday season, while a time of reflection for most, will remain a season of concern.

**"We were at a place where we probably would not have had much,"** said an individual in line at a recent Thanksgiving distribution.

Because of generous donations, Feeding the Gulf Coast was able to distribute a full Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings and turkey to over 2,000 families across our service area.

When a client encounters hunger and needs food assistance for the first time, they may be afraid and uncertain, but we work to provide the hope they need to move from crisis to stability.

**"I wasn't going to cook a turkey for Thanksgiving,"** said Audrey as she waited in line at a distribution. **"But now I'll have a turkey and that will be just wonderful. It's a real blessing."**

While many of us are craving a sense of normalcy this year, the holidays are a time when memories are made. These distributions have provided a measure of stability to families in need this holiday season.

While we know it may seem a little harder to find the blessings in this year, we also know that we do not need to look very far to see what touches our hearts—**you.**

Through threats of sickness and storms, our mission has only been reinforced, and as we reflect on 2020, we are incredibly grateful for the support of dedicated partners and donors who have helped make a difference in the lives of those we serve. We are continually inspired by your kindness and compassionate generosity. On behalf of every life impacted because you cared, we thank you.



## 12 WAYS OF Giving

**AN ONLINE DONATION** designated to your choice of program or where the need is greatest. Visit [feedingthegulfcoast.org](http://feedingthegulfcoast.org).

**A MONTHLY GIFT PLEDGE** from you to the food bank provides support 365-days of the year to our hunger-relief initiatives.

**A DONOR ADVISED FUND** can help simplify your giving and facilitate your strategic philanthropic goals.

**A COMPANY MATCHED DONATION** will make your donation go twice as far.

**VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AND TALENTS** to make a difference in the lives of your neighbors.

**HOST A FOOD DRIVE OR FUND DRIVE** by recruiting a team to collect our most needed items.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHEN YOU SHOP** by selecting Feeding the Gulf Coast as your charity at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com).

**GIVE A GIFT IN HONOR OR MEMORY** to commemorate someone special.

**DONATING STOCKS AND MUTUAL FUND SHARES** offers you valuable financial and tax-deductible benefits.

**INVITE YOUR COWORKERS TO JOIN YOU IN ENDING HUNGER** through workplace giving, including payroll deductions.

**A GIFT THROUGH YOUR ESTATE PLAN** can be made through your will or revocable trust or a beneficiary designation of assets, such as a retirement plan or life insurance policy.

**START A FUNDRAISER** by utilizing your social network on Facebook.

Your generous donations are critical to our ability to help families struggling with hunger. Every dollar you give can provide five meals to those in need.

For more information on ways to give or to make your donation today, contact Cyndy Baggett at [cbaggett@feedingthegulfcoast.org](mailto:cbaggett@feedingthegulfcoast.org) or (251) 653-1617, ext 130.

## Strength in Community Giving Back in the Face of Uncertainty

**I** started [working for Airbus] in late September 2018. Shirley joined me in January 2019. She got a job with Continental Aerospace Technologies. I volunteered at Feeding the Gulf Coast twice with Airbus. Then COVID-19 hit the aerospace industry hard, and both of us lost our jobs. Sitting around our apartment, I told Shirley that we should volunteer at Feeding the Gulf Coast, so here we are.” – Chuck

As the pandemic progressed early Spring, the food bank experienced a sharp decline in volunteer support as companies suspended employee outings for safety concerns. However, in return, the food bank saw an increase in new individuals who found a way to turn their newfound time into community support.

**Our volunteer support from new individuals has increased by 30% this year.** Feeding the Gulf Coast has created new avenues for how volunteers can get involved despite reduced group size and warehouse shifts which are limited due to social distancing. With the increase in mobile food distributions, larger groups are able to volunteer safely in an outdoor environment.

