



The Giving Spirit

Christina's parents taught her to be grateful for everything she has in life. It's a value that is immediately apparent when you speak with her — she takes nothing for granted and is quick to offer a helping hand. Accustomed to being the one giving, Christina never imagined needing help herself.

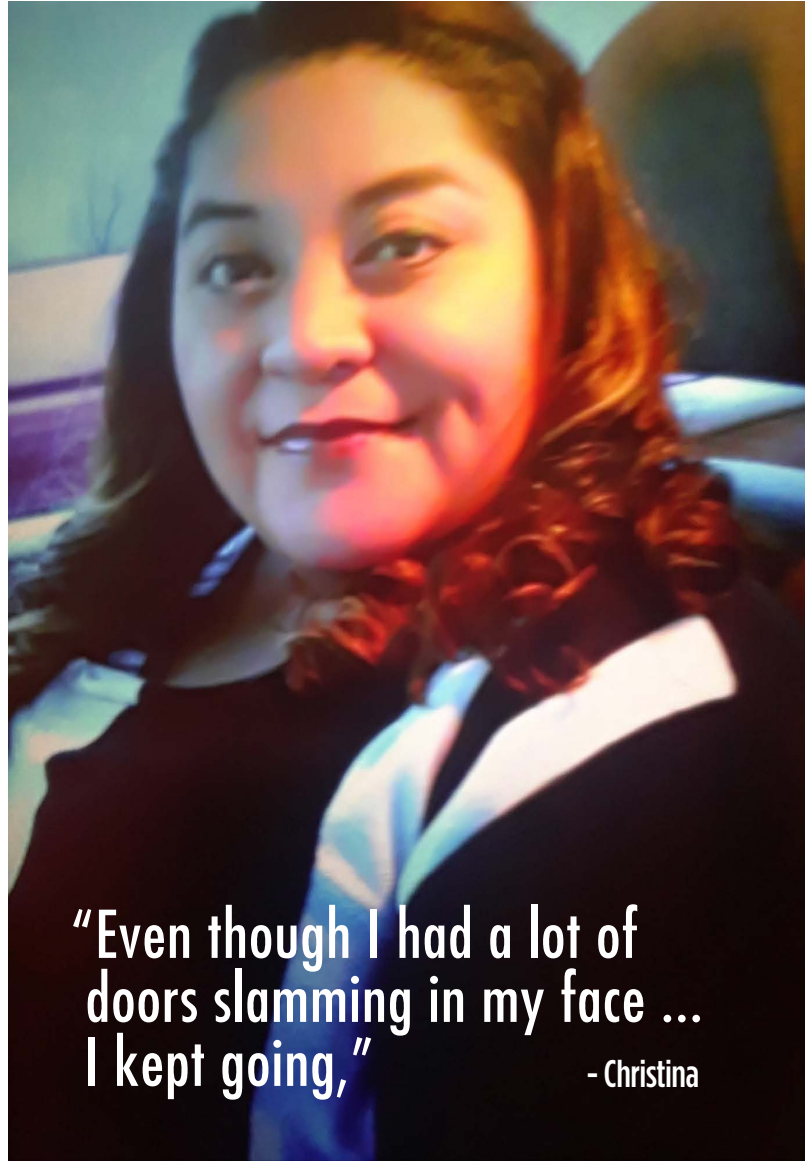
“In December of 2019, my family and I found ourselves in a place where no family ever wants to be ... which is homeless and hopeless,” said Christina. Her family, which includes her husband, son, daughter, and two-year-old granddaughter, were displaced from their home after the landlord failed an inspection for the Section 8 affordable housing program. **“We had one week to find another place. I had no idea where we would go ... you can't live in a van with a baby.”**

After confiding in a friend, Christina was put in touch with EFAA's housing program and scheduled an appointment with a case manager. Due to the urgency of her situation, Christina's family received priority placement to get into EFAA's housing. **“I had no idea we were going to be accepted the same day,”** Christina said.

Christina knew, however, that this wasn't the end of her story — EFAA's short-term housing was an important step to regaining her stability, but she was determined to get back on her feet. In just a few months, she was able to reinstate her Section 8 voucher and get approved for her own housing. **“Even though I had a lot of doors slamming in my face ... I kept going,”** she said proudly.

Today, Christina's family lives comfortably in a townhome rental in Boulder. Everyone has their own bed, an immense relief for her son who was sleeping on the couch, and her granddaughter has a place to play with her toys on the patio. **“We are happy ... peaceful,”** said Christina.

On April 1st, Christina dropped off donations for the families staying at her old housing site, along with handmade face masks and a note of gratitude to her former case managers.



“Even though I had a lot of doors slamming in my face ... I kept going,” - Christina

“There were always things we didn't have enough of when we were living there,” said Christina. **“Shampoo, Q-tips, Band-Aids, cotton balls, Brillo pads for dishes. It may not have been a lot, but it was something that I could afford to do, and allowed me to let EFAA know that I appreciated everything they gave me. It was my way of saying thank you.”**

With the season of gratitude and giving upon us, Christina's story reminds us that generosity has the power to carry us through crisis. In this time of historic hardship, we are all finding our own ways to give back in a way that is meaningful to us. Thank you for being part of our collective response.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



When 2020 started, I thought it would be an auspicious year for all the references to vision and foresight. But I have to admit, we did not see this one coming. As a safety net organization, our ability to respond quickly and appropriately to evolving community need is a big part of our mission.

Since the pandemic hit, over one-quarter of all of the households that have come to EFAA have been new to our services. These families and individuals experienced sudden shocks and found themselves in situations they could not anticipate, like many of us.

