

# Austin Nonprofit Hungry Souls Feeds 1,900 Food-Insecure Austinites with Young Children, a 12-Year Record

*Hungry Souls, a nonprofit philanthropy based in Austin, Texas, looks to its annual fundraiser The Big Event on October 18th to meet the unprecedented demand.*

AUSTIN, TEXAS, USA, October 12, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Hungry Souls](#), a [nonprofit](#) philanthropy based in Austin, Texas, broke a twelve year record at its last packing shift, now providing meals for 1,900 Austinites who are food insecure every week. Funded solely by donations and volunteer effort, the organization is hosting [The Big Event](#) on October 18, 2023 to raise funds for its operations in unprecedented demand.

Hungry Souls now provides 475 pre-qualified elementary and middle school students at 29 area schools every week. This week marks the most meal packages ever assembled and distributed by the registered 501 (c)(3) since the organization's inception in 2011. A meal package consists of one cooler of perishable food staples, one bag with nonperishable food, and weekly recipes for the food provided. A student's package is delivered to a designated representative at participating elementary and middle schools, intended to feed that student's prequalified food-insecure family of four for a weekend.

"Hunger was a concept I hadn't fully understood until I had spent some time in Mexico on a mission trip with my church to help build a house for a needy family," said Austinite Jason Stanford, who co-founded Hungry Souls with his wife, Celeste. "The experience in Mexico opened my eyes to families that are in need and I knew there were kids and families in Austin that needed the same help," Stanford said. Upon returning, the Stanfords decided to assist in feeding children who were food insecure in their hometown.

**THE BIG EVENT!**  
A NIGHT TO CONNECT FOR  
**HUNGRY SOULS**

**WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 18TH 6-10PM**  
**AT THE OASIS BREWING COMPANY**

DRINKS + DINNER + SUNSET + AUCTION + CONNECTION + CORY MORROW

**BUY TICKETS + SPONSOR**  
**WWW.HUNGRY-SOULS.ORG**

The Big Event - October 18, 2023 at 6pm

According to Feeding America, 12.3% of children in Travis County, comprising most of the City of Austin, are food insecure. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food insecurity as a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life.

“In the early days, I would go to Costco, load up on food staples for balanced meals, and store them in our office fridge and on our office shelves. We started with one school and would pack the food on Thursday morning and deliver to them in my truck, my wife’s car, her aunt and uncle’s car, our fence company employee’s cars, or our fence crew trucks to Achieve School so their food-insecure families to have something to eat over the weekends,” said Stanford.



Since 2011, Hungry Souls has expanded dramatically, utilizing over a dozen refrigerators and freezers, industrial shelving, and an open room for bag assembly. The organization now has three delivery vehicles with each full to capacity for Thursday deliveries. Hungry Souls relies solely on donations to fund food, and on volunteers to provide the labor in packing and delivering weekly meals to schools for families.

“

We have two new schools to our program which are 91% or more food-insecure. That means that the majority of the kids in class don’t know where their next meal will come from after the bell rings.”

*Bill Sullivan, Hungry Souls  
Executive Director*

Each Tuesday night, dozens of volunteers pack non-perishable foods into bags destined for hundreds of local families. Service organizations such as the National Charity League and the Young Men's Service League have boosted volunteer numbers significantly in recent months, allowing for more efficient packing. “These are by far the most

rewarding service hours I have experienced,” said youth volunteer Spencer Schultz. Corporate and educational entities, such as David Weekley Homes and the University of Texas Football Team, have also organized groups to attend packing shifts at Hungry Souls.

Families who qualify for a free or reduced lunch program through their school districts are the primary recipients of Hungry Souls meal packages. “We have two new schools to our program which are 91% or more food insecure,” said Bill Sullivan, Executive Director of Hungry Souls. “Think about that. That means that the majority of the kids in class don’t know where their next meal will come from after the bell rings,” he added. “We fill the nutrition gap over the weekends

for families because children need healthy families to reach their fullest potential."

As the demand for its services soars in Austin, the financial demands are also increasing at a rapid rate. "What we need most is corporate sponsorship to keep serving families. We have faith that our community will show up for us," said Sullivan. The organization is hosting the Big Event on October 18, 2023 to raise funds to meet the unprecedented need. The event will be hosted at the Oasis Texas Brewing Company in the Oasis complex, an iconic venue overlooking Lake Travis. Several school counselors and social workers are expected to speak about the impact of Hungry Souls on their campuses at the event.



Volunteers pack a record 475 meal bags

"We would love more sponsors, and a sold-out event next week," said Sullivan. "The scratch kitchen at the Oasis Brewing Company will serve amazing dinner, the Cowboys will run an exciting live auction, and the incredible musician Cory Morrow will perform as the sun sets over the water in majestic fashion," said Sullivan. "Support kids and have a great time. It doesn't get better than that," he added.

To learn more about Hungry Souls, to become a sponsor of The Big Event, to donate, or to purchase tickets to the Big Event, visit <http://hungry-souls.org>.

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