

Inside the Gate

FALL 2022



Feeding the Hungry and Homeless of Tulsa - Every Day



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FOUNDERS

Keenan Barnard
Gene Buzzard
(1946-2020)
Rev. John C. Powers
(1936-2021)

Dear Friends of Iron Gate,

It is hard to believe that on August 26, we celebrated 3 years in our new beautiful building on Archer! (Thank you to Andy's Frozen Custard for the cold treats we distributed to our guests!) We continue to be grateful for our beautiful facility that allows us to serve our guests with dignity and respect. In August we served 17,927 meals, which averages about 578 plates a day to approximately 275 guests a day. Our culinary team works hard to prepare nutritious and delicious meals for our guests.

I am always humbled and grateful for the gifts Iron Gate receives to help us keep feeding those in need, from the dollar bills folded up in an envelope to the checks that make you weep with joy. Every gift matters! Iron Gate was recently honored at Tulsa Elks Lodge #946 dinner with a grant to fight food insecurity. Cari and I met up with the Iron Rockets International Motorcycle Club on Route 66 and received a donation from their members that came to Oklahoma from Germany, Aruba, Tennessee, Florida, Texas and places in between. Every day is a new day at Iron Gate and the most fun is answering phone calls about food donations – in one week, I think we received calls as varied as someone moving and cleaning out their pantry to pallets of assorted beverages from Coca Cola Southwest Beverages, 50 dozen Hurt's donuts to bulk food products from a delayed opening in Owasso– all of these things help stretch our food dollars and provide variety for our guests. Thank you to everyone who thinks of Iron Gate when they have food to share.

I often receive gratitude from those we serve. Every morning guests go through the line, they thank volunteers, some pick up plates to say thank you and some just quietly smile. The pantry line is brimming with thank you's, a few tears and hand written notes, but YOU are the true recipient of these kind words, because without your support, Iron Gate would not be able to serve those in need. Your generosity allowed us to serve 3,242 households with approximately 53,612 pounds of groceries in August via drive-thru pantry, outreach bags and agency pick-up. With the economy uncertain, gas prices fluctuating and back-to-school around the corner, the need continues and Iron Gate stands ready.

We are looking forward to our Cooking For A Cause fundraiser that will be Thursday, October 6 at a new location, The Vista21. This is a fun evening featuring food, wine, a gift card pull, mystery boxes, photo booth and an auction to raise operating funds for Iron Gate. Local chefs will prepare their favorite dish and compete for the coveted people's choice prize! I hope you will join us, it truly is "the tastiest way to help feed the hungry!"

Be well, be kind,



Carrie Vesely Henderson, CFRE

chenderson@irongatetulsa.org | 918-879-1707

Our Gratitude Goes to ...



Pictured left to right: Quantez Stewart, Carrie Vesley Henderson, Rebecca Lewis

ARVEST BANK

Arvest Bank launched its annual Million Meals Initiative to fight hunger. Iron Gate was one of their Tulsa recipients in helping end hunger in our community. Thank you Arvest Bank for your support in feeding our neighbors in need. This donation will help provide 1,400 meals to the hungry.



ZARROW FAMILY FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERING

Family members from The Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation gathered together on a Saturday in June to help feed the hungry and homeless of Tulsa at Iron Gate. This foundation is one of Iron Gate's longtime supporters. Thank you for believing in our mission and for serving the hungry.

COMMUNITY LIGHT FOUNDATION

Their mission is to assist in feeding the hungry in our community that face food insecurity. Iron Gate is grateful to be one of the organizations they support. Thank you to The Community Light Foundation and Ride to Remember Black Wall Street for your donation. Together we are fighting food insecurity in our community.



IRON ROCKETS MOTORCYCLE CLUB

This international Motorcycle Club gathered for their annual rally in Sparks, OK. Every year they chose an organization to give back to and they choose Iron Gate for a second year. We appreciate the generosity and support from Iron Rockets near and far. Thank you for helping Tulsans receive the food they need.

