



# efaaneWS

## HOW EFAA'S SUPPORT HELPS A FAMILY MOVE FROM CRISIS TO STABILITY: *Vanessa's Story*

**V**anessa\*, a single mother, lives in Boulder with her two teenage girls. Last summer, she and her daughters were excited to move into their new home – an apartment in the girls' school district, that they secured with the help of a Housing Choice Voucher. But as Vanessa was moving her family into the apartment, she was assaulted by a former partner. After reporting the incident to the police, she and her children were relocated to a shelter, unable to return to the apartment since her attacker knew its location.

With no housing and her voucher set to expire in days, Vanessa was faced with the possibility of living in her vehicle with her children. If a voucher holder doesn't find housing within 60 days, they risk losing their voucher entirely. She was desperate to find help, but was also trying to process the trauma of her assault. As the deadline approached, Vanessa wasn't finding the support she needed to move forward.

In this moment of crisis, Vanessa reached out to EFAA. When she arrived at EFAA's office, she was trembling and distressed, struggling to articulate her situation. What she encountered at EFAA, was a team ready to respond. Jasmin, EFAA's family housing navigator, recognized the urgency of Vanessa's situation and the imminent expiration of her housing voucher. Rather than just offering advice, Jasmin took direct action. She contacted a property manager she had worked with previously and explained the situation, doing everything possible to prevent the family from losing their voucher. Understanding that Vanessa was overwhelmed by the process and still dealing with trauma, Jasmin helped complete the housing application and arranged for EFAA to provide emergency hotel stays during the weeks between Vanessa's application submission and approval.

EFAA's support went even further to bring more stability for the family. Jasmin connected Vanessa with Mental Health Partners, where she was able to meet with a therapist right away and continues to receive ongoing support for PTSD. Vanessa is now enrolled in a professional training program to help secure a higher-paying position. Her daughters were able to stay in the



*\*name and image changed to protect privacy*

**“EFAA not only provided us with a safe place to stay, they offered emotional support and guidance.”**

school where they were thriving, and her oldest daughter will graduate from high school this spring.

Vanessa maintains strong connections to the Boulder community she loves. “My girls have friends here,” Vanessa shares. “They have counselors and teachers on their side. The support they receive at their school is amazing.”

Vanessa's story demonstrates how focused, compassionate support can help a family move from crisis to stability. With support from EFAA, she's not just surviving – she's building a new future for herself and her daughters, pursuing education and career advancement, while maintaining the community connections that mean so much to her family. For Vanessa, EFAA's impact went beyond preventing homelessness; EFAA provided the emotional support and practical assistance Vanessa needed during a critical time in her life.

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## 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 2025

This newsletter is published three times annually by Emergency Family Assistance Association

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## DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

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

As we move into Spring, I want to thank EFAA's generous supporters. The community invests in EFAA in so many ways, from the time and commitment of hundreds of EFAA's volunteers, to folks that do food drives and drop off other critical items for our food bank, and the generous financial support that we received from so many community members throughout the fall 2024 giving season. All of us at EFAA feel so fortunate to have your trust.

We began 2025 with resolve to face the challenges on the horizon. As I have shared with you in the past, over the last two years EFAA has seen record numbers of residents coming to our safety net services, primarily food, financial assistance, and resource referrals to other agencies in the community. We anticipate the need to continue and most likely increase in 2025 if there are cuts to the Federal safety net, instability in the immigrant community, or other shocks that send people in need to the local non-profit safety net.

Looking ahead, EFAA will be balancing these needs for immediate assistance with building programs to help people achieve greater economic security over the long term. Some of this programming had been put on hold in favor of crisis response during COVID. Over the next years, EFAA will seek to rebalance and rebuild this longer-term impact programming focusing on family strengthening, housing stability, and economic resilience to move out of crisis.

In that vein, EFAA is excited to expand our Economic Empowerment Program. This includes focusing on improved employment opportunities and income for families in EFAA's Housing Program through upskilling, job readiness, and micro-businesses. In addition, for several years we have partnered with the local non-profit Philanthropiece in delivering a financial health course which has had significant positive effects for participants, including starting emergency savings funds, managing credit scores, developing savings habits, and understanding financial instruments. In 2025, we will deepen this work, taking on more of the operational responsibilities while designing classes and workshops beyond the basics. Given the importance of finding ways to help people chart a better economic future, EFAA will be engaging with other agencies and programs in Boulder County to identify gaps and avoid duplicating efforts.

