Fall 2026 • Meeting our community's basic needs since 1918.

efaanews

# Val's Story: A CLEARER PATH FORWARD

For Val, the future felt clear. She had a stable career as a professional driver, a home of her own, and a life she had built in her small mountain community. Retirement was still years away, and she expected to continue working and providing for herself for years to come.



Then, during a routine visit to the eye doctor, everything changed. Val was diagnosed with a rare form of ocular melanoma, an untreatable condition that causes significant, rapid vision loss. Suddenly, the future she had envisioned was filled with uncertainty. How quickly would her vision deteriorate? How long would she be able to continue driving? And how would she support herself if she could no longer do the job she had dedicated so much of her life to?

> "Getting my new glasses made such a difference. It was one less thing to worry about during an incredibly stressful time."

For three years, Val navigated the process of seeking assistance while trying to plan for an uncertain future. When she could no longer rely on her income, she turned to EFAA for help meeting her basic needs, including food and her growing utility expenses.

During a visit with her Resource Navigator, Christine, Val noticed a sign about a new program offering assistance with minor medical expenses, including eyeglasses. She asked if she might qualify. EFAA connected Val with a local eye doctor who could fill her prescription for progressive prism lenses, helping her make the most of the vision she still had. "Getting my new glasses made such a difference. It was one less thing to worry about during an incredibly stressful time," Val said.

The glasses couldn't change Val's diagnosis or answer the difficult questions about her future. But they gave her one less barrier to navigate and one less expense to carry during an already overwhelming time. With clearer vision and renewed confidence, Val has continued looking ahead. Today, she leads a senior alliance in her mountain community, helping other residents connect with organizations like EFAA and find the resources they need during challenging times.

Stories like Val's are possible because of EFAA's donors. Your generosity allows EFAA to meet neighbors where they are, providing support for the many needs that can arise during a difficult time. Because of you, neighbors like Val can find the resources they need to navigate uncertainty, regain their footing, and look toward the future with 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.


Fall 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,

One of the things I value most about EFAA is that we are never standing still. We are continually listening — to our participants, our volunteers, our partners, and our broader community — and asking how we can respond more thoughtfully to what people are experiencing.

The stories in this newsletter bring that commitment to life.

Val's story is a powerful reminder of how quickly circumstances can change. After years of working, supporting herself, and planning for the future, an unexpected diagnosis changed everything. EFAA could not alter that diagnosis, but we could help remove one barrier, ease one expense, and make an uncertain time a little more manageable. What inspires me even more is how Val is now using her own experience to help connect others in her mountain community to resources and support.

And then there is Sasha, who began volunteering with EFAA as a high school student and leaves for college with a deeper understanding of the strength, resilience, and diversity of our community. Her story reminds us that service changes all of us — not only the people receiving support, but also those who give their time, talents, and hearts.

This is what community looks like to me.

EFAA brings together people of different generations, backgrounds, experiences, and life circumstances. On any given day, participants, volunteers, staff, board members, donors, and community partners are each contributing in different ways but toward the same goal: helping our neighbors thrive and strengthening the community we all call home.

As needs continue to evolve, so will EFAA. We will keep listening, learning, adapting, and building solutions alongside the people we serve. And we will continue to do it together, because the strength of EFAA has always been the strength of our community.

With gratitude,

Debbie Pope
Executive Director

# EFAA's Resourcing Hours Expand Support for Neighbors

When a neighbor reaches out to EFAA for help, the need isn't always straightforward. A household may be facing unexpected medical expenses, struggling to keep up with a utility bill, or unsure where to turn for a community resource – all while navigating food or housing insecurity.

As requests for financial assistance increased, EFAA began seeing more of these unexpected needs emerge. EFAA transitioned to an online intake process for financial assistance, giving the organization greater visibility into the needs households were bringing forward and the challenges emerging in the community. The incoming requests revealed a level of need that was broader and more urgent than previously understood, while also helping identify trends and anticipate challenges before they became crises. With this clearer picture, EFAA recognized an opportunity to provide more personalized support for needs that didn't fit neatly into one category. That led to the introduction of **Resourcing Hours** – dedicated walk-in hours four days per week when participants can connect with a Resource Navigator to find solutions and identify available resources.

