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# INSIDE *the* GATE

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DECEMBER 2021



# Dear Friends of Iron Gate –

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Gene Buzzard (1946-2020)



It's hard to believe we are at the end of another year! Whereas 2020 seemed to last an eternity, 2021 has gone by in a blink. While everything is getting back to normal, there are some things that just aren't there yet. We are still exercising caution in the way we are serving people, but we are opening up slowly and safely.

This year, will be another one of unprecedented demand, as of the end of November, Iron Gate has served 27,372 households with groceries and distributed 261,294 meals to our guests. To give you a reference point, in 2019 we helped 10,140 households with groceries and served 233,122 meals. Demand for groceries has almost TRIPLED! I am grateful for our new building. Our expanded cold and dry storage gave Iron Gate the capacity to meet the level of demand and serve our guests. Unfortunately, with increased prices and some emergency programs ending, the need will most likely not abate anytime soon.

It's been an inspiring season of giving! Thank you to everyone who participated in a food drive, dropped off bags or brought by a donation. On Thanksgiving Day, our dining room was full with 51 Miss USA contestants packing kid's packs, making grocery bags and serving the meal—and outside on the patio, a local family foundation surprised our guests with brand new cold weather gear. The week ended with a dedicated group of Native Americans arriving early in the dark hours of the morning to make fry bread for a delicious meal of Indian tacos, topped off by drumming on the patio for all to enjoy. Once again, I was overwhelmed by the generosity and compassion shown to our guests. Then, it was time for Giving Tuesday. Thank you to our Giving Tuesday matching donors, and thank you to everyone who made a gift. Each and every gift matters, it's turned into a plate of food for the meal or a bag of groceries to get someone through a challenging time. On Giving Tuesday, Iron Gate received a large unexpected gift from long-time supporters and a more modest gift from a guest who had used our pantry services during the past year. Each gift was meaningful and touched my heart in a different way. They give to make the world a better place due to empathy or experience, giving is truly is an act of kindness. It was a reminder that people CARE about other people. What a wonderful place to be.

Remember to be kind to each other and yourself as we end this year and start a new one. Wishing you limitless joy and all the best for 2022!



*With Gratitude,*

**Carrie Vesely Henderson, CFRE**  
Executive Director  
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Executive Director, Carrie Vesely Henderson with Liz Walters and Pat Carr from Carr & Carr Attorneys



## GIVING TUESDAY

Wow! What a #GivingTuesday we had. Thank you everyone for unleashing generosity on this global day of giving. Together we can make a difference. Together we can fill plates. Together we can stock pantries. Together we can feed the hungry. And Together we raised **\$57,545.50!** Donations were matched dollar for dollar by a generous donor.

**YOUR IMPACT:**  
3,501 meals + 3,501 matched = 7,002 meals for the hungry  
390 households + 390 households matched = 781 households with groceries  
Thank you for helping us feed the hungry and homeless of Tulsa.



## SHOP AND GIVE BACK

Mythic Press is partnering with Iron Gate for the month of December to give back. Shop in-person at their general store, Mythic City, at Mother Road Market shops (1124 S. Lewis Ave.) and 5% of your purchase goes to helping Iron Gate feed the hungry of Tulsa. You can also bring in a canned food donation to receive 10% off. Get your limited edition Bison Crewneck and support Iron Gate.



## SCARE AWAY HUNGER

Iron Gate's hosted our 2nd annual "Scare Away Hunger" food drive on October 30th. "Food insecurity is Scary, and it's all too real of a fear for Tulsa families." Iron Gate's Executive Director, Carrie Vesely Henderson, stated. "Many of the families using our grocery pantry are seeking assistance for the first time. with 39 percent of those recipients being children under the age of 17." This year's food drive raised 1,673 pounds of groceries for the hungry in Tulsa. Thank you to everyone who donated and stopped by to scare away hunger!

