

Irving
Cares



Established 1957

FOCUS

Winter 2014

**OVER 82% OF CHILDREN ATTENDING
IRVING ISD ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE
FREE OR REDUCED-PRICE MEALS**

Feinstein Foundation Challenge



Get ready to join
the most successful
grassroots campaign
to fight hunger
in our country!

Between March 1 and April 30, Irving Cares will report every dollar (and pound of food) collected from the use of this challenge to the Feinstein Foundation. Their annual \$1 million giveaway distributes proportionately matching funds among 'feeding community' nonprofits throughout the country.

Food Pantry needs always increase in the summer months when children who usually eat meals at schools are home all day, or are visiting for the summer. The ability to meet basic needs is an important measure of a community's quality of life.

This year, with your help, we can ensure that our hungry neighbors have the nutrition they need. A generous gift of \$50, \$100, \$150 or more will be magnified in the fight against hunger in Irving. We can't do it without you.

There is tremendous need in our city, but cooperatively, we can close the gap on hunger and minimize food insecurity in our community. With your help, we feed an average **838 families a month** providing 85 pounds of nutritiously balanced groceries per order. ♥

"Your staff is welcoming and really sweet to my son. I appreciate knowing there is help — and no judgment when needing it."

Keep up with Irving Cares online!

Download a QR scanning app and scan these codes on your mobile device.



facebook.com/IrvingCares



[Twitter@IrvingCares](https://twitter.com/IrvingCares)



www.irvingcares.org

THIS IS THE

- 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator!
- Renovations Complete
- Now Hiring
- Most Requested Item
- Dan Carlson
- Mindy Orth
- Lizette Ramos
- Patient Transportation
- ... and much more!

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Irving Cares, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation, publishes Focus to update the community about our programs, activities and plans. Please contact us if you have a story or information of interest.

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Irving Cares Earns Coveted 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator

Irving Cares' sound fiscal management practices and commitment to accountability and transparency have earned it a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator. **This is the 7th time Irving Cares has earned the evaluator's highest rating.**

Since 2002, using data-driven analysis, Charity Navigator has awarded only the most fiscally responsible organizations a 4-star rating. In 2011, Charity Navigator added a second dimension of Accountability and Transparency (A&T) to its rating methodology, and now reviews 17 governance and ethical practices as well as measures of openness, providing information on its web site for each of the charities it evaluates. The A&T metrics, which account for 50% of a charity's overall rating, reveal which charities have "best practices" that minimize the chance of unethical activities and whether they freely share basic information about their organization with their donors and other stakeholders. ♥

Giving Hope

Combating poverty and its ensuing results is not easy. Feeding hungry children, however, is a good start. Keeping children from becoming food-insecure is one of the key benefits of Irving Cares. It's not just parents who are struggling to feed their children as demonstrated by this recent case manager/client encounter:

A woman came in recently for food and a turkey voucher. She hadn't been here in about four years, according to our records. Previously, she was taking care of three grand-children. Today, she is taking care of another grandchild. The same volunteer case manager, Jacqueline, who had seen her previously, happened to be on duty.

The client remembered Jacqueline, saying: "You're the first person I saw here four years ago. You saved my life. I don't know what I would have done without Irving Cares. You pointed me in the right direction."



"In the current economic environment, it's important our donors trust that we're using their funding wisely to accomplish the agency goals of providing basic needs for Irving families," said Irving Cares CEO, Teddie Story. "This 4-star Charity Navigator rating demonstrates to supporters that we take our fiduciary and governance responsibilities very seriously."

Jacqueline recalled that first meeting; "She was absolutely frantic. I calmed her down, gave her all the help we could and gave her hope. What meant the most to her, I think, was leaving Irving Cares feeling helped and empowered and hopeful." Adding, "We don't often know whether our assistance made a difference. Circumstances can change, for the good or the bad."