We are excited to share with you the fruits of these efforts in the future,

Sincerely

  
Julie Van Domelen



# BECOME AN EFAA SUSTAINING PARTNER!

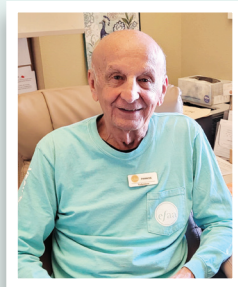
EFAA's Sustaining Partners provide ongoing support by making a recurring monthly gift. Your monthly gift provides sustainable support to local families with food, housing, and other critical resources. You set the amount that's right for you. Signing up is easy, and you'll feel good knowing you're making a difference in our community. To set up your recurring donation, scan the QR code or visit [efaa.org/donate/give-monthly](https://efaa.org/donate/give-monthly).

*For examples of different gift levels and the impact they provide, check out the graphic to the right.*



## MEET FRANCIS, EFAA FOOD BANK INTAKE VOLUNTEER

Francis, a native of France, has volunteered at EFAA for 11 years. He discovered EFAA while volunteering with Intercambio, working with a family living in EFAA's Yarmouth building. The organization's local focus resonated with him: "When you give a dollar to EFAA, it's used to help a family here in Boulder County."



As a Food Bank Intake Volunteer, Francis enrolls new households and verifies existing participants' information. He also provides bus passes and shopping bags when available. When he first started volunteering, there were fewer people coming to EFAA, allowing more time to meet with participants and hear their stories. "I met some really wonderful people — mostly working families and retired adults."

Today, EFAA's food bank has doubled its reach. During a typical 2.5-hour shift, Francis assists 50-60 households. His experience at EFAA has revealed a different side of Boulder: "I never realized there are so many people here who are struggling. Everyone thinks of Boulder as a rich city, but there are so many families that need help."

Before moving to Boulder, Francis earned his PhD from the University of Illinois, taught French Literature at the University of Indiana, and spent 25 years at Northern Illinois University. After retirement, he and his wife relocated to Boulder to be closer to their son and two granddaughters.

Francis remains passionate about EFAA's mission and hopes to raise awareness about the organization. "It feels gratifying. It's like being part of a family dedicated to making life easier for our neighbors who need it. I'll volunteer here until I'm no longer able."

Thank you Francis, for your years of volunteer service. We are grateful for your dedication and commitment.

*Interested in becoming an EFAA volunteer? Scan the QR code or visit [efaa.org/volunteer](https://efaa.org/volunteer).*



Recurring, monthly donations add up to meaningful impact!



**\$19/month**

provides one person with a healthy meal-a-day



**\$40/month**

provides a summer camp experience for a child living in EFAA's housing



**\$79/month**

keeps a family from sleeping in their car while they wait for transitional housing



**\$125/month**

helps prevent a family from being evicted so they can stay in their home



**\$185/month**

provides critical medical care for one person a month



# Economic Empowerment

In addition to EFAA's emergency support programs — food, financial assistance, and housing, EFAA also offers support through an Economic Empowerment program to provide participants with skills and resources to build long-term financial stability. Ana Fernandez Frank serves as EFAA's Economic Empowerment Program Manager. Her work focuses on helping participants chart a better economic future through financial knowledge, education, and training. Training programs include a basic computer skills class and financial health courses to learn about goal setting, budgeting, and credit scores. The program will also connect participants to local employment resources to help them increase their income and become better prepared for potential financial shocks. This involves balancing immediate needs with long-term financial

goals, while acknowledging the complex barriers many participants face.

As the Economic Empowerment program becomes more established, EFAA will continue to evaluate the impact of current initiatives, develop new offerings, and leverage partnerships with other community resources.

While EFAA and our partners provide the information, resources, and a support structure, it's the resilience and commitment of our participants that's key for springboarding themselves and their children out of poverty.



Ana Fernandez Frank



## Mark your Calendars TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE SPRING EVENTS!

### The 3rd Annual EFAA Friend Fest!

Please join us at EFAA Friend Fest on Sunday, May 4. Bring your friends and family for a fun-filled afternoon and opportunity to learn more about EFAA's mission. For tickets, information, and sponsorship opportunities, scan the QR code or visit [efaa.org/friendfest](https://efaa.org/friendfest).



The 3rd Annual  
EFAA Friend Fest

SUNDAY, May 4, 2025  
3:00 - 6:00pm  
@ The Rayback



### National Volunteer Appreciation Week



April 20 - 26 is National Volunteer Appreciation Week. Let's celebrate the more than 600 hardworking EFAA volunteers who make our work possible.

### The NALC Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

The 2025 National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is Saturday, May 10th. This is the country's largest single-day food drive. Last year's drive brought in over 19,000 pounds of non-perishable food to the EFAA Food Bank.