## IRON GATE STAFF

Carrie Vesely Henderson, CFRE  
**Executive Director**

Matt Mitchell  
**Operations Director**

Jeff Stark  
**Director of Culinary Services**

Caroline Kitalong  
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## INSIDE THE GATE

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Christina Maxwell

Jenny Thai

Carrie Vesely Henderson  
**Writer/Editor**

Annie Tyndall  
**Designer**





**MISS USA CONTESTANTS VOLUNTEER FOR THANKSGIVING**

Thanksgiving Day at Iron Gate was a special one this year! And we aren't just talking about the food. We had the pleasure of having all 51 Miss USA 2021 Contestants come in to volunteer. They arrived bright and early at 7:30AM, proudly wearing their state sashes and ready to serve. They helped with serving our Thanksgiving meal, sorting food donations, packing over 250 grocery bags and making over 2,500 kid's packs. We are so grateful to have them experience what we do at Iron Gate. Thank you Miss USA for giving your time and making sure the hungry and homeless of Tulsa were fed this holiday season.



**NATIVE AMERICAN DAY AT IRON GATE**

Iron Gate celebrated Native American Heritage Month with another year of Fry bread and Indian Tacos. Frybread Diva, Debbie Ridge and her team arrived at 5am to make her famous frybread and grape dumplings for Iron Gate guests. Tulsa Indian Club Pow Wow Princess Jasmine, helped distribute meals while guests also enjoyed a native drum circle on our patio. Thank you to all of the volunteers who made this day possible. Iron Gate is proud to honor and serve our Native American community.







## MEET STEVE

It took a global pandemic to highlight a heartbreaking truth Iron Gate has wrestled with for decades: food insecurity is real and it can happen to anyone. In 2020, Iron Gate saw demand for food spike. Those who live on the streets and those in nice homes in “good” parts of town. Iron Gate’s mission is to feed the hungry and homeless of Tulsa every day. And it’s never been more important. Faces of Iron Gate has always been a way to humanize the issue of hunger. We hope Steve’s story will touch your heart and perhaps even move you to action.

Steve is a desert storm veteran who gallantly served his country, but lost his way after returning from war. He is working on getting his life right and said the food at Iron Gate helps to get his mind focused so he can work on achieving his goals like having a place for his son and granddaughter (pictured) to stay when they visit from California.

## STUDENTS GIVING BACK AND SPREADING CHEER!

Holland Hall Elementary continues to be an example of generosity. From Kindergarten to 5th Grade, students learn to give with unselfishness and heart. Providing not just items, but themselves. Year after year, Holland Hall 1st graders arrive at Iron Gate in Christmas pajamas with an offering. This year they chose cereal and peanut butter. The children prepare a program of songs and perform for Iron Gate’s guests. 3rd graders dedicate their Christmas parties to assembling Kid’s Packs. They bring them down to Iron Gate and have a tour of the facility to learn about our programs. The 5th graders often choose to help Iron Gate with various items. We appreciate the continued partnership with these students, which often leads to a philanthropic heart. Thank you to all the teachers and administrators who create a space for charitable learning.



The month of November is always filled with people reflecting on how to give back to others. This past November was no exception. Iron Gate received over 8,600 pounds or 4.5 tons of groceries in November from over 25 different individuals, faith partners, and companies. We would like to thank: AEP-PSO, Amazon Broken Arrow Warehouse, Arcosa, B'nai Emunah Preschool, Black Hawk Industrial, Brownlee Family, Cabin Boys Brewery, Carr & Carr Attorneys, Coretz Family Foundation, Daisy Scout Troop, Diana Greeff and Granddaughter, Faith United Methodist Early Learning Academy, Johnson Family, Owen Elementary, Oxley Foundation, PDC Rx, Phillips Family, Ramsey Family, S&T Manufacturing, Sanctuary Tulsa, Sharky’s on Brookside, Sides Family, Steele Family, Suzanne Ryan and her neighbors, TGI Promo, Trinity Employment Specialists, Tulsa Honor Academy, and numerous anonymous donors. We remain grateful to all of our donors who help Iron Gate continue to feed the Hungry of Tulsa every day.



Holidays are a time for family and food. By donating an item for our grocery pantry you are helping provide a holiday meal for a family in need. Some of our most needed items include:

- Canned tuna/chicken
- Cereal
- Instant mash potatoes
- Macaroni and Cheese
- Dry pasta, rice, and beans
- Pasta sauce (plastic jars)
- Peanut butter
- Jelly (plastic jars)
- Stuffing mix
- Cornbread mix
- Bisquick
- Canned vegetables
- Canned soup

SCAN TO DONATE







Iron Gate  
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Happy  
Holidays!







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# INSIDE *the* GATE

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**NOVEMBER 2021**

