



efaa news

FROM SURVIVAL TO SOLID GROUND: *Olivia's Story*

When Olivia left a relationship with two young children and no permanent place to live, her focus narrowed to the essentials. Keep the kids safe. Stay close to community. Figure out the next step.

She moved between friends' couches and short-term rentals around Nederland, doing what she could to hold things together. Her children were with her part-time, which made the instability survivable. Then everything shifted.

When Boulder County Child Protection Services asked Olivia to take on a kinship foster placement, she welcomed a third child into her care. Overnight, she went from sharing custody of two children to caring for three, without stable housing. "I realized I couldn't live like that anymore," Olivia said. "With three kids, I needed something solid. I needed stability."

Olivia already knew about Emergency Family Assistance Association (EFAA). Her family had received support years earlier. But it was a visit to the Nederland Food Pantry that connected her to EFAA's Mountain Office and housing support closer to home.

With EFAA's help, Olivia and her children moved into EFAA housing. For Olivia, housing was not a finish line. It was a starting point. "I knew I had a limited amount of time," she said. "I didn't want to waste it."

While living in EFAA housing, Olivia became a fully certified foster parent. She also focused on rebuilding financial stability. She created a strict budget, tracked expenses, and set clear goals: Save for a reliable car. Increase income. Prepare for independent rent.

In August of this year, Olivia launched her own business, opening a hair salon in Nederland. She built her client base intentionally, balancing long workdays with parenting responsibilities. Around the same time, she purchased a reliable car, removing one more barrier to stability.

By carefully budgeting and growing her business, Olivia saved enough to take the next step. When her time in EFAA housing ended, she and her children moved into a three-bedroom home in their community.

Today, Olivia supports her family through her salon, is in the process of adopting her foster daughter, and is



“ With three kids, I needed something solid. I needed stability. ”

preparing to purchase the home she currently rents — a milestone that once felt impossible.

"It's just me and these kids," Olivia said. "So, I had to figure it out."

Her advice to others navigating instability is direct and hard-earned — "find the resources and use them. Don't turn down opportunities."

Olivia's story reflects what is possible when determination meets the right support at the right time. With stable housing, guidance, and community backing, she built a foundation where her family can move forward with confidence, security, and hope.



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.

Spring 2026

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DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

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

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Spring is a season of renewal, and at EFAA it is also a time to recognize the resilience of our community. During moments that test stability, EFAA remains a trusted core — providing essential support while helping families move toward greater security. This work is possible because of the generosity of neighbors who donate, volunteer, and stand alongside families as they navigate challenging times.



The stories in this newsletter reflect the power of community in action. Whether it is a family finding stability after crisis or a volunteer helping keep the lights on, these moments remind us that hope is built through collective care. Together, donors, volunteers, and participants create the breathing room families need to regain footing and move forward with dignity.

Looking ahead, EFAA is expanding and strengthening our family housing program to better meet the complex needs of families experiencing housing instability. This evolution builds on our long-standing commitment to crisis response while deepening our focus on long-term stability, resilience, and family well-being. By strengthening pathways to housing and surrounding families with supportive, strengths-based services, we are creating opportunities not just for immediate shelter, but for lasting progress.

This growth reflects what we hear every day from families and partners: stability opens the door to economic opportunity, healthier futures for children, and stronger connections to community. As we move forward, EFAA is aligning best practices with local partnership and community wisdom to ensure families have the support they need to thrive.

Thank you for being part of EFAA's community and for believing in what is possible when neighbors come together. Your generosity and commitment continue to build pathways toward stability, strength, and hope for families across our region.

With gratitude,

Debbie Pope
Executive Director



Energy Outreach Colorado (EOC)

Energy Outreach Colorado is a valued partner of EFAA, enabling us to support our community with critical energy assistance.

Over the past year, EFAA's Basic Needs Program launched a new approach to delivering this support, made possible by the dedication of our bilingual volunteers.



ENERGY OUTREACH COLORADO

In 2025, EFAA introduced Benefits Navigators — a new volunteer role to provide support to eligible households with Energy Outreach Colorado applications and connect them to additional utility resources. Currently we have four, bilingual Benefits Navigators who are available onsite to meet with participants on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 12–3 p.m. With volunteers providing specialized energy assistance support, our Basic Needs Resource Navigators can devote focused attention to the diverse array of challenges facing our participants.

EFAA's new *Resourcing Hours*, when paired with EOC assistance hours, now offers walk-in services that extend beyond direct financial assistance. During Resourcing Hours, community members can meet one-on-one with a resource navigator outside of a scheduled appointment to better understand EFAA's programs and eligibility, receive support with document readiness, and access resources and warm referrals to partner organizations.

EFAA Benefits Navigator Volunteers - Keeping the Lights On

EFAA's Benefits Navigators are a small team with an outsized impact. Together, the four bilingual volunteers help neighbors navigate energy assistance at moments when time, money, and options are running out.



Pat's path to volunteering began more than a decade ago. A friend asked if she could help translate thank-you notes from Spanish to English for EFAA's Christmas Adopt a Family program. Pat had never been inside EFAA before, but seeing the work up close left a lasting impression. "I was so intrigued by what was happening here that I started volunteering," she shared.

Today, Pat is one of EFAA's Benefits Navigators, a role she describes as deeply rewarding. One moment has stayed with her. A participant burst into tears after learning her Xcel bill

EFAA/EOC FY25 IMPACT



415 Appointments
conducted by four
bilingual, EFAA
Benefits Navigator
Volunteers



1,242 People
supported by energy
assistance



\$746
Average amount of
energy assistance per
household



\$309,394
in total energy
assistance provided to
EFAA Participants

Source: Energy Outreach Colorado
Annual Report. 10/1/24 - 9/30/25.

CONTINUED

EFAA Benefits Navigator Volunteers – Keeping the Lights On

would be paid in full and her disconnection notice voided. “Truly, the world is full of love,” the participant said.

Wendy, another invaluable member of the team, began volunteering in 2024 after years of supporting EFAA financially. She wanted to serve locally and directly. Being able to walk to EFAA and work with neighbors from her own zip code made the experience especially meaningful.

Energy assistance work is detailed and exacting. Every qualification must be verified. Applications must be completed carefully. Even small system glitches can create delays when someone is already overwhelmed, but working hand in hand with the Benefits Navigators, community members can leave the day with relief and a sense of being seen.



Mark your Calendars

TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE SPRING EVENTS!

The 4th Annual EFAA Friend Fest!

Sunday, April 26th, 3:00 – 6:00pm
@The Rayback

Please join us at EFAA Friend Fest on Sunday, April 26 from 3pm – 6pm. Bring your friends and family for a fun-filled afternoon and opportunity to learn more about EFAA’s mission. *For tickets and more information scan the QR code or visit efaa.org/friendfest.*

Join Us!
for the
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Sunday, April 26, 2026
3:00 - 6:00pm
@ The Rayback

A square QR code located at the bottom right of the promotional graphic.

National Volunteer Week

April 19 – 25 is National Volunteer Week. Let’s celebrate the nearly 600 hardworking EFAA volunteers who make our work possible.



The NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive



The 2026 National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is Saturday, May 9th. This is the country’s largest single-day food drive. Last year’s drive brought in over 20,000 pounds of non-perishable food to the EFAA Food Bank.