STAFF

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INSIDE THE GATE

Carissa Gutierrez
Rochelle W. Dowdell
Christina Maxwell
Carrie Vesely Henderson
Writer/Editor
Tina Fincher
Designer



The story of Iron Gate is one of observation, kindness, respect and progression. Iron Gate started because of a simple act of generosity. Iron Gate's founders, Keenan Barnard, Gene Buzzard and Father Jack Powers stepped out of a Bible study at Trinity Episcopal Church to make a homeless man a sandwich. That simple act launched an organization that now feeds hundreds of people every day.

Iron Gate began serving hot meals from the basement of Trinity Episcopal Church in 1979. Seven years later, bags of groceries were added to the hot meals and the Grocery Pantry was born.

Today's Grocery Pantry has a very different look and scope from the pantry of 1986. Kid's Packs were added to the mix in 2009. Kid's Packs provide an extra amount of nutrition and a way to provide children a small treat when treats are often few and far between.

Currently, Iron Gate distributes groceries to guests through a drive-through pantry three days a week and 'walker bags' go out at the same time to guests who are in the area, but without a car or a kitchen.

Working with community partners, outreach bags are delivered offsite three times a week to Tulsa's homeless living in encampments throughout the city. Case Workers from partner agencies, pick up groceries weekly for their

clients, and most recently, to assist Case Workers with their schedules, we have begun utilizing Door Dash's non-profit program for free delivery to guests. Continuing to evolve, the Grocery Pantry is looking at offering a hybrid program that will provide a self-select model in addition to drive-through. Self-select will allow our guests to come into the pantry and select the products in a store-shopping experience., which is how pantry was set up pre-pandemic. There are no restrictions or requirements to receive groceries from Iron Gate. Grocery distributions average 31 pounds per household, providing families with milk, protein, and fresh fruits and vegetables.

The experience of the pandemic, along with instability and inflation, has exacerbated the issue of food insecurity. Before the pandemic, approximately 15% of people in our state didn't have enough food. Feeding America now projects that number to be one in five Oklahomans. The statistics are even more dire for Oklahoma children. One in four children is projected to not have enough food to eat.



The last three years has seen a steady increase in need. The Grocery Pantry served 10,140 households in 2019; in 2021 the number rose to 30,108, tripling impact and reach. Already in the first seven months of 2022, we have seen a 16% increase in service over last year.

The food distributed through Iron Gate's Grocery Pantry comes from various sources: Food Drives, The Food Bank and retail pickups. Two years ago we were picking up approximately eight-thousand pounds of groceries monthly from retailers. Today that number has risen to up to thirty-thousand pounds monthly. The increase in the number of retailers and stops every week has required a heavier load in operations and scheduling. Much of this increase is due to Iron Gate's continued operation throughout Covid. As other agencies reduced staff and operations, Iron Gate continued 365 days a year throughout the pandemic.

The Grocery Pantry, through its many iterations, continues to provide assistance, healthy food options and hope to those who are food-insecure. A monthly visit to Iron Gate's Grocery Pantry may not end hunger, but at a time when so much is difficult, receiving groceries is a welcome relief, a significant assistance and one less worry for those struggling to make ends meet.

PARTNER AGENCIES

Action Steps Tulsa
Anew Dawn Counseling
Angel Against Trafficking
ARUBA
ATENTO
B.R.U., Inc. International Youth Academy
Community Service Council
CROOKS
Crossover Preparatory School
Counseling & Recovery Services
CURA for the World
DaySpring
Domestic Violence Intervention Services, Inc.
EduRec Youth & Family Fun Center
Emergency Infant Services
Family and Children's Services of Oklahoma
Giorgio Durham Counseling
Housing Solutions
John 3:16 Mission
LIFE Senior Services
Lillyfield Tulsa
Madison Strategies
Mental Health Association of Tulsa
Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Oklahoma Department of Human Services
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Parkside Psychiatric Hospital & Clinic
Primary Therapeutic Services
Project Communication
Resonance Center for Women
Soaring Eagles
SOLEIL COUNSELING & TRAUMA RECOVERY, INC.
Still She Rises
Supporters of Families with Sickle Cell
Tulsa County Alternative Court Program
Therapeutic Life Services
Transitional Living Centers
T-Town Satin Dolls
T-Town Steppers
Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless
Tulsa Health Department
Tulsa Public Schools
Urban Strategies Inc.
Veterans Affairs Tulsa
Women in Recovery
Women's Justice Team
Youth Services



“So often we take this issue of food insecurity and put it in a corner on its own. We separate it from our own daily reality because it is simply too painful to realize that so many of our neighbors and friends run the risk of missing their next meal. I want the images to tell of the pride and character of the Oklahomans standing before me. I want to draw attention to the individualistic nature of the problem, while at the same time using the backdrop of the Tulsa skyline to drive home the message that the individual is always, by their nature, a part of the sum.”

- SHANE BEVEL

FACES Campaign

For the last eleven years, Iron Gate has given the problem of hunger and homelessness a face. Through our FACES campaign, we have shown Tulsans that the hungry in our city are not simply anonymous numbers; they are people. People with lives, relationships, challenges and dreams.

Working with talented and giving photographers, Iron Gate has photographed and documented almost one hundred individuals since 2011. FACES aims to raise awareness of the mission of Iron Gate to feed the hungry and homeless in Tulsa and, through portraiture, to humanize those in need.

This year’s FACES shoot was held in August. The 2022 photographer contributing his time and expertise is Tulsa Shane Bevel. Shane is an editorial and commercial photographer documenting the activities of his clients and friends in Tulsa and beyond. After more than a decade of staff work for newspapers across the southern states, he turned to freelance work and has been making beautiful images of amazing people for wonderful clients over the last 14 years. He lives in midtown Tulsa with his wife Fran Bevel and his two children Graham and Ruby. When not working or volunteering, Shane spends as much time outdoors with his family as possible, knowing that the key to understanding ourselves is to feel small in this immense world we occupy.

The exhibit, along with the stories of the featured guests will be shown at an opening and Open House at Iron Gate on Tuesday, November 8. FACES provides a snapshot into the diverse lives of our guests. While it by no means tells the full story of their experiences, it does provide a glimpse into their journeys and reveals a little of what Iron Gate means to those who we help feed every day.

SCARE AWAY HUNGER FOOD DRIVE



Saturday, October 29th

11am-1pm

Iron Gate's West Gate Entrance
501 W. Archer St.
Tulsa, OK 74103

**Skip the candy and grab the cans!
Help fill our pantry and feed the hungry.
Drive-thru to drop off your donations.**

Volunteers are the Heart of Iron Gate

This summer we had multiple groups of enthusiastic students spend time with us volunteering at Iron Gate. They served Community Meals, handed out groceries for the drive-through Grocery Pantry, made Kid's Packs, and sorted and packed bags for distribution. We could not do what we do or reach the many that we serve, without the constant support from volunteers. We appreciate the gift of time, hard work, and compassion.



If you have time to assist in feeding the hungry and homeless of Tulsa, please call, email, or scan the QR Code for more information. We would love to have you!

Questions? Contact Christina Maxwell, Volunteer Coordinator -
volunteers@irongatetulsa.org. 918-879-1714



St. Paul Lutheran - Iowa



SYNOD Youth Conference



St. Pius X School - Tulsa, OK



St. Pius X School - Tulsa, OK



All Saints Episcopal School - Fort Worth, TX



Riverfield CARES Summer Camp



Reach Beyond Mission - Austin, TX



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**Iron Gate invites you to
Cooking for a Cause**

The Tastiest Way to Feed the Hungry

**The Vista at 21 Rooftop
Thursday, October 6th, 2022
6pm**

For sponsorship opportunities or tickets, visit
www.irongatetulsa.org/cookingforacause or
scan the QR code