Donor support and grant funding help make this individualized assistance possible. For eligible households seeking medical or dental assistance, EFAA can provide funds for expenses such as dental care, eye exams, eyeglasses, necessary medical equipment, and prescriptions. Addressing these needs can do more than resolve an immediate expense – it can help someone see clearly, get back to work, or avoid a medical issue becoming a larger barrier to stability.

Resourcing Hours give EFAA the flexibility to respond to a wide range of needs and provide neighbors with solutions. With continued community support, EFAA plans to expand Resourcing Hours and add car repair assistance this fall, creating more opportunities for neighbors to find the resources they need to move forward.

# Volunteer Spotlight: Building Connections Through Service

For Sasha, volunteering at EFAA started simply: she was a high school student looking for something meaningful to do with her time. Two and a half years later, it has become a much more personal experience. Growing up with many advantages, Sasha says her perspective changed when her dad became sick and her mom wasn't working. The experience opened her eyes to how quickly circumstances can change and the importance of having community resources like EFAA.



Over the years, Sasha has gotten to know participants who return to EFAA, learning their stories, watching their children grow, and building connections with familiar faces. Speaking Spanish has also allowed her to connect with more participants and learn from people with different backgrounds and experiences. "It's an honor to witness what EFAA does in action. You get to see the power of community, and it gives me a lot of hope for the future."

Sasha has also partnered with EFAA through programs at her school and serves on the City of Boulder's Youth Opportunity Advisory Board. As she prepares to head to college, she'll take with her the connections, perspective, and sense of purpose she has gained through volunteering, along with a continued commitment to connect with and advocate for her community.

For EFAA, Sasha is an inspiring example of the next generation of community leaders and of the lasting impact that volunteering can have on both the people who give their time and the neighbors they serve.

## Resourcing Hours Impact

Data gathered from January 2026 to present

**427 Households**
provided with utility or medical expense support

**$114,427**
in financial assistance distributed for minor medical and dental costs

**232 assistances**
provided for medical, dental, and vision expenses

**$157,497**
in financial assistance distributed for utility costs

**278 vouchers**
provided for utility expenses

# Did You Know? TAX-ADVANTAGED WAYS TO GIVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

As you consider giving opportunities this holiday season, you may be eligible to support your neighbors while making a tax-advantaged gift from your retirement account.

If you are 70½ or older, you may make a **qualified charitable distribution (QCD)** directly from your IRA to a qualifying organization like EFAA. A QCD can be a meaningful way to put your retirement dollars to work in our community and is usually not included in your taxable income. For 2026, you can direct up to $111,000 per person ($222,000 for married couples) through QCDs.

At age 73, you generally must begin taking **required minimum distributions (RMDs)** from certain retirement accounts. If eligible, you can use a QCD to satisfy all or part of your RMD while supporting EFAA's work helping neighbors access food, financial assistance, and other essential resources.

Your gift can help ensure more Boulder County households have support when unexpected challenges arise. Ready to make a difference this holiday season? Consider directing your eligible IRA gift to EFAA.

*Tax rules and eligibility vary based on your individual circumstances. Please consult your tax advisor to determine whether a QCD is right for you.*

Scan here for our Donate Funds page and scroll down to **Tax Advantaged Giving** to learn more.

# THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO help others THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

## Food Bank

Help local families create a special holiday meal at home by donating ingredients from EFAA's holiday food wish list.

**Holiday Dinner**
- Frozen Turkey
- Frozen Ham
- Dehydrated Mashed Potatoes
- Gravy Mix

**Holiday Desserts**
- Frozen Pie Crusts
- Canned Apple Pie Filling
- Canned Pumpkin
- Evaporated Milk
- Pumpkin Spice Mix
- Mexican Hot Chocolate

**Holiday Tamales**
- Masa Harina
- Corn Husks
- Dried Chiles
- Lard
- Broth (beef, chicken, or vegetable)
- Frozen Pork Loin



## Colorado Gives Day IS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Your gift to EFAA on Colorado Gives Day can go even further through the Colorado Gives Foundation Incentive Fund, a $1.4 million pool that helps increase the impact of donations to participating nonprofits.

## Homeless Contribution Tax Credit (HCTC)

Colorado taxpayers who make eligible contributions of $100+ to EFAA may receive a 25% state income tax credit. Eligible in-kind gifts valued at more than $5,000 may also qualify. Visit efaa.org/donate/funds to learn more.