The woman was very appreciative, saying, "I'm not leaving here without giving you a hug!" Jacqueline replied, "And I'm not going to let you leave without one." ♥

"Beverly was very helpful assisting me from day one. She's an excellent case worker."

Renovation Improvements Completed

For many years, clients receiving food had to exit the lobby, walk around the building and enter through yet another door to wait for their order to be filled, no matter the weather.

Clients waiting for the food orders to be filled sat in folding chairs in a narrow hallway between the warehouse and Food Pantry, often dodging carts full of inventory. This hallway was also the volunteer and staff entrance.

Incoming food arrived through a single glass door meant for foot traffic, not flat carts loaded with boxes of food. Large donations were hand-stacked from the truck onto the sidewalk, and then carried in to one of two warehouses.

Two case management offices were isolated from the other five offices, blocked from view because of cubicle walls. We had funding for an additional case manager in the Employment Services Program, yet there was no office available.

Renovation started in October is now complete, and all of these issues have been resolved. Food Pantry clients have a spacious waiting room, and each order is delivered in a more private environment. Staff and volunteers have a secure entryway to the agency. Donated food comes in through double doors directly from the ramp off the loading dock into one contiguous warehouse. A clear line of sight exists through the entire case management area, and the new case manager has a private office.

We appreciate the support of the City of Irving and our general contractor, Mart, Inc. for making the project possible. Come check it out! Contact Teddie Story at tstory@irvingcares.org or 972-721-9181 ext 203 to schedule a tour. ♥



Remodeled warehouse

Hey, do you know what 66% of our neighbors request from our food pantry?

Green beans? No. Cereal? No. Peanut butter? No. What if I told you it was toilet paper?

Our food insecurity surveys show us that 66% of our clients say toilet paper is their biggest need. If you can not buy food, then toilet paper and other hygiene products fall further down the list.

We need help in providing these items to our Irving neighbors. Please consider donating or holding a toilet paper or hygiene product drive to help us meet this need. These items also help our neighbors find jobs, perform better in school, and they add dignity to their everyday existence.

You can help by donating toilet paper, bar soap, shampoo, toothbrushes and toothpaste, and feminine hygiene products to Irving Cares.

Contact Kyle Taylor, Coordinator of Volunteers, at ktaylor@irvingcares.org or 972-721-9181 x209. ♥



Fresh, comfortable waiting room

"I am glad for the pantry — and for it being so close to my home."

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Dan Carlson

Grateful for the Rides to Medical Appointments

by Monica Oliver

Often times I hear Johnnie's sermon when I pick her up for a doctor's appointment or other medical needs, but that's all right. We all need a spiritual lift at times, and I really enjoy helping her as she is a very kind and caring person.

Johnnie is quite a bit overweight, has arthritis in her

PATIENT TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

shoulders, hands and knees and finds it very hard to get around at times. Additionally, she has blood pressure problems and respiratory concerns. She and her husband, who also has many medical issues, live in a small one-bedroom apartment and get by on his social security and her very small disability income. But Johnnie doesn't complain, saying they make it fine and draws on her faith to get them by.

They have an old, undependable car that only gets driven occasionally to the store or church. Through the Patient Transportation Program, Irving Cares is able to take them to and from their many doctors and medical appointments at Parkland Hospital and to pick up their prescriptions. She recently commented how much she appreciates our transportation service, saying she did not know what they would do without it.

Johnnie is such a pleasure, getting up early to wait if I have a busy schedule and — she never complains. She shows her appreciation for each trip. I am so glad she found Irving Cares and that we are able to help her meet her needs by allowing her to receive the medical support she and her husband need. ♥



Dan Carlson

Why I Volunteer

by Dan Carlson

In 2010, I began looking for an organization that was engaged in doing good in the community, and one that provided opportunities for someone to pitch-in through volunteerism.

When I learned of Irving Cares, I was certain that I had found that group. The statement of "A Hand Up, Not a Handout" is important to me, because it confirms that Irving Cares is interested in making a genuine difference in the lives of people in need. I remain hopeful that the few hours each week I spend at the Food Pantry might, in some small way, help in achieving that end.

