



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
PRESS RELEASE**

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**VOLUNTEERS RALLY TOGETHER FOR 19TH ANNUAL “FREEDOM DAY”  
CENTERED AROUND EQUITY AND JUSTICE on 9/11**

***Communities Foundation of Texas unites volunteers in virtual, remote, and physically distanced projects to honor 9/11 victims, first responders, military and veterans who serve the North Texas community***

**DALLAS – September 11, 2020** - Communities Foundation of Texas’ [19th annual Freedom Day](#) community service event will be held in observance of the 19<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 9/11 attacks and the federally-recognized National Day of Service and Remembrance, September 11, and as part of CFT’s [North Texas Giving Day](#) season of giving.

[CFT for Business \(CFT4B\)](#), a program of [Communities Foundation of Texas](#), facilitates community involvement and philanthropy for companies of all sizes. Since CFT’s first Freedom Day in 2002, more than 14,000 volunteers from CFT4B member and sponsor companies have completed more than 50,000 hours of service on 9/11 to turn a day of tragedy into a day of doing good. In 2019, more than 1,500 volunteers supported 24 nonprofits across 35 projects.

This year, hundreds of volunteers including CFT for Business member company employees, event sponsors, CFT fund holders, staff, service partners, partnering nonprofits, and DFW-area veterans will join in service around the theme of *Equity and Justice for All*. The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, recent economic crisis, and urgent demands to end systemic racism have created tremendous need in our community. This year’s Freedom Day will activate volunteers to help nonprofit partners meet growing needs related to these issues, with a focus on building thriving communities for all. Volunteers will be activated in virtual, remote, and physically distanced projects.

The theme of *Equity and Justice for All* is woven throughout the day. The volunteer projects selected and educational breaks between projects were chosen through the lens of equity and justice. Participating nonprofits detailed how they are working to achieve equity and justice prior to being selected.

“Strengthening our community has never been more important than during these especially challenging times” said Dave Scullin, president and CEO of Communities Foundation of Texas. “Communities Foundation of Texas is honored to serve alongside our CFT for Business member companies, their employees, and their families who volunteer on this day of service and remembrance.”

Key moments of this year’s Freedom Day in addition to volunteer service include a virtual morning kickoff from 8:30am – 9am featuring CFT’s President and CEO, Dave Scullin, and Pastor Richie Butler of St. Luke Community United Methodist Church, who serves on CFT’s Board of Trustees and founded Project Unity; as well as a special lunch and learn program featuring Jerry Hawkins and Stephanie Drenka of Dallas Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation.

*Join the 8:30am opening ceremony via zoom here: [Freedom Day Opening Ceremony](#).*

*Join the 11:45am lunch and learn program via ring central here: [Freedom Day Lunch and Learn](#).*

Following the opening ceremony, more than 250 volunteers will gather virtually and at physically distanced project sites between 9:15am and 5pm, with a total of 18 different projects this year. Education breaks between volunteering include educational presentations from: All Stars Project, Lone Star Justice Alliance, DKMS, SMU Human Rights and SMU the Collective, Project Unity, and United to Learn.

“While we have pivoted many things to a virtual experience this year, we remain committed to bringing people together on the National Day of Service and Remembrance. In recognition of the courage and bravery of the men and women who serve as first responders and fight for freedom, and in partnership with local nonprofits who are working to achieve equity and justice for all, CFT4B dedicates this grand day of service to them,” said Sejal Desai, Business Engagement Director, CFT for Business. “For almost twenty years, we have rallied our community of good corporate citizens to turn this day of tragedy into a day of doing good.”

View the full schedule, including links to join the virtual experiences, at [www.cftexas.org/freedomday](http://www.cftexas.org/freedomday).

**The full list of nonprofit partners participating in virtual or physically distanced in-person projects and/or education efforts includes:**

All Stars Project, At Ease Texas, Birthday Party Project, Catholic Charities, Cohen Military Family Clinic, Dallas Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation, DKMS, Farmers Assisting Returning Military (F.A.R.M.), HungerBusters, Lone Star Justice Alliance, Military Veteran Peer Network, Mosaic Family Services, North Texas Food Bank, Patriot PAWS Service Dogs, Project Unity, Senior Source, SMU, Special Olympics Texas, #StopOne, Texas Health Resources, Texas Ramp Project, Unbound Fort Worth, and United to Learn.

