SURVIVING AND THRIVING in the wake of HURRICANE HARVEY

2017 Annual Report
Bad things do happen in the world, like war, natural disasters, disease. But out of those situations always arise stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary things.

-Daryn Kagan
Dear Friends,

The year 2017 will be forever associated with Hurricane Harvey in the minds of Southeast Texans, so it should not be surprising that the epic impact of Harvey's rainfall shapes the narrative of the Southeast Texas Food Bank's year as well.

We began 2017 with eyes focused on the benchmarks for growth and improved service to our eight-county service territory that had been established for the second year of our 10-year strategic plan. We ended the year with a different focus and a record volume of output as we responded to the disruption Harvey created.

It was ironic that in the wake of Harvey's record rainfall, the resource most needed immediately after the storm was water due to the collapse of drinking water systems in Beaumont and other surrounding communities. Because the storm had created a temporary chain of islands in Southeast Texas, our facility was only accessible to those in Beaumont for a day or two after the storm, but there was plenty of demand for our services as we rallied staff and volunteers to distribute water and some other disaster-friendly items directly from our warehouse. A few days later, as the waters gradually receded and movement of goods became possible, we were blessed to start receiving an influx of water and disaster-ready food commodities from around the country through our relationship with the Feeding America network and the compassion of many individuals, businesses, and churches, who felt compelled to help. Within less than 10 days, about one million pounds of food and water had been distributed directly from our warehouse and we had only just begun to respond.

Over the remainder of 2017, we greatly expanded our mobile pantry operations to take food directly from our warehouse to emergency distributions forming in the community and we prioritized assistance to our partner agencies most fully engaged with disaster response in their own communities. These strategic activities to maximize our output to those affected by Harvey coupled with record financial support from donors around the country and loaned labor from other Feeding America network food banks gave hope to our staff and volunteers who were strained by the long hours of response and provided real relief to those strained by the tragedies of lost homes and livelihoods.

Our strategic plan had called for us to target generating sufficient food and financial resources and growing our staff size, volunteer pool, and other infrastructure to a scale that would produce an output of food sufficient for roughly 6 million meals. Nature had other plans for us, as Harvey's impact fast forwarded those activities, propelling us to a record food distribution total of more than 8.2 million pounds, enough food to provide almost 7 million meals.

We learned many lessons in the wake of Harvey that will shape our future as we recalibrate our strategies to continue responding to Harvey's long-term impacts on Southeast Texans and the elevated demand for our services in its wake. Most of all, we learned how generous the spirit of our nation (and even the international community) is when large scale disasters strike. The scale of our response would not have been possible without the Feeding America network, the assistance of other food banks in Texas, and the generosity of donors outside our area whose research led them to conclude the Southeast Texas Food Bank would be a trustworthy beneficiary and would yield impactful results. To all around the country (and world) who aided our efforts in 2017, I offer a hearty thanks!

Of course, the upheaval of Harvey's visit also reminded us how resilient in the face of challenges Southeast Texans can be and how committed to helping their neighbors they can be. The outpouring of volunteerism and financial support from residents of our region struggling themselves in the wake of Harvey was truly edifying and helped renew our resolve to keep going with our multi-pronged disaster response efforts. So, I applaud Southeast Texans for rising so quickly and stepping up to help us sustain our disaster response and our ordinary services.

While I might not wish a year like 2017 on anyone, I somehow feel blessed to have passed through it and to have witnessed the spirit of a nation and a community united in action and resolved to rebuild. I hope that spirit of commitment to advancing our mission will characterize you as you use this Annual Report to reflect on the many ways the Southeast Texas Food Bank met the challenges of Harvey and continues to need resources to meet the challenges of the next life-altering event and the daily issue of hunger relief. Unfortunately, reliance on our services is a reality for more than 1 in 5 Southeast Texans even in ordinary circumstances. Thank you for taking some time to read our Annual Report and thank you for helping shape our past and future so that our response to our high volume of community need may always be strong.

Sincerely,

Dan Maher
Executive Director
Hurricane Harvey made landfall in our region in August 2017 as a Category 4 storm and inflicted over $125 billion dollars of damage in Texas, making it the second costliest storm in history behind Hurricane Katrina. Thousands of residents of Southeast Texas were affected by the storm and its aftermath and continue to struggle today. The focus of this year’s annual report is not to relive the devastating hurricane, but to highlight the resiliency, strength and selflessness shown by citizens throughout the region both during the storm and afterwards with the ongoing recovery efforts.

$125 BILLION TOTAL FINANCIAL COST

64.58 INCHES OF RAIN RECORDED IN NEDERLAND, TX BREAKING AN ALL TIME RECORD

19 DEATHS IN SETX attributed to Harvey

27 Trillion GALLONS OF WATER FROM RAINFALL

110,000 NUMBER OF STRUCTURES DAMAGED in Jefferson, Orange, Hardin and Tyler Counties

8.2 MILLION POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED BY SOUTHEAST TEXAS FOOD BANK, A RECORD VOLUME

“

The time is always right to do what is right.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.”
Two Beaumont Police officers and fire rescue divers spotted a woman and her infant daughter floating in a canal in Beaumont, Texas during Harvey’s wrath. The crew pulled the woman and her daughter from the water. The 41-year-old mother “absolutely saved the child’s life,” Officer Carol Riley, a spokeswoman for the Beaumont Police Department. “They were in the water for quite some time,” Riley says. “When the baby was found, the baby was clinging to her. The mother did the best she could to keep her child up over the water.” “The baby also had a backpack that was helping her float on her back, and she was holding on to her mom,” Riley said. The mother later died, but the child survived.

The Houston Texans’ star defensive end J.J. Watt won the NFL’s Walter Payton Man of the Year Award for 2017 – 2018 for his post-Hurricane Harvey support of Southeast Texas. Watt raised tens of millions of dollars and invested more than $2 million of Foundation funds in our operations in the wake of the storm. He noted, “The (post-Hurricane Harvey) fundraiser that I started with a simple goal of $200,000 turned into an unbelievable outpouring of support from people all around the globe. When it was all said and done, after the late donations and checks that came in after the deadline were counted, the total amount that was donated and is now hard at work in the community was $41.6 million….While a great deal has been accomplished in the past 12 months, there is still much work to be done.” We received funds to purchase additional food, as well as additional trucks to enlarge the Food Bank’s capacity to pick up and deliver food. Additional storage space was accessed and dozens of partner distribution agencies also received a share of the funding for projects to help them recover or increase their capacity to respond to Hurricane Harvey victims.
Although many of our employees were either trapped by floodwaters or dealing with flooding in their own homes, the Southeast Texas Food Bank continued to operate to ensure residents in our eight-county territory had food, water and other disaster supplies readily available.

Each of us as human beings has a responsibility to reach out to help our brothers and sisters affected by disasters. One day it may be us or our loved ones needing someone to reach out and help.

- Michael W. Hawkins
The Southeast Texas Food Bank traces its origins to 1991 when it began operations as a satellite distribution organization of the Houston Food Bank. Inhabiting an ill-fitted building that had formerly been a bread factory, the Southeast Texas Food Bank struggled to fulfill its charge to distribute food to low-income residents in seven regional counties, managing a modest distribution of less than 500,000 pounds annually.

In 1999, a series of significant modifications to the building and a renewed focus on developing appropriate infrastructure to increase food distribution operations began. At that time, the Houston Food Bank established a five-year schedule designed to allow the Southeast Texas Food Bank to function with its own charter and an independent affiliation with parent organization Feeding America. By 2002, all the benchmarks in that process had been met, allowing the Southeast Texas Food Bank to become an independent food bank in the Feeding America network, affording it greater opportunities for donations from national food manufacturers and the chance to contract with the Texas Department of Agriculture to distribute USDA commodities.

Subsequently, the Southeast Texas Food Bank’s scale of operations and community impact increased dramatically. The volume of food distributed grew almost ten-fold in the next decade and the number of associated member agencies receiving distributed food doubled.

In 2017, the Food Bank exceeded 8 million pounds of food which translates into over 6 million meals distributed to our community. This output growth was driven in part by the hurricane but also by implementing some of the initial steps identified in a 10-year strategic plan through 2025.

This food is distributed to low-income members of the community through our association with more than 100 member social service agencies and 30 qualified schools in our eight-county service territory.

**Some Local Hunger Data**

Food insecurity refers to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food insecure households are not necessarily food insecure all the time. Food insecurity may reflect a household’s need to make trade-offs between important basic needs, such as housing or medical bills, and purchasing nutritionally adequate foods.

» Within the Food Bank’s eight-county service territory, the ratio of those residents deemed to be food insecure is estimated to be 22.2 percent, compared to 15.7 percent in the entire State of Texas. Among children, that ratio is estimated to be 27.3 percent compared to 23.8 percent in the State of Texas.

» Sabine County has both the highest overall food insecurity rate, 24.3 percent, and the highest childhood food insecurity rate at 36.6 percent

» It is estimated that 116,000 residents of Southeast Texas can be classified as food insecure.

» It is estimated that for every food insecure resident of our area to have sufficient resources to self-provide all their meals throughout the year, our economy would have to generate an additional $56 million of income for them.

In 2017, the Food Bank exceeded 8 million pounds of food which translates into almost 7 million meals distributed to our community. That record output growth was driven in part by the hurricane, but also by implementing some of the initial steps identified in a 10-year strategic plan through 2025 which challenges our operations to grow to such a scale that an output of 12.5 million pounds of food (enough for 10.5 million meals) will become our ordinary activity level.

**Making a Difference**

Beth wanted to volunteer at the Food Bank after her own experiences with food insecurity. “I started (needing) the Food Bank when I lost my job. One thing my mother always taught me was to give back, especially because we have been hungry before.”

“In the past when I have gone hungry, I wish I knew about places like this. I can recall living on ten cents for groceries for the month. And I ended up getting, uh, iron deficiency anemia and nearly bleeding out at a doctor’s office because I just did not have the things I needed…it doesn’t look like it but I still hoard food, I’m still… still in that survival mode. I always have cans of meat, I always have dried noodles, uh, spices are a must in my house, I always have to have tons of spices because you know, it’s amazing what you can make with just potatoes,” Beth laughs.

Right now, Beth and her family have been able to shift their focus from immediate food needs to long-term health concerns. “Currently, no, [we’re not on food assistance]. We’ve been very blessed which is why I’m donating my time also. I’m not asking for assistance because we are not really going hungry, we’re just needing to work on managing our health and what we have.”
## REVENUE AND SUPPORT (Cash and In-Kind)

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## FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

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<td>Support Services</td>
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<td>• Fundraising</td>
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<td><strong>Total Functional Expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Net Assets, End of Year</td>
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**Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it.**

- Dennis P. Kimbro
Obtaining adequate food for distribution is a key daily activity. Our strategy is to acquire as much food as possible for the lowest cost to maximize efficiency and take advantage of economies of scale that our operations can provide the community while still providing quality products for those food insecure residents of the region. We accomplish this through a variety of food resourcing methods which are summarized below.

**The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Emergency Food Assistance Program**

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) receives an allocation of food each year from the USDA to distribute to those facing food insecurity and other economic challenges. The TDA employs a formula to distribute food to Feeding America food banks throughout the state. Based on the current formula, approximately 2 percent of that food is allocated to the Southeast Texas Food Bank to be distributed to qualifying recipients in the region. The USDA programs operated by the Food Bank accounted for 22 percent of the total food distributed.

**National and Regional Retail Chains and Manufacturers**

The Food Bank also has partnerships with local retail stores that represent large national or regional chains including HEB, Kroger, Sam’s Club, and Walmart. When these retailers replace older product with fresher product, they make the older product available to us, so it can be re-purposed to feed those in need. The products made available to the Food Bank are fully safe for human consumption. Sometimes, national manufacturers will have unsellable products. These products are also made available to the Food Bank to distribute to families in need of food resources. These retailers and manufacturers donated 10 percent of the food distributed in 2017.

**Purchased Non-Perishable Product**

To ensure that certain staple foods are always available to those in need, we periodically purchase products through a variety of state and national partnerships. In 2017, 12 percent of the food distributed was purchased product.

**Local Donations and Feeding America Affiliation**

Smaller local retailers and local food drives also donate product to the Food Bank on a monthly basis. In addition, the Southeast Texas Food Bank is one of 200 Feeding America affiliated food banks in the United States. This affiliation helps us gain access to products not readily available locally through national donors that lack a presence in Southeast Texas. This connection to the Feeding America network was a particularly important source of food for our community immediately after Hurricane Harvey struck. These resources and donation methods accounted for 37 percent of the food distributed in 2017.

**Produce**

The Southeast Food Bank also strives to have fresh produce available to distribute to our partner agencies throughout the year. In 2017, we acquired over 1.7 million pounds of produce which represents 19 percent of the total food output.
The Food Bank employed two staff members dedicated to daily outreach within our eight-county territory to help with the enrollment of those who may be eligible for government entitlement programs but have not previously enrolled for these benefits. We encourage participation in SNAP (Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program) benefits to increase access to food for those residents who may use this benefit to buy food for themselves that they may not have been able to afford without this benefit. Our staff members also assisted eligible residents in applying for other key supplemental aid programs including TANF (Temporary Aid for Needy Families), Medicaid, and CHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program). In 2017, our social service staff assisted 744 residents in our eight-county service area in applying for these benefits.

“"I was happy to be of help to the residents of our service area during Hurricane Harvey. There was a tremendous need across all segments of the community. We worked extended hours to do our best to meet the needs of the area and everyone was grateful the Food Bank was there to help.”

- Laura Morgan Social Services Coordinator

The Kids in Need Foundation donated $1,091,966 worth of school supplies in 2017, while First Book National Book Bank donated 24,250 books valued at $183,815.

Our School Tools Program operates similarly to the Backpack Program in that eligibility for the program is reserved for public elementary schools with 70 percent or more of the student population receiving free or reduced school meals. These qualifying schools can designate teachers to come to the Food Bank once a month to pick up school supplies for students who lack access to adequate supplies through parents, guardians or other means. The Food Bank partners with the Kids in Need Foundation and the First Books programs. These organizations provide large quantities of school supplies and age appropriate books that are distributed to needy children in each of the qualifying school districts.

“The teachers are very thankful for the School Tools program especially after Harvey, since funds are tight for everyone.”

- Mary Simon Childrens Programs Coordinator
The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) provides food resources for our Senior Food Box Program, a federal initiative designed to improve the health and nutrition of low-income seniors who are at least 60 years of age and need supplemental dietary assistance through nutritious USDA Food. This food is specifically designed to be compatible with a senior’s diet, i.e., low fat, low sodium while being dairy and protein rich. In Southeast Texas, some seniors receive less than $50 per month in SNAP (food stamp) benefits, and are sometimes forced to make choices between paying utilities, buying medications or purchasing foods. Qualified seniors must have a valid ID showing proof they are at least 60 years old. They must also present proof of income at time of enrollment to show they meet federal income requirements. Participating seniors receive bottled fruit juice, shelf-stable 2% milk, canned protein (stew, chicken, chili), canned vegetables, canned fruit, a bag of dried beans or a jar of peanut butter, hot or cold cereal, pasta, non-fat dried milk (every other month), and a two-pound block of cheese. In 2017, our Senior Food Box program distributed up to 2,000 boxes of nutritious senior-friendly foods monthly to residents of Southeast Texas who are among our most vulnerable populations.

In 2017, our Nutrition Education Program continued to conduct education classes, cooking demonstrations and school programs at housing complexes, after-school programs, the Salvation Army and local churches. During the summer, staff was active at many Summer Feeding sites with fresh produce for the children and their families, while also conducting Kids’ Cooking Camps. We offered fun cooking demonstrations and education class topics such as Fast Food Freak Out, Heart Health, Choose My Plate, & Having Healthy Holidays.

Our Diabetic Program continued to expand in Orange, Port Arthur, and Vidor. We also hosted several Diabetic Health Fairs in Beaumont, Lumberton, Port Arthur, and Vidor, reaching communities where 1 in 3 of the residents in these areas face diabetes or have a family member with diabetes. We redesigned our healthy box and expanded our program by holding free Diabetes Management Classes at all of our partner agencies that offered our Diabetic Program.

“The community really seems to be responding to our nutrition education seminars, and students seem to enjoy learning about healthy eating habits. We are looking forward to reaching more families and children in 2018 and are excited about the future of the program.”

- Somi Muthuraju Nutrition Education Specialist

“We are excited about the future of the Senior Food Box Program and the good it does for seniors, we look forward to adding more sites in 2018 and reaching as many seniors as we can.”

- Rachel Crowder
**Hold a Food and Fund Drive**
Collecting non-perishable food items and/or collecting funds is a great way for your church, corporate or school group to help the Food Bank achieve our mission. Below are some tips to conduct a successful food drive:

1. **Set A Goal**
It helps to have a specific goal for a food drive. This gives participants a benchmark for success.

2. **Have Fun**
Use creative ideas like collecting cans as entry to an event or holding a contest between work departments.

3. **Set Up a Central Location**
Collect food items at a central location. This will make it easier to load food at the completion of the drive.

4. **Make it Educational**
Participating in a food drive is a great way to educate friends, family or co-workers about the mission of the Food Bank and how hunger affects the community.

5. **Make the Delivery**
At the completion of the food drive, contact the Food Bank to arrange for drop-off of donated items. All contributions, regardless of volume, are gratefully received and will help us in the fight against hunger in Southeast Texas.

**Suggested Food Drive Items:**
- Peanut Butter
- Chili
- Canned Stews
- Canned Soups
- Canned Lunch Meats
- Canned Fruits
- Canned Vegetables
- Cereal
- Rice
- Pasta

**Monetary Donations**
Every $1 you give helps provide up to 3 meals for Southeast Texans in need. Make a difference today!

**Become a Monthly Donor**
Schedule a monthly gift to provide the support needed to reach vulnerable citizens year-round.

**Give A Gift**
Honor, remember or celebrate someone in your life by making a gift to the Food Bank.

**Become a recurring donor, your contribution can make a difference:**

- **$1 Donation:** 3 MEALS
- **$50 Donation:** 150 MEALS
- **$100 Donation:** 300 MEALS
- **$500 Donation:** 1500 MEALS
- **$1000 Donation:** 3000 MEALS

**Donate Food**

**Donate Money**
Volunteering at the Food Bank

Volunteering at the Food Bank can be a highly rewarding experience. There are many opportunities available for individuals, corporate or church groups to participate, including:

- Office tasks
- Restocking School Tools
- Aiding teachers in School Tools
- Food Box assembly
- Sorting of food and other donations

1,869 NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO VOLUNTEERED AT THE FOOD BANK

15,503 NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER HOURS DONATED

$382,769 ESTIMATED AMOUNT OF FUNDS THE FOOD BANK SAVED IN EMPLOYMENT COSTS IN 2017 THANKS TO VOLUNTEERISM COVERING CERTAIN TASKS

You give but little when you give your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

-Kalil Gibran
volunteer spotlight

Manasseh Miles  Southeast Texas Food Bank Intern

For Manasseh Miles, a Health Sciences major at Lamar University and a linebacker for their football team, interning at the Southeast Texas Food Bank wasn’t out of his comfort zone. “I’m a servant at heart. I’ve already been through things in my life that have brought me a desire to strengthen those that may be going through something,” said Manasseh, whose own family was helped through a local pantry. Manasseh has been impressed with the broad reach of the Food Bank—from the nutrition programs to the food distribution process. “When people think of a Food Bank, they think of a place people come to get food when they need assistance,” says Manasseh. “How many different programs they have, how many people they help—it’s more than just handing out food.” As an athlete, Manasseh spends a lot of time understanding the relationship of food to his physical ability, so studying to be a dietitian was a natural fit. Manasseh particularly enjoyed interacting with children at a Boys & Girls Club during nutrition lessons. He also enjoyed being part of our produce drops. “What I’ve seen is just the demand that’s out there of people in need,” says Manasseh. “Being able to see the process when the food comes in on the truck, seeing it go out to the pantry and then seeing the little kids with their parents and how happy they get when they receive the food—that’s so much that this Food Bank does.”

Shannon Beathard  Senior Box Volunteer

We would like to highlight one of our faithful volunteers Shannon Beathard, who has been such a blessing volunteering to help assemble senior boxes and family boxes. She even travels out with staff to help with food distributions during November, one of our busiest months of the year. She is a long-term volunteer at the Food Bank and has been tirelessly helping those less fortunate since Hurricane Harvey struck. She continues to volunteer today to make our community a better place.
food bank
annual statistics

744 SNAP APPLICATIONS

325 TEACHERS HELPED BY SCHOOL TOOLS

63 NUTRITION EDUCATION CLASSES

15,503 VOLUNTEER HOURS

194 MOBILE FOOD PANTRIES

1,500 BACKPACK STUDENTS

8 MILLION POUNDS TOTAL FOOD OUTPUT

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

-Margaret Mead
Leading the fight against hunger in Southeast Texas.