Without question, one of the benefits I enjoy from volunteering is that I have become acquainted with the delightful and ever-upbeat Irving Cares staff, while serving with a wonderful and hard-working crew of fellow volunteers. ♥

Dan Carlson was born and raised in Ossining, New York. He served four years in the US Air Force, and holds a BS Degree from the State University of New York.

Dan and Bonnie Carlson were married in 1965. They have three children and seven grandchildren (all of whom live within a one hour drive here in North Texas).

Dan retired from the NY State Police in 1988 after twenty-one years of service as a police officer. He and Bonnie moved to Texas, where he spent the next twenty-two years teaching in the field of law enforcement management, leadership and ethics. In 2010, Dan retired from the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration. Dan has written one book on law enforcement and culture, and is co-author of a second book on law enforcement ethics.



Over thirty years ago, Bonnie signed Dan up for a stained glass class. This led to a long-time hobby which, now that both have retired, has blossomed into a labor of love. Dan and Bonnie own and operate Vischer Ferry Stained Glass, where they enjoy creating lovely and unique works of art.

Dan and Bonnie enjoy traveling around the United States — especially to minor league baseball parks far and wide. ♥

Agencies Work Together for Homeless Persons Count

As a way to substantiate the need for services, agencies across Dallas participate in a “point in time” survey to determine the number of homeless persons in our community.

Irving Cares, along with Hope Fellowship, Heartland World Ministries, Many Helping Hands, the City of Irving’s Housing & Human Services, Fire, Police and Code Enforcement Departments gathered at Hope Fellowship on January 23 to provide a hot meal, blankets, socks, scarves, gloves, hygiene packs and other supplies to persons in various phases of homelessness. Initial results show just over 100 persons meeting the criteria of being homeless, about the same as years prior.

Through collaborative efforts like these, we work together to assess the needs of the Irving community. Results are still being compiled. Some of the most-identified needs are transportation, employment, job training and housing. ♥



Matching Gifts Increase Impact: Volunteers are the Difference at Irving Cares

Our success is built on the strength of the treasure and talents you share. There is simply no way that thirteen staff members could possibly help over 44,000 people in one year.

Matching gifts

By participating in your employer (or former employer’s) giving program you can easily increase your support.

Companies like Exxon Mobil Corporation, Bank of America, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, Microsoft, Fluor Corporation, Geico and others make gifts to Irving Cares when you notify them of your time or financial investment. It’s simple to do. Check with your HR department to learn about gift matching or volunteer time matching programs. Retirees too, will find that many companies match community service with community grants. Thank you for helping!

Estate planning

Another option for ensuring that Irving Cares is able to continue meeting needs in the future is to include the agency in your will or estate planning. If you would like to learn more about this opportunity or to discuss other ways to leave your legacy, contact Teddie Story at tstory@irvingcares.org, or Kimberly Humphries at khumphries@irvingcares.org. Or call 972-721-9181. ♥

Now Hiring for a Paid Summer Internship

Irving Cares has been selected to participate in the 2014 ExxonMobil Community Summer Jobs Program, funded by ExxonMobil and administered through Sunwest Communications. Each year the ExxonMobil Community Summer Jobs Program provides full-time college students with eight-week paid internships to gain experience in a wide range of nonprofit community organizations. Our Employment Service Manager, Mary Shelton, is now accepting applications for an Employment Services Case Worker Intern.

During eight weeks this summer, the intern will be responsible for learning about the Employment Services Program at Irving Cares, working with clients to help them obtain employment, building community partnerships, brainstorming marketing ideas, and conducting a Job Search Seminar.

The applicant must be willing to commit to Irving Cares for eight weeks this summer and be a full-time (minimum 12 credit hours per



semester) college sophomore, junior, or senior in the fall of 2014.

