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**FREEDOM DAY PARTNERS WITH 9/11 DAY FOR 18TH ANNUAL REMEMBRANCE ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2019; AN ESTIMATED 1,500 VOLUNTEERS TO WORK ON OVER 30 LOCAL PROJECT SITES INCLUDING NORTH TEXAS FOOD BANK**

***Communities Foundation of Texas for Business has recognized Freedom Day in North Texas since 2002 and will collaborate with the 9/11 Day organizers at the national level for expanded observance***

DALLAS – September 11, 2019 – For the first time in its 18-year history, the Dallas-based [Freedom Day](#) will join the federally-recognized [9/11 Day](#), for a partnership that will bring 1,500 volunteers together throughout North Texas on September 11. The collaborative initiative will assist in amplifying the work of both organizations and allow more companies and volunteers to serve the local community. Participants will meet at over 30 sites across the region, including a massive meal packing project in at the North Texas Food bank that will generate over 275,000 meals for people in need.

Freedom Day was founded by the Dallas-based [Communities Foundation of Texas for Business](#) in 2002 and has had close to 10,000 volunteers and over 50,000 hours since it was founded. Key moments of the day include a morning kickoff at [Communities Foundation of Texas](#) and a noon meeting at [North Texas Food Bank](#) that will bring representatives from both Freedom Day and 9/11 Day together for remarks.

Starting with a ceremony that takes place at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, September 11, volunteers will gather at Communities Foundation of Texas ([5500 Caruth Haven Ln., Dallas](#)) to begin the day of service. This year, CFT4B's Freedom Day will also recognize the contributions of immigrants serving in the United States military, as well as veterans, and military families. Guest speaker Rais Bhuiyan will deliver a keynote address before Freedom Day's call to action. Bhuiyan is the founder of the non-profit [World Without Hate](#), a platform "dedicated to eradicating the cycle of hate and violence" through a number of programs that emphasize forgiveness and understanding.

“Communities Foundation of Texas is honored to serve alongside the CFT4B member companies, their employees, and their families who will come out— 1500 people strong—to volunteer on this day of service and remembrance,” said Dave Scullin, president and CEO of Communities Foundation of Texas. “Everyone working together on CFT’s Freedom Day events will strengthen our community, commemorate those whose lives were lost and changed on 9/11 while also recognizing veterans who served our country with valor. This year, we are particularly excited to partner with [9/11 Day](#), the national nonprofit organization, started by the families of 9/11 victims.”

### **#ElPasoChallenge creator Ruben Martinez to join CFT4B Sejal Desai and 9/11 Day co-founder David Paine at North Texas Food Bank at noon on September 11**

Eleven year old student Ruben Martinez wanted to lead his community in healing with small acts of kindness following the attack that took place in his hometown of El Paso on August 3. He started the El Paso Challenge using the #elpasochallenge hashtag, encouraging others to engage in 22 acts of kindness—one for each of the victims. Acts included everything from strangers buying lunch for one another, to flowers being brought to first responders in an El Paso hospital.

Martinez will travel from El Paso with his mother Rose to join the Dallas Meal Pack on September 11 at The North Texas Food Bank ([3677 Mapleshade Ln, Plano 75075](#)). 9/11 Day co-founder David Paine will deliver prepared remarks at noon, along with additional comments by Martinez, and Communities Foundation of Texas for Business leader, Sejal Desai.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to meet someone as inspiring as Ruben, who intuitively understands, much like our own organization, that doing good is ultimately the best to respond to evil," Paine says.

The Dallas Meal Pack goal is to assemble 275,000 non-perishable meals for those in need. In addition to Dallas, 9/11 Day is helping to organize similar meal packing projects for 9/11 in seven other cities, including NYC, Atlanta, Chicago, St. Louis, Phoenix, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

### **The origins of 9/11 Day**

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, a small group of 9/11 family members and friends met in New York to discuss how best to pay tribute to their lost loved ones. 9/11 Day was co-founded by David Paine and Jay Winuk in 2002. Winuk lost a brother serving as a volunteer firefighter in the attacks on September 11, 2001.

"When we got together, a number of months after the attacks, we decided that instead of passing on their legacy of evil and hate, we would try to pass on to our children the notion of working together and helping each other and putting aside our differences to make the world a better place," says 9/11 Day co-founder David Paine. "That became the inspiration for 9/11 Day or September 11 becoming a national day of service."

