

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**North Texas Food Bank Honors Outstanding Supporters and Volunteers**  
*Golden Fork Award Winners Announced at 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Ceremony*

**October 24, 2022 (Dallas)** – [The North Texas Food Bank](#) (NTFB) recognized top supporters and volunteers at its annual Golden Fork Awards ceremony. This year’s awards were presented to corporations, organizations and individuals that have made a significant impact on hunger-relief efforts in North Texas through their generosity and dedication.

“While we feel this gratitude every single day, we like to pause each year to formally recognize our most passionate hunger fighters and honor the many contributions that are critical in allowing the North Texas Food Bank to serve our neighbors experiencing hunger,” said [President and CEO Trisha Cunningham](#). “As North Texans are facing the highest inflation rates we have seen in 40 years and having to make difficult choices between food and other necessities, these supporters are helping us meet the elevated demand and provide our community with food for today and hope for tomorrow.”



From left to right: Christy Lara/ Tom Thumb / Albertsons; Kattia Prado Saenz; Raj Asava, Sonia Elhence, Anna Asava/ HungerMitao; Heather Kreager/ Sammons Enterprises; Dave Woodyard/ Catholic Charities; Gillian Breidenbach /Dallas Morning News; Clay Wachter/ FreshPoint; Kenn Stokes; Karen Vickery and Traci Griswald/ Audacy

The following recipients were honored for their contributions at the ceremony on October 20:

**Corporation of the Year: Sammons Enterprises, Inc.**

[Sammons Enterprises](#) has been a long-time supporter of the North Texas Food Bank for the past 14 years. In that time, the company donated \$1.9 million, which means access to 5.7 million meals for our neighbors facing hunger. The NTFB is especially grateful for Sammons' partnership during the busy holiday season, where they are a Match Sponsor, matching gifts up to \$100,000, and encouraging community members to donate so their gifts can have more impact. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sammons was one of the first companies to reach out and offer support to the Food Bank as the nation was just starting to understand and feel the impact of the pandemic. The company was resolute in wanting to ensure the resources and food needed for our neighbors during such a challenging time were available.

**Media Partner of the Year: The Dallas Morning News**

The NTFB is grateful for its media partners, who help raise awareness about the issue of hunger in North Texas. [The Dallas Morning News](#) has been a steady partner in the fight against hunger since the Food Bank's inception. During COVID their media coverage kept the public informed of the many offerings of the NTFB and its Feeding Network. From profiles by Cheryl Hall to on-the-ground coverage by Nataly Keomoungkhoun- this level of awareness was critical as the NTFB worked to raise more funds and deliver more food. With some key shifts at the Dallas Morning News Charities, Medium Giant and their corporate citizenship arm FWD DFW, led by Gillian Breidenbach, stepped in to help NTFB leverage some key marketing support to bolster its current campaigns.

**Community Partner of the Year: HungerMitao**

HungerMitao, which means "wipe out hunger", is a volunteer-driven grassroots movement working to mobilize and galvanize communities, focused on the Indian American community, in the fight against hunger across the country. Founded by Aradhana (Anna) and Raj Asava in September 2017, [HungerMitao](#) recently marked its fifth anniversary of championing hunger relief. And not just here at the North Texas Food Bank. Raj and Anna and the HungerMitao team have expanded the movement's presence to food banks in Tarrant County, Houston, New York City, Atlanta, Seattle and Detroit, with plans for further growth. In its five years, HungerMitao has provided funding support, volunteer hours, food drives and community

awareness through its many efforts and campaigns. Last fall, HungerMitao committed \$150,000 paid over two years to the North Texas Food Bank through a food distribution truck sponsorship. Beyond their success, HungerMitao has provided a model for other Affinity Groups to follow in starting their own groups, including Nihao (Chinese American) and SinHambre (Latino/Hispanic).

### **Hunger Ambassador of the Year: Audacy, the creators of Restaurant Week**

Founded in 1997 and developed to help drive traffic to restaurants in their historically slowest month of August, DFW Restaurant Week quickly became a staple community event that is looked forward to every year. The Food Bank was one of the original beneficiaries and is grateful to have partnered with and benefitted from this campaign for 25 years – and counting. In addition to the monetary funds collected from this event, DFW Restaurant Week provides a unique opportunity to drive awareness around families that are struggling to make ends meet and facing hunger. All told over the last 25 years, thanks to [Audacy](#), its dedicated staff and participating restaurants, DFW restaurant week has helped provide the Food Bank with more than \$8 million and 25 million meals to support the important mission of feeding neighbors.

### **Tom Black Volunteer of the Year Award: Kenn Stokes**

[Kenn Stokes](#) exemplifies what a Kernel, which is what NTFB calls volunteer leaders, should be. He is selfless, a hard worker, dedicated to the mission, cheerful and engaging. But, really, Kenn just loves the North Texas Food Bank and the volunteers. A Toyota employee, Kenn relocated to North Texas four years ago from California. He volunteered for several organizations while living on the West Coast and wanted to repeat the volunteer experience in Texas. He found his volunteer home at NTFB when he began volunteering in January 2020, right before NTFB closed its operations for COVID. But as soon as NTFB started accepting volunteers back in the Distribution Center, Kenn was back at the Food Bank. He quickly became a Kernel and since that time, he has amassed more than 400 hours of service. He is on the NTFB Production floor every Saturday for both morning and afternoon shifts as well as every evening shift.

### **In-Kind Partner of the Year: Bain & Company**

[Bain & Company](#) has been a supporter of the Food Bank through many projects and initiatives over the years. The development of the Network Expansion Model was one of the first projects initiated with Bain. This model enabled the Food Bank to better plan out its network expansion and understand the growth impact of different initiatives and programming. In the fiscal year

2020, the NTFB Community Impact team partnered with Bain to develop a Hunger Index for the 13-county NTFB service area. This index, updated annually, maps high-need areas as identified by the Feeding America insecurity data and the overlay of where NTFB serves. Additionally, Bain gifted the Food Bank with another helpful dashboard this year. The SNAP Gap Tool is another data visualization tool that shows the NTFB team the discrepancy between SNAP-eligible neighbors and those enrolled to better drive its work in underserved counties. Bain team members have volunteered their time at distributions such as the holiday Feast of Sharing event last year at Fair Park. The NTFB is grateful to Bain for the time it allowed Michael Brookshire, a partner in its Healthcare, Strategy, and Performance Improvement practices, to serve as the Food Bank's board chair for our last two fiscal years.

### **Special Recognition Award: Kattia Prado Saenz**

[Kattia Prado Saenz](#) is the Parent Liaison for Armstrong Middle School in Plano ISD, one of the Food Bank's School Pantry partner sites. She has been a partner with NTFB since August 2019 and the school has distributed more than 370,000 lbs of food and more than 310,000 meals since then. Kattia is an advocate for her students, families and staff. She not only holds an after-school distribution once a month for two hours, but she also delivers food to 40 families that can't make it to the distribution due to various reasons. Beyond hunger relief, Kattia teaches ESL classes to parents in the mornings at the school and helps sign families up for benefits and free and reduced lunch. Kattia is a true hunger fighter and believer in equity, ensuring equitable access at the distributions. She is an integral part of the School Pantry Program and Armstrong Middle School, going above and beyond her already lengthy school duties to serve her community. Kattia is passionate about helping her families thrive.

### **Retail Partner of the Year: FreshPoint Dallas**

[FreshPoint](#) is one of North America's largest exclusively owned produce distributors. The company has been a supporter of the North Texas Food Bank since 2010 and donated 6.7 million pounds of produce. In the last fiscal year alone, FreshPoint donated 1.1 million pounds of produce to the Food Bank that could then be distributed through its direct feeding programs and its feeding network. FreshPoint is committed to supporting the Food Bank with quarterly visits and consistent deliveries. The Food Bank is grateful for this partnership and for FreshPoint's dedication to increasing its ability to bridge the hunger gap year after year.

### **Lifetime Achievement Award: Tom Thumb / Albertsons**

[Tom Thumb / Albertsons](#) has been a long-time and valuable partner of the North Texas Food Bank. Through both their financial support and donated pounds, Tom Thumb / Albertsons has provided access to more than 12.8M meals over their lifetime giving! This year, Tom Thumb /Albertsons deepened its relationship with the Food Bank by consolidating its register campaign beneficiaries to generate more funding for the Food Bank. They also enhanced their food-rescue initiatives, introducing Fresh Rescue at their stores in the South Division which rescued an additional 544,463 pounds of food through our partner agency network. Tom Thumb / Albertsons is one of NTFB's first retail partners to successfully host an off-site training at the North Texas Food Bank to help strengthen relationships with the Food Bank's Food Sourcing team and store directors and continues to be open to additional opportunities to help NTFB meet the needs of neighbors facing hunger. The company is always asking what more they can do and how they can make a greater impact on neighbors in need.

### **2022 Jan Pruitt Legacy Award: Dave Woodyard, CEO of Catholic Charities of Dallas**

This award honors NTFB's late CEO Jan Pruitt, who had a passion for helping her neighbors in need. The award was created in her memory six years ago.

This year, the award was given to Dave Woodyard, a leader with over 40 years of experience in the service, hospitality and non-profit industries. Since early 2016, Dave has leveraged his extensive experience and long-time commitment to social welfare as the President and Chief Executive Officer of [Catholic Charities of Dallas](#). In this role, he oversees the organization's nearly \$35 million budget for 10 Missions and over 37 programs serving more than 250,000 children, families, and seniors every year. Catholic Charities has been a partner with the North Texas Food Bank for more than 15 years. When Dave came on board at CCD, the agency distributed around 100,000 pounds. In the last fiscal year, CCD was our largest "retailer" and 3<sup>rd</sup> largest overall Feeding Partner, distributing more than 6 million pounds across its approximately 90 sites in nine counties. That is tremendous growth under Dave's leadership and CCD is already ahead of last year by over 500,000 pounds. Dave's growth mindset has led to a wonderful partnership, aligning with the Food Bank's mission and targeting high-need areas with NTFB data guidance. Under Dave's leadership, Catholic Charities is always looking forward, and they have been a recipient of the North Texas Food Bank partner grant program. Through this partnership, they have opened Jan Pruitt Pantry in Lancaster, and have purchased three mobile pantry trucks and one refrigerated truck for picking up and delivering

food. Continuing the growth, just this past month a 5<sup>th</sup> Mobile Pantry was gifted to CCD from NTFB to feed yet more families in hunger.

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### **About North Texas Food Bank**

The North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) is a top-ranked nonprofit hunger-relief organization that sources, packages and distributes food through a diverse network of more than 400 feeding partners including food pantries and community organizations across 13 North Texas counties. The organization also provides food to children, seniors and families through various direct-delivery programs, including mobile pantries.

In its last fiscal year, the NTFB provided access to nearly 137 million nutritious meals, a 9% percent increase over the prior year. In response to the ongoing elevated hunger crisis, the organization has launched a \$500 million campaign, Nourish North Texas, to provide more food for today and hope for tomorrow by addressing the barriers to food security that our neighbors face.

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

North Texas Food Bank

Jeff Smith

[Jeff.smith@ntfb.org](mailto:Jeff.smith@ntfb.org)

469-891-7022