This is a terrific opportunity for the right candidate to gain practical experience in a busy

social service agency environment. “As a case management intern for the Irving Cares Employment Services Program, I considered it a welcome challenge to be a resource for clients during their time of personal crisis. Also, through my internship, I was fortunate enough to gain valuable insight into the inner workings of a non-profit organization,” remarked one former intern. “I have no doubt that it’ll be a great experience for the student chosen this year!”

If you, or someone you know, want to make a difference in the lives of needy families and do more this summer than answer the phones, contact Mary Shelton at 972-721-9181 x 207 or mshelton@irvingcares.org. **The deadline for submitting a cover letter with resumé and writing sample is March 3, 2014.** ♥

SAMMONS ENTERPRISES RESULTS



During The Great Harvest, we announced an amazing opportunity. Celebrating its 75th year in 2013, Sammons Enterprises offered a \$100,000 challenge grant for Irving Cares. The founder, Charles Sammons, was a very quiet but generous entrepreneur. He loved the idea of pooling his donations with others to make a bigger impact, and this grant did just that.

We raised \$17,000 that evening toward the hiring of a new case manager in the Employment Services Program, which Sammons immediately matched. We shared this opportunity with the community, and the community responded mightily! By the end of December, we had met the match, and because of the generosity of Sammons Enterprises, raised a total of \$282,000.

We are humbled by the support Irving Cares received from the community in response to this grant and the investment you made in the lives of low-income families in Irving. ❤️

Lizette Ramos

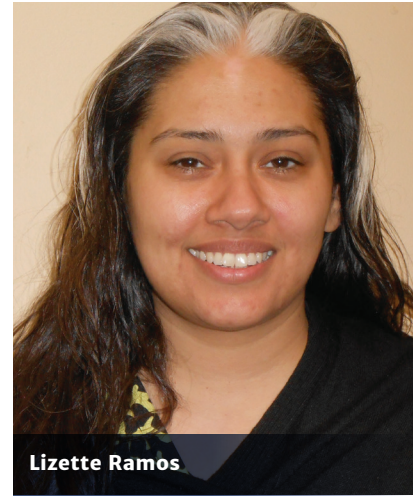
New Employment Services Manager position made possible by Sammons Match

Lizette Ramos was born in Fresno, California and moved to Irving at the young age of four. Lizette is the proud mother of three amazing boys, Max (11), Dorian (9), and Andrew (6); and has been blessed to have met Juan José Sosa, a wonderful man who loves and cares for her and her children.

How Lizette came to be here with us is fairly interesting... After 7 years of working in the banking industry, she decided she was ready for a career change to a job that would give her the satisfaction of giving back to the community and make a difference in people's lives. Refunding overdraft fees wasn't exactly making the difference she was hoping to make.

After three months of searching for the right job, she decided to look into Irving Cares to see what services might be offered, as her finances were getting a little tight. But rather than asking for assistance, she made the choice to ask if Irving Cares was hiring. To her surprise, Irving Cares was in fact looking for a bilingual Employment Services Manager and would review her resumé. Little did either she or Mary Shelton, Employment Services Manager, know that they would both be surprised to see each other on the day of her interview. Several years earlier, Lizette was in need of assistance as a single mother and struggling after the recent birth of her youngest child. In no time, through the Holiday Assistance Program, Irving Cares had Lizette back on track and headed in the right direction.

We are delighted to welcome her as a part of the Irving Cares team as our new addition to the Employment Services Program, assisting in expanding services to the Hispanic community. Lizette is delighted to be with us and working with two individuals, Mary Shelton and Beverly Wilborn, who made such a difference in her life and the lives of her children. ❤️



Lizette Ramos

"Life often has a funny way of working out, and you never know when it will be your turn to make a difference... so remember to keep your heart open and always offer a warm smile and genuine interest to everyone you meet, because your smile and the wisdom you possess will most definitely make the difference in someone's life if not their day," says Lizette.

"I got your love and care, and it's all I needed today."



