



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 18, 2020

Contacts: Alix Duchouquette

(915) 227-4945

[aduchouquette@mithoffburton.com](mailto:aduchouquette@mithoffburton.com)

Chris Lechuga

(915) 274-2407

[clechuga@rabengroup.com](mailto:clechuga@rabengroup.com)

**El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Reaches \$1MM Goal for the Paul L. Foster Family Foundation, Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation, and MountainStar Sports Group Foundation Matching Grant and Announces New \$600K Challenge**

*Donations will support the Food Bank meet the increased need for meals as families continue to be impacted by COVID-19*

**EL PASO, TX** – Today, the [El Pasoans Fighting Hunger](#) (EPFH) Food Bank, in partnership with the [Paul L. Foster Family Foundation](#), [Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation](#), and MountainStar Sports Group Foundation, announced they had reached their matching grant goal of raising \$1 million to support families grappling with food insecurity and the economic impacts of COVID-19.

To keep the momentum going, [Community en Acción](#) (CEA) announced a \$100,000 donation to the Food Bank and, coupled with two other anonymous donations, issued a new \$600,000 fundraising challenge to the community to continue donating to El Pasoans Fighting Hunger.

“The Food Bank is grateful to everyone in El Paso who has given to support their friends, neighbors, and family members during this crisis, and especially to the community leaders that have spearheaded our fundraising efforts,” said Stuart Schwartz, EPFH Food Bank Board Chair. “The incredibly generous \$1 million matching grant from the Paul L. Foster Family Foundation, the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family

Foundation, and MountainStar Sports Group Foundation helped us raise an additional \$1 million., And now Community en Acción's matching challenge is allowing us to fulfill our mission of alleviating food insecurity, especially in the middle of a pandemic. Their generosity demonstrates the kind of leadership and solidarity that makes El Paso a great place to live. We are thankful to the community for meeting the first matching grant and ask for your support in the new challenge."

Since the pandemic began, EPFH Food Bank has risen to meet the challenges by distributing up to 11,000 emergency food boxes daily through its 5 mega-distribution locations and mobile pantries in El Paso, Culberson and Hudspeth Counties. In fact, the Food Bank spent \$1.67 million in just the first month of its COVID-19 response, which accounted for more than half of its pre-COVID-19 annual budget. Seeing the need for additional funds, EPFH sought the help of the community, and local business and community leaders answered the call.

"It is heartening to see how El Pasoans have been here for each other during this crisis," said Josh Hunt, President of the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation. "Everyone is pitching in. Individuals are significantly increasing their contributions. Businesses are answering the call to action with donations and volunteer hours. Community organizations are stepping up to lend their critical support to reduce the anxiety and fear so many are feeling. We are proud to support the Food Bank and the many El Pasoans who will need it until our economy stabilizes."

The Food Bank has seen both a surge in families accessing its services and a decline in volunteers, resulting in long lines and long wait times for families turning to the Food Bank during this pandemic. As families face new financial hardships caused by unemployment, furloughs, or reduced hours, food security has become a real issue for more families in our region.

"This pandemic has challenged our community in many aspects, but we have always come together to lend a helping hand to those who need it," said CEA Chair Emeritus Richard A. Castro. "I commend the Food Bank for continuing to support families in need and am proud to support its mission with this \$100,000 donation from CEA. But, the work is not done and I encourage my fellow Community en Acción members and all business leaders across El Paso to contribute as part of our new challenge so that El Pasoans Fighting Hunger can continue its tremendous service to our community throughout the summer months."

The donations announced today will allow the Food Bank to continue providing food and nutrition assistance to the hundreds of thousands of El Pasoans who have been affected by the COVID-19 crisis. In the last few months, more than 50,000 people in the

El Paso region have filed unemployment claims and El Paso's unemployment rate has hit a historic high of 15 percent.

“Unfortunately the ongoing health and economic crisis means that the need continues for many people in our community. It is critically important that those of us who can give to this new matching grant do so in order to support our neighbors and the Food Bank,” said Rosemary Marin, Board Chair of CEA. “I am grateful to my fellow CEA members, especially Richard A. Castro, Raymond Palacios and Ed Escudero for stepping up to lead in this unprecedented moment.”

For more information on how to contribute to the El Pasoans Fighting Hunger Food Bank, visit <https://elpasoansfightinghunger.org/> or call (915) 298-0353.

For media inquiries, please contact Chris Lechuga at 915-274-2407 or [clechuga@rabengroup.com](mailto:clechuga@rabengroup.com), or Alix Duchouquette at 915-227-4945 or [aduchouquette@mithoffburton.com](mailto:aduchouquette@mithoffburton.com).

###