



Summer 2025 • Meeting our community's basic needs since 1918.

efaa news

EFAA PARTICIPANTS' VISION BECOMES REALITY: *Boulder's First Housing Resource Fair*

On Saturday, April 26th, EFAA, the City of Boulder, and Boulder Housing Partners (BHP) hosted Boulder's first Housing Resource Fair. More than 230 community members attended this free, three-hour event. Attendees were able to connect with over 20 organizations, to gain information about affordable housing resources, learn about tenant rights, find housing support services, and explore homebuyer programs for lower-income households. Some participants even scheduled apartment viewings for the following week, creating immediate, tangible connections.

This valuable community gathering didn't emerge from a boardroom or city planning meeting. It was born from the lived experiences and determination of two EFAA Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) members: Victor Lemus and Susan Gillespie.

Victor, a leader in his mobile home community, had navigated challenging housing situations and wanted to prevent others from facing similar struggles. Susan brought her experience with homelessness to their shared mission. Both recognized a frustrating reality: Boulder had numerous housing resources, but many community members couldn't figure out how to access them or determine their eligibility.

Initially, the PAC decided to address this issue by forming a housing subcommittee to create a comprehensive resource guide. Victor, passionate about his mobile home community advocacy, wanted to share his experience to help others avoid the challenges he'd faced. However, as the team met and gathered information, they realized that given the volume of content and frequency of updates, their resource guide would quickly become outdated.



“Our voices matter.
Our ideas have value.
We know what our
community needs.”

This challenge sparked their breakthrough idea: instead of trying to capture all the information in a static guide, why not bring all the resources together in one place at one time?

Their idea evolved into a collaborative effort between EFAA, the City of Boulder, and BHP. Together, they planned an event that would serve as a “one-stop shop” for housing resources—from nonprofits and government agencies to legal services and actual housing providers.

The fair's success exceeded expectations, especially since there was no registration process and multiple events were

occurring in Boulder that day. The participating organizations and the City of Boulder worked together to promote the event through a press release, flyers, social posts, and an information page on the City's website.

The feedback has been positive from both attendees and participating organizations. Attendees appreciated having everything in one place, to access comprehensive and sometimes confusing information directly with people from the organizations, without having to navigate through a website, which can feel overwhelming.

For Victor and Susan, watching their vision unfold brought profound validation. “Our voices matter. Our ideas have value. We know what our community needs.” This sentiment reflects their transformation from service recipients to community changemakers.

Given the positive response, plans are in place to make the Housing Resource Fair an annual event, ensuring Boulder's housing resources remain accessible to those who need them most.

FROM THE 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.

Summer 2025

This newsletter is published three times annually by Emergency Family Assistance Association

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DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

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

I write this letter to the EFAA community as our fiscal year comes to an end at the end of June. We have had a very strong year at EFAA, with solid fundraising, continued support from volunteers, and a dedicated staff team. This has allowed us to meet the increasing need and economic unease in our community. EFAA's motto of neighbors helping neighbors has been on full display. Through your support, thousands of our community members have received stabilizing services of our safety net of food and financial assistance; hundreds of families with children experiencing homelessness have found safety and security in our temporary housing; and dozens of people have expanded their knowledge, skills, and practice, around economic resilience through our financial health classes.

I also write this as I enter my final months at EFAA before retiring. As I think back over my ten plus years at the helm, several themes stand out:

In this community, we lift each other up. Life can be a struggle, and shocks are to be expected. I have seen the impacts of COVID, inflation, and all the vagaries of life, but I have also been consistently amazed and grateful for how people step in and demonstrate empathy for all of us in our community.

I am deeply grateful that EFAA does not have to go it alone. Partnerships have been key. From the wonderful fellow non-profits with whom we lock arms and integrate actions, to the city and county agencies that collaborate with us, to the many foundations and businesses that help sustain our work.

I have also learned how hard it is to address the underlying factors that drive economic insecurity. Despite all the great services provided, the shocks of recent years mean that there are more families with children facing homelessness now than when I started over ten years ago. Boulder is a high-cost community and income inequality has increased over recent years. We have worked hard to build awareness of these structural challenges and to elevate participants' voices and lived experiences so that our community can find collective solutions that go beyond EFAA's doors.

My most heartfelt thanks go to the people who come to EFAA for services. Your stories, your perseverance, and your commitment to making our community better for all, is inspiring. A few weeks ago, I was tabling for EFAA at a community resource fair. A woman came up to the table who I had met years ago as EFAA formed its participant advisory council. She was a hardworking single mom, determined to make a better life for herself and her young son. I said "wow, I haven't seen you for quite a while." She said, "my son is in middle school and doing great, and I now have a good job with benefits helping young people with behavioral challenges, so I don't need EFAA at this point in my life." We gave each other a big hug and a high five.