## **Who's helping and where to help**

Freedom Day in Dallas is one of 9/11 Day's largest collaborative projects this year. The non-perishable meals will be donated to and distributed by North Texas Food Bank and the Tarrant Area Food Bank.

In addition to packing meals at North Texas Food Bank, Freedom Day volunteers will serve at Equest, Hope's Door New Beginning Center, Mission Arlington, Mission Metroplex, Trusted World, Farmers Assisting Returning Military, Hunger Busters, North Texas Food Bank, and the Tarrant Area Food Bank, amongst multiple others.

Many Dallas area employers and non-profits are supporting 9/11 Day by sending volunteers to projects around the country and providing funding. Some of the area's participating companies and organizations include Borden Dairy, Wells Fargo, Brinker International, Omni Hotels and Resorts, USAA, Holland & Knight, Macy's, Clarion, Turner, Cathedral of Hope, Islamic Relief USA, Kroger Foods, Clarion Properties, Hooters of America, and others. The Dallas Cowboys and Dallas Mavericks organizations are also expected to participate in the meal packing project.

Additional funding is being provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that oversees national service programs including AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, and also by Citi Foundation and the American Express Company.

Other generous local sponsors of cash and in-kind contributions include, but are not limited to: Ray Hunt, CFT4B Cornerstone Sponsor, James Thompson, CFT4B Cornerstone Sponsor, The Shields Group, CFT4B Cornerstone Sponsor, BioWorld, CFT4B Cornerstone Sponsor, Ann Massey Badmus, PC, GDS Link, FreshInk Marketing, Truepoint, Risch Results, CyberGrowth, Fallen Family Fund, SFMG Wealth Advisors, Montgomery Capital Advisers, DHD Films, Platinum IDS, InSource, The Plexus Groupe, RHSB, Texadia, Texas Health Resources, Jimmy Johns, North Texas Giving Day, BB&T, Techscape, Swan Smith Family Fund, Top Pot Doughnuts, Ampex Restaurants, Royal Catering, La Madeline, and Hyatt House.

## **3rd Annual Family Day to follow on September 14 at CFT**

The service doesn't end on September 11. Freedom Day's Family Day takes place on September 14, which is now in its third year. Volunteers will meet at Communities Foundation of Texas on Saturday at 9 a.m. in a program that furthers honors the service of local veterans and builds on the community movement of giving through North Texas Giving Day

**For high-resolution images, go to:** <https://sunshinesachs.egnyte.com/fl/D6H6T3llzc#folder-link/>

**For additional footage, go to:** <https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/ZSknCER7N8cm7VICNyLWp?domain=dropbox.com>

### **About Communities Foundation of Texas for Business**

Communities Foundation of Texas for Business (CFT4B) is a program of Communities Foundation of Texas that makes it easy for North Texas businesses to do good in the community. CFT for Business is a network of over 100 member companies. Those include early stage companies, small and mid-size businesses, private equity investors, venture capitalists, and a wide range of professional service providers who have a commitment to give back to the communities in which they live and work. Learn more at [www.cft4b.org](http://www.cft4b.org)

### **About Communities Foundation of Texas**

Communities Foundation of Texas (CFT) works with companies, families, and nonprofits to strengthen our community through a variety of charitable funds and strategic grantmaking initiatives. CFT is committed to serving and understanding donor needs, expertly handling complex gifts, wisely managing charitable funds and leveraging its community knowledge to increase charitable impact. The foundation professionally manages more than 1,000 charitable funds and has awarded more than \$1.9 billion in grants since its founding in 1953. Learn more at [www.cftexas.org](http://www.cftexas.org)

### **About 9/11 Day**

In 2002, the nonprofit group 9/11 Day founded the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, now widely known as "[9/11 Day](#)," with the goal of gradually transforming the anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks from a day of tragedy into a day of doing good. In 2009, the U.S. Congress and President formally recognized 9/11 Day under bipartisan federal law as a National Day of Service and Remembrance. "Our goal with 9/11 Day is to make sure that something positive comes from the loss of so many innocent people in such a terrible way," said Jay Winuk, who co-founded 9/11 Day with friend David Paine. Winuk lost his younger brother Glenn J. Winuk, an attorney and volunteer firefighter/EMT who died in the line of duty during the rescue effort at the World Trade Center in New York City.