



Partner Agency Newsletter

February 2018

SPOTLIGHT: Central Texas Food Bank Funds ReThink Hunger Program Manager for Partner Agency

The Food Bank is proud to announce a \$70,000 grant to Hill Country Community Ministries in Leander to fund a 1-year paid position for the ReThink Hunger Program Manager and program expansion costs. This effort is a part of \$100,000 ReThink Hunger Grant to Williamson County which included investments in Operation Liberty Hill, Shepherd's Heart of Taylor, The Caring Place, Hutto Community Food Pantry, Reveal Resource Center and Leander Church of Christ's Brighter Days Food Pantry. The Food Bank plans to share more about this project in the coming months and we want to congratulate all of our Williamson County Partner Agencies on their service to the community. Lastly, we would like to welcome Jen Searight as ReThink Hunger Program Manager. Find out more about Jen below and what she will be working on this year!

I'm Jen Searight, the new ReThink Hunger Program Manager at Hill Country Community Ministries (HCCM). Up in Leander, and throughout Williamson County, hunger is a growing problem. Even with the 20+ CTXFB partner agencies in the county, pockets of the population remain underserved...which is where I come in. My focus this year is growing HCCM's Fresh Food for All program.

I'm looking at county data, population trends, and community resources of all sorts so our growth can be focused on really reaching those pockets of need. Over 5,000 community members were served in 2017. I can't wait to exceed that number this coming year. New sites will be added as the year progresses.

I am most excited to collaborate with other community institutions to reach new clients and to serve current clients holistically. On top of more sites, I'm planning to have additional services, like health screenings, at our distribution events. While I'm an employee of Hill Country Community Ministries, I'm looking to serve all of Williamson



County. That means I'm asking Wilco partner agencies for any expert advice on where you see great need. If you've got big ideas, good data, or any questions, you can reach out to me any time at Jennifer.searight@hccm.org.

Background: I come to HCCM after spending most of 2017 traveling around the world. I do have experience in fighting hunger—my first real job post-grad was at AIDS Services of Austin's Food Bank (a CTXFB partner!). I'm from southern California and graduated from George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. I earned a Bachelor's degree in Global Affairs. I ended up in Central Texas on a whim, but I'm sticking around here. When I'm not at HCCM, I'm riding my bike, playing with my nephews, or planning a trip.

Events:

[Souper Bowl of Caring](#): January 5-February 4

[Austin Oyster Festival](#): February 24

[Austin CROP Hunger Walk](#): February 25

Reminders & Resources:

Food Bank Flea Market

Non-food items will be available in a "flea market" style at the Central Texas Food Bank on Saturday, February 17th from 8am-12pm on the agency loading docks. Here's what you need to know:

- First come first serve basis
- All totes are 6 cents / lb.
- Totes cannot be broken up (must take everything in entire tote)
- Agencies can take a maximum of four totes

Check out the flyer [HERE!](#) Contact Karsten Darden at kdarden@centraltexasfoodbank.org with any questions.

Partner Agency Facebook Group

The Central Texas Food Bank has created a Facebook group for our partner agency staff, volunteers, and supporters in order to facilitate information sharing among our partners! Please use this page to share



ideas, ask questions, and exchange resources. The Food Bank will occasionally post about new/incoming product, grant opportunities, and general hunger-relief news. You can find the Facebook page [HERE](#). Once you click on the “Join Group” icon on the page, a group administrator will approve your request. *Posts including profanity, content demeaning of any person/group, or otherwise offense will be removed. Please help us ensure that this remains a positive and helpful space. If you have any questions, please email agencies@centraltexasfoodbank.org

Grant Opportunities

Walmart Foundation Community Grant Program: The 2017 grant cycle begins February 1, 2017 and the application deadline to apply is December 31, 2017. Award grants range from \$250 to \$2500. Apply [HERE](#).

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