These are the images and stories I'll carry with me on my next adventure in life. Thank you all for the support you have given me and EFAA over the years.

With gratitude,

Julie Van Domelen



USDA ENDS LOCAL FOOD PURCHASE AGREEMENT FOR FOOD BANKS AND SCHOOLS

With recent federal funding cuts, many have asked how EFAA has been impacted. While EFAA's greatest source of funding is individual donors, the USDA had funded an important program for our food bank that was terminated in March. The Local Food Purchase Agreement (LFPA) provided funds for schools and food banks, including EFAA, to purchase fresh foods from local farms and ranches.

EFAA has prioritized providing fresh, nutritious food in our food bank because it contributes to healthy nutrition and creates a dignified experience for those who rely on our services. The LFPA provided nearly \$80,000 annually to EFAA, to use toward the purchase of fresh produce, eggs, and meat. So, this is a significant loss.

The end of the program doesn't only affect schools and food banks—it impacts the local farms that have invested time, money, and labor into producing additional food to support the community.

Recently announced cuts to the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) are also concerning. According to data from *Feeding Colorado*, 615,000 Colorado residents currently receive SNAP benefits, including 19,358 people in Boulder County. Because of the new spending bill, 298,000 Colorado families will lose some or all SNAP benefits. The impact of these cuts will create significant demand while reducing our ability to meet the community need.

How You Can Help:

Financial donations are most helpful since they allow us to purchase what we need when we need it. **If you're considering a financial gift, now is an ideal time. The Leffingwell Foundation will match every donation to EFAA up to \$100,000 until August 31, 2025. Visit efaa.org and click on the GIVE NOW button to donate.**

You can also support local farms who supply food to EFAA's food bank and may have been impacted by the funding cuts. Check out the panel on the right for a list of some of our farm partners.



Some of the local farms that supply fresh food to EFAA's food bank

Cure Organic Farm
cureorganicfarm.com

Earth's Table
earths-table.co

Gramagrass and Livestock
gramagrasslivestock.com

Growing Gardens
growinggardens.org

Kilt Farm
kiltfarm.com

Masa Seed Foundation
masaseedfoundation.org

Monroe Organic Farms
monroefarm.com

North Wasatch Farm

Red Wagon Farm Boulder
redwagonfarmboulder.com

Wild Child Farm
soworganicseed.com



EFAA PURCHASES 1501 YARMOUTH TO SUPPORT EXPANSION OF STAFF AND PROGRAMS

This spring EFAA purchased 1501 Yarmouth Ave., the 1,750 square-foot, 2nd half of the duplex building EFAA already owns at 1503 Yarmouth. The additional space allows us to support our expanded Economic Empowerment program (discussed in our Spring newsletter) and workspace for EFAA's core activities as demand for services grows. The building comes with 10 parking spaces, which is a welcome bonus.

The purchase was fully funded through a capital campaign. We will be recognizing the generous capital contributors with a plaque in the main lobby of the building. After some fresh paint and new carpet, staff members will be moving into their new offices this summer.

EFAA Promotes Ellen Ross to Director of Development and Communications

We're excited to announce that Ellen Ross has been promoted to Director of Development and Communications. Previously serving as EFAA's Communications Manager, Ellen gained comprehensive exposure to all program areas while crafting compelling stories for newsletters, funding appeals, and media relations. This role provided deep insight into every facet of EFAA's mission and impact — a great foundation for her current position.

Ellen joined EFAA in March 2023, bringing valuable leadership experience from the for-profit sector. She previously held VP and director-level roles leading marketing, communications, and client services for technology startups and emerging companies. This background provided hands-on experience in developing strategic communications, nurturing stakeholder relationships, and securing funding.

"It turns out my work in startup companies was excellent preparation for the nonprofit world," Ellen reflects.

"Both require resilience, resourcefulness, and strategic thinking to accomplish ambitious goals—often with limited staff and resources."

In her expanded role, Ellen looks forward to working more closely with donor and foundation partners while continuing to strengthen community support, as demand for EFAA's services grows throughout Boulder. Her unique blend of nonprofit program knowledge and business development expertise positions her perfectly to advance EFAA's mission in this critical leadership role.



Tickets on sale now!

Join us for EFAA's Annual
Farm to Table Dinner

Sunday, September 28th

4:00 – 7:30pm

at Planet Bluegrass in Lyons, CO.



Purchase tickets at
efaa.org/farm-to-table-2025
or scan the QR code



Last Chance to Double Your Donation!

Summer is a time when donations slow down and yet the need continues—especially as kids are out of school and no longer receive free lunch.



Make your gift now to help ensure local kids have enough food to eat and **DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!** The Leffingwell Foundation will match every dollar you donate to EFAA up to \$100,000.

Go to efaa.org and click the GIVE NOW button or scan the QR code to make your gift.

Hurry—deadline is August 31, 2025.