We have learned a lot at EFAA over the last eight months. We have learned that as much as EFAA has intensified its longer-term family resilience work, immediate responsiveness of the safety net is a critical community service. While state and federal level support is important in times of crisis, we continue to need long-trusted local organizations, not beholden to decisions made far away, to be immediately present in the response to crises.

We have also learned how our “new normal” is resulting in increased accessibility and equity for our community. In moving to fully remote appointments, participants do not have to travel to EFAA for services but can access support via video or phone, with increased convenience. **EFAA’s food bank has done over 300 home deliveries to folks who are high-risk or otherwise cannot make it safely to EFAA.** Our team has handled the expanded volume of donations and vouchers for financial assistance by shifting from paper to more seamless electronic processing procedures.

While we may be physically apart, we’ve figured out ways to communicate and collaborate with our community better — for example, a new partnership has put in place an early warning system to better prevent people from losing their housing. **And more than anything, we have learned that our neighbors will stand up for each other, and that with your support, we will be able to adapt and change quickly to meet the need.** These attributes build resilience in a community, an organization, a family. Thank you for your enduring commitment to helping our neighbors during their time of need.


Julie Van Domelen
 Executive Director



EFAA’S MISSION

EFAA provides stabilizing services, innovative programs, and transformative advocacy to strengthen families and create a thriving community.

Emergency Family Assistance Association

Meeting our community’s basic needs since 1918.

WINTER 2020

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DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

Ask your employer if they have a matching gift program and double the impact of your gift.

AN EARLY Warning System

Since May, as many as 6 to 8 million Americans have slipped into poverty as employment numbers stay high and federal safety net supports remain in limbo. Eight months into the pandemic, it is clear that the full economic toll of the coronavirus is yet to be seen. However, what we do know is that a coordinated community response is vital to protect those who are most severely impacted.

This summer, EFAA began working with the City of Boulder, Boulder Housing Partners, mediation and eviction court representatives, and other local leaders and landlord groups to form an early warning system to detect a rise in evictions. By regularly “taking the pulse” of how the coronavirus is impacting residents and landlords alike, the group has given a broad coalition of housing stakeholders a platform to work together to prevent a potential surge of evictions in our community.

“At first, we were building the plane as we were flying,” said Renee Gallegos, Community Investment Program Manager with the City of Boulder. “But having this group has led to unprecedented opportunities to work together and communicate better as we try to respond as effectively as possible to this crisis.”

The Boulder Housing Supports group meets monthly to share information and plan for what’s ahead — the idea being that the earlier we can detect trends, the quicker and more effectively we can respond. “The City is so grateful to the many housing and service partners committed to serving those at risk of losing housing during these extraordinary times,” added Kristin Hyser, Deputy Director of Housing and Human Services with the City of Boulder. “EFAA is a leader in this work meeting the challenge tirelessly, proactively and with compassion.”

While this crisis continues to evolve, EFAA is dedicated to remaining nimble, responsive, and informed. We are committed to being a leader in our community’s response to ensure critical supports are available to our neighbors impacted by this crisis.



OUR COVID-19 Response*



1,836
families helped



\$1.4 MILLION
given to prevent homelessness



490,000
meals distributed

OF THOSE WE HELPED ...

26% had never received services from EFAA before

69% were families with children, many of whom faced both a loss of income and the loss of childcare

9% were seniors, many of which live on fixed incomes

69% were Hispanic/Latinx, who are often left out of federal safety net programs

*As of October 2020.





EXPANDING *Food Access*

For several years, Scott volunteered with EFAA by driving our food truck to grocery stores across Boulder to pick up produce, dairy, meats, and prepared food and deliver these essential items to our food bank. But early in the pandemic grocery shelves were bare and most stores had limited food items to donate, reducing the need for Scott’s regular volunteer role.

It wasn’t long before EFAA found a new opportunity to put Scott’s truck driving skills back to work. The food bank team noticed that not everyone who visited the food bank before the pandemic was coming in to pick up grab-and-go food bags. “Either they were sick themselves, immunocompromised, didn’t have a car ... there was a whole host of reasons,” said Scott. It was on that phone call that Scott signed up to pilot a new COVID-19 response program: EFAA’s food delivery service.

To date, volunteers like Scott have done more than 300 deliveries to our neighbors facing food insecurity. People with disabilities and seniors living on fixed incomes often struggle to access healthy, nutritious foods — and the added health risk of visiting a grocery store or food bank makes it even more difficult.

The pandemic has opened the door for EFAA to experiment with more accessible program models. Remote appointments, electronic paperwork, and food delivery are just a few of the ways our services have changed for the better. In addition to providing food delivery, EFAA has improved food access by adding weekend hours one Saturday every month and implementing a new menu model that allows food bank visitors to choose their food.

While challenging, this year has required us to rethink our service delivery. Many changes that were made because of the pandemic have made our programs stronger and we plan to take these lessons with us into the future. Thank you for being on this journey with us.



“The food, personal hygiene items and household items I receive from EFAA assist me beyond measure and give me ease and comfort. My needs are met without struggle which eliminates stress from my life. I am grateful for EFAA and deeply appreciate each and every EFAA staff member and volunteer! I am with gratitude that EFAA exists! Love you all!”

- A note from an EFAA participant



Save the Date!

COLORADO GIVES DAY IS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8TH.

Make a gift to EFAA on Colorado Gives Day and leverage the \$1 Million Incentive Fund to make your dollars go further to help our neighbors facing crisis. **Pre-schedule your gift today at www.coloradogives.org/EFAA.**