'Pay It Forward' Week Grows in 2013

During the holiday season of 2012, Mike Overby of Express Employment had an idea: Hire people during the early weeks of December so that they get a paycheck before Christmas. For each person he hired, he donated to Irving Cares as part of Pay It Forward Week, resulting in a \$1,000 donation.

For 2013, Mike decided to make the program even better by engaging local restaurants and businesses who would also donate to Irving Cares.

Joe's Coffee Shop, Fish City Grill, Big State Drugs Soda Fountain, PJ's Café, and Glory House all donated a percentage of their sales during the week. Also participating were Bill Hooten State Farm Insurance and Essential Insurance Concepts, as well as La Cima Club, which hosted a food drive.

When Pay It Forward Week ended, Irving Cares received \$3,413 in donations. Thank you to all those who visited the participating partners. We hope to make 2014 an even greater success. ♥

Mindy Orth

Social Work student from University of Texas Arlington

Born and raised in Chicago, I moved to Texas ten years ago. When I joined Northgate United Methodist Church about eight years ago, I got involved in outreach in the community and became the Outreach Coordinator five years ago.

After raising my children, I wanted to seek ways of helping others, so I decided to go into social work. I have such empathy for those lacking basic needs, and feel through social work I will have the opportunity to make a difference.

I received my Associate Degree in 2013 and will be receiving my Bachelor Degree of Social Work this year. My plan is to continue my education to receive my Masters Degree of Social Work.

I feel blessed to have my internship with Irving Cares which will help expand the knowledge and experience I need to do what is best in helping others. My goal in life is to touch as many people in a positive way as possible. ♥



Mindy Orth

Every Day Is An Opportunity

Mother's Day is May 11, birthdays and anniversaries are celebrated daily, and we celebrate every day an investment is made in Irving Cares!

The Mother's Day Appeal is designed especially for you to

MOTHERS DAY APPEAL

honor or remember the women who have been important in your life. Sisters, aunts, mentors, mothers, and grandmothers are all included.

With each donation made to Irving Cares in honor or memory of someone special, a note will be mailed to the honoree or remembered family advising them that an empowering investment was

made in their name. Your partnership provides opportunities for struggling Irving residents to pursue success in their lives with dignity. It's a gift that gives twice!

Making a donation honoring your special occasion is easy: complete your secure gift online at www.irvingcares.org, or send a check to: Irving Cares, PO Box 177425, Irving, Texas 75017-7425 with the occasion, name and address where you want your special note mailed. ♥

BLUE RIBBON AWARD NOMINATION

Irving Cares has been nominated by the Greater Irving/Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce for the 2014 Dream Big Small Business of the Year Award.

This award honors small businesses and the people who run them.

Each year, the US Chamber recognizes one exceptional small business for their tireless work and embodiment of the Spirit of free enterprise. Each small business will be judged on the following; staff training and motivation, community involvement, customer service and business strategies and goals.

Each business must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the Award: have less than 250 employees, have gross

revenues of less than \$20 million in 2011 and 2012 and be able to attend the Small Business Summit 2014. Irving Cares will be judged with other companies our same size. The grand prize is \$10,000 for the enterprise who is selected as Small Business of the Year at the national level.

First step is to get through Regionals and be named Blue Ribbon Small Business Award winner to represent the Southwest and South Central Region.

This is a great honor to be viewed not only as a non profit, but as a legitimate small business entity by the Greater Irving / Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce. Wish us luck!

SAVE THE DATE

THE GREAT HARVEST



**Friday
September 26
2014**

Mark your calendar now!

Cydney Roberts returns as Chair of The Great Harvest for another great night at Four Seasons Resort & Club.

The help of extraordinary volunteers makes Irving Cares possible. Last year, volunteers logged 16,236 hours!

Our needs: helpers in the food pantry or warehouse on Thursdays 1-4 pm, drivers for food donation and retail food pick ups, and volunteers for case management and intake. On the job training provided. Contact Kyle Taylor at ktaylor@irvingcares.org or 972-721-9181 x209.



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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