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Partner Agency Newsletter - June 2021

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Agency News



Spotlight: Meet your Agency Relations Team!

At the beginning of 2020, we made updates to how our Agency Relations Team operates in an effort to better understand and serve our Network of partners. This included designating each partner a new single point of contact, aka 'CTFB Relationship Manager'. Using this new structure, we have navigated our way through a challenging year together all while building stronger connections. We are using this month's newsletter as an opportunity to introduce you to the team a little further.



Kara Hedlund, Agency Relations Manager

Kara (finally) found her way to food banking in 2016 through the CTFB Mobile Pantry team. Prior to CTFB, she discovered nonprofit programming at Goodwill while coordinating an at-risk youth employment program and also spent time at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) as an air emission specialist. Fun Fact – she used to drive the glass bottom boats as an Environmental Education tour guide at the famous Aquarena Springs in San Marcos, TX!

Kara leads the Agency Relations Team and works directly with her own group of Partner Agencies. One of her favorite things to learn is how people found their way to fighting hunger. Kara finds great joy in leading the team and is committed to supporting our network of partners drawing on her direct experience with coordinating client-centered, volunteer-run food distributions. Outside of work, Kara enjoys hiking, hunting, home improvement projects and all things related to animals!



Jessica Buchoz, Agency Relations Specialist

Jesse came to CTFB with previous experience working at a fellow partner agency, the Hays County Food Bank in San Marcos. Along with other team members, Jesse has a portfolio of partners that she works with and advocates for at the Central Texas Food Bank. She has many of the meal sites and agencies that serve target populations in her portfolio – which includes soup kitchens, rehabilitation & treatment centers, childcare facilities, college food pantries and more. She loves doing community-focused work and collaborating with organizations to make a real impact. Outside of work, she enjoys crafting and making things (she has a whole craft room!), cooking and baking, seeing live music, and spending time with her cattle dog, Roy.



Karsten Darden, Agency Relations Specialist

Karsten Darden began his journey to serving the community through an after school program at the Austin Area Urban League where he was teaching children. Karsten has been at the food bank since November of 2012 (9 years!). He has enjoyed his time in the Agency Relations department for his entire tenure at the food bank. In his portfolio, he works with many of our faith-based partner agencies. He values working with the partner agencies in all aspects of compliance and capacity building. Karsten enjoys seeing the CTFB network of Partners grow to serve more clients. It is very rewarding for him to be a part of the fight against hunger at the CTFB. Outside of work, he enjoys Audible Books and listening to podcasts.



Fabian Laveaga-Luna, Agency Relations Specialist

Fabian likes to enjoy one or two cups of coffee, sometimes three, and enjoys listening to Pearl Jam and other grunge artists. Fabian was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and lived most of childhood between México City and the city of Durango in the northern part of México. He moved to El Paso, TX to attend college, eventually earning a BA in Journalism with a Minor in Spanish from UTEP. In El Paso, Fabian collaborated with a local non-profit called BorderSenses, focusing on providing academic opportunities to vulnerable communities. Later, he had the opportunity to contribute as a volunteer with Amnesty International in the Czech Republic, creating awareness for social issues happening around the world. Fabian also worked as an Eligibility and Resource Specialist and Food Bank Coordinator at the non-profit organization Hopelink in Washington.

Fabian started at CTFB in our Social Services department before moving onto the Agency Relations Team. Fabian looks forward to continuing to strengthen relationships with his portfolio partners, and supporting the incredible work you all do daily!

Partner Agency Facebook Page



Do you know about the Central Texas Food Bank's Partner Agencies [Facebook Page](#)? We use this page to connect agencies to perishable items available at other pantries, office/furniture donations, upcoming events and to provide quick updates. You are welcome to use this page to share resources with others across our network of amazing Partner Agencies. Request to join the page today.

Resources



Capital IDEA Outreach: Travis, Williamson, Hays and Bastrop Counties

Capital IDEA helps low-income adults earn community college degrees in high-demand fields like Healthcare and Information Technology (IT). They provide wrap-around supports in addition to covering tuition, books, and other college expenses within their service area of Travis, Williamson, Hays, parts of Bastrop Counties. For more information visit www.capitalidea.org, or check out this [flyer](#) to print and share with clients.

Recipe of the Month: Shakshuka



Summer is almost here, and with the warmer weather comes a desire for families to enjoy new foods. For this month's recipe, we are featuring tomatoes- harvested from our very own CTFB garden. There are many variations of tomatoes - Roma, heirloom, cherry - which lends to a wide variety of flavors and usage. Although tomatoes originated in Latin America, they are commonly used around the world in many different cuisines. People have argued that a tomato is a fruit, but the debate was ended in 1893 when The Supreme Court ruled tomatoes to be a vegetable and therefore is part of

MyPlate's vegetable food group.

This versatile and humble vegetable can be prepared in many different ways, soups, salads and sauces. This vegetable is low in calories, is a great source of vitamin C, potassium, and full of antioxidants. Try making a fresh tomato sauce for a pasta dish, dicing it and adding it on toast for a homemade bruschetta or simply adding it to your salad of choice.

With seasonal produce in mind, this month the team selected a recipe that brings out the taste of the Mediterranean and is featuring Shakshuka. This is a simple dish that is loaded with flavor and vegetables like onions, bell peppers and of course, tomatoes. "Shakshuka" translates to "all mixed up" and is topped with some eggs and spice blends that is simple and easy to make. Please visit our website for this recipe, along with many other seasonal recipes to share with your clients!

[Click here for more recipes.](#)

Class Registration Open for Travis County Residents: Organic Food Gardening

Registration is open for our summer gardening classes! These 8-week virtual classes offer the opportunity for clients to gain useful skills to grow fresh produce in a fun and interactive online environment.

This series focuses on the nitty gritty of growing food, and is offered in both Spanish and

English for Travis County residents. For more information to share with clients check out the class [Flyer!](#) Registration is open to all food pantry clients, but class size is limited

Food Sourcing Forecast

Below, you will find a list of foods that will be available on the shopping list soon. On the hyperlinked items you will find easy recipes that can be shared with your clients. [To find more recipes, visit our website!](#)

Meat & Dairy	Produce	Shelf Stable
2% Milk		Peanut Butter
Chicken Leg Quarters		Pinto Beans (Dry)
Chicken Thighs	Grapes	Red Kidney Beans (Can)
Eggs	Pears (Can)	Rice
Ground Bison	Spinach (Can)	Walnuts
Salted Butter		
Whole Chicken		

Important Reminders

Save the Date: Upcoming Closures

The Food Bank will be closed on Monday, July 5th in observance of Independence Day. There will be no pick-ups or deliveries on that day. For the most up-to-date closure information, please refer to the 2021 Holiday Guide and the agencies page of our website. CTFB will post and send out the ordering guidelines for closures so you can plan for your pantry needs. If you would like to schedule a pick up appointment at CTFB, please reach out to your relationship manager.

[Click here to download the 2021 Holiday Guide.](#)

[Click here to visit the Agencies page.](#)

Contact the Team

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