For Chuck and Shirley, what could have been an opportunity to worry became an opportunity to be a blessing to the community they now call home. When asked what the most challenging part of 2020 has been, Shirley replied, “Being locked up and being unemployed.” Chuck jokingly added, “Being locked up with Shirley.”

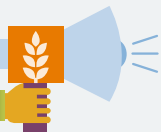
Volunteering at the food bank provided the Walkers with an outlet for giving back and safely escaping the house.

The Walkers have been coming on a near-weekly basis this fall and have logged over 40 hours assisting with food sorting. When asked why they keep returning to the food bank, Shirley responded, **“The people. We love the people here, and the volunteers are great—everybody is so friendly! Because we are unemployed, it gets us off the couch.”**

For those interested in learning more about our volunteer opportunities, please visit our website’s **Get Involved** section. Our mission is only accomplished because of our amazing volunteers and supporters.

### ADVOCACY CORNER | CRITICAL USDA EXTENSIONS

In October, the USDA announced the child nutrition waivers’ extension allowing schools and community partners to provide meals through summer feeding programs, allowing non-congregate meals, and extending area eligibility to enable all children to receive free meals through the end of the 2020–2021 school year. These waivers have been critical in our ability to ensure that at-risk children have access to nutritious meals through the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit our website to learn more about how children benefit from these critical programs.



**JOIN US AT THE TABLE:**

GO TO [WWW.FEEDINGTHEGULFCOAST.ORG/LEARN-MORE/THE-TABLE-CALL-SERIES](http://WWW.FEEDINGTHEGULFCOAST.ORG/LEARN-MORE/THE-TABLE-CALL-SERIES) TO REGISTER FOR UPCOMING EPISODES OF OUR VIRTUAL CALL SERIES.



Feeding the Gulf Coast works towards the vision of establishing a hunger-free Central Gulf Coast for our neighbors in need throughout 24 counties in Alabama, Mississippi, and the Florida Panhandle.

The food bank distributed over 24 million meals in 2019 through our network of over 400 partners.

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*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*  
 VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR FULL STATEMENT



## MAKE AN IMPACT



As we look forward to 2021, we do so with anticipation and cause for celebration. What began as a call to serve the hungry of Mobile and Baldwin counties has grown throughout the years. Next year we celebrate 40 years of service as Feeding the Gulf Coast, formerly Bay Area Food Bank.

### Share your Mission Moment

We know so many people have played a part in our Mission Moments. If you would like to share your story of how the food bank has impacted your life in any way, please connect with us at [communications@feedingthegulfcoast.org](mailto:communications@feedingthegulfcoast.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**DECEMBER 24 & 25, 2020**  
**CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS**

**JANUARY 1, 2021**  
**CLOSED FOR NEW YEAR'S DAY**

**FEBRUARY 16, 2021**  
**CLOSED FOR MARDI GRAS**

### RALLY YOUR NETWORK TO SUPPORT THE FOOD BANK

Feeding the Gulf Coast has experienced a significant decrease in food drives during this time. It takes funds for us to do what we do and get food to those who need it most.

To set up your food and fund drive, visit our website or contact Missy Busby at [mbusby@feedingthegulfcoast.org](mailto:mbusby@feedingthegulfcoast.org)

### AMAZON SMILE

This holiday season, your Christmas shopping can help give back to the community. Visit [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) when you shop Amazon and choose Feeding the Gulf Coast as your charity of choice. Every little bit helps to make a difference.

visit [FEEDINGTHEGULFCOAST.ORG](https://FEEDINGTHEGULFCOAST.ORG) | (888) 704-FOOD

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

☐ \$20 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to join the Hope Harvesters Monthly Giving Club.

Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

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Feeding the Gulf Coast's federal identification number is 63-0821997.

### Payment Options

☐ Please charge my credit card:

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover ☐ AMEX

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Account \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please make check payable to: **Feeding the Gulf Coast**

☐ Give online at [www.feedingthegulfcoast.org/donate](https://www.feedingthegulfcoast.org/donate)