**Sponsors of this year’s Freedom Day include:** Ray Hunt, The Shields Group, Bioworld Merchandising, The Fallen Family Fund at CFT, RHSB, SFMG Wealth Advisors, Texadia Systems, Swan Smith Family Fund at CFT, Platinum IDS and DHD Films.

**Some of the participating companies include:**

Bioworld Merchandising, Catalyst Health Network, DHD Films, ES OnDemand, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, HumCap, Istation, Marketwave, Metrocare Services, Netscout, Platinum IDS, Reata Pharmaceuticals, RHSB, SFMG Wealth Advisors, The Shields Group, Stewart Law Group, StratiFi Health, Texadia Systems, Weaver and Tidwell, West Monroe Partners and more.

**\*Notable service locations and activities**

**Physically Distanced Projects: Equity and Justice focus areas of veteran re-integration, food insecurity, mental health, and mobility.**

**Farmers Assisting Returning Military (F.A.R.M.) Fall Garden Build**

- Time: 8:30 am – 3:00 pm
- Address: 700 South Good Latimer Freeway, Dallas, TX
- Visuals: 50 volunteers will assist with fall garden building and planting for this veteran-led nonprofit that provides food security and helps veterans find peace, purpose and opportunity through therapeutic agricultural training.
- Onsite media contact – Melissa Hawkins, [melissa@sfmfg.com](mailto:melissa@sfmfg.com), mobile: (469) 233-4023, office: (972) 674-2568, Manager of Client Service, SFMG Wealth Advisors  
**OR** Earle J. “Chip” Bensing, [ebensing@employsolutions.com](mailto:ebensing@employsolutions.com), mobile: 214.649.8681, office: 214.453.8814, CFO. Employ Solutions/ES OnDemand

**Hunger Busters – Operation Healthy Summer Box**

- Time: 11:00 am – 3:00 pm
- Address: CVS, 3030 Sylvan Avenue, Dallas, TX 75212
- Visuals: 30 volunteers will register families and load boxes of fresh produce and gallons of milk into their vehicles.
- Onsite media contact – Michael Holmes, [mholmes@platinumids.com](mailto:mholmes@platinumids.com), mobile: 214.729.2729, President and CEO, Platinum Intelligent Data Solutions

**North Texas Food Bank – Food box sorting and packing**

- Time: Morning: 8:30 – 11:30 am and 12:30 – 3:30 pm
- Address: 3677 Mapleshade Lane, Plano, TX 75075
- Visuals: 120 volunteers will help bring hope and joy to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity by filling boxes with necessary food items at North Texas Food Bank.
- Onsite media contact Lisa Causey, [lcausey@cftexas.org](mailto:lcausey@cftexas.org), mobile: 214.448.7860, office: 214.750.4131, Facilities and Events Manager, Communities Foundation of Texas

**Virtual projects with nonprofit partners include:**

- **Birthday Party Project:** Volunteers will create birthday cards for children of families experiencing homelessness and submit them virtually

- **Catholic Charities of Fort Worth:** Volunteers will create encouraging letters for individuals, families and veterans served by Catholic Charities of Fort Worth and submit them virtually
- **Cohen Family Clinic:** Volunteers will create encouraging letters for military members, their spouse, and/or children and submit them virtually
- **Dallas-TRHT:** Volunteers will help change the narrative to tell a fuller story of the city by collecting oral histories/testimonies of community members and/or curating artifacts and resources for D-TRHT's digital library
- **Mosaic:** Volunteers will create encouraging letters for women and children survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking and submit them virtually. 20 volunteers will create Storytime videos reaching children's books to children survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking
- **The Senior Source:** Volunteers will create encouraging notes for seniors and submit them virtually
- **Texas Health Resources:** Volunteers will create thank you notes and encouraging letters for health care heroes fighting COVID-19 on the front lines and submit them virtually.
- **Unbound Fort Worth:** Volunteers will create encouraging notes for human trafficking victims and will submit them virtually

**Learning Opportunities include:**

- **Dallas TRHT Lunch and Learn** – 11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. –The mission of Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation is to create a radically inclusive city by addressing race and racism through narrative change, relationship building and equitable policies and practices. This lunchtime presentation will provide tools you can use to help achieve this mission. Join via ring central here: [Freedom Day Lunch and Learn](#).

**To request an audio or video interview with any of the volunteers participating in this project, contact Kymberraine Banks, CFT's Business Engagement Officer at [kbanks@cftexas.org](mailto:kbanks@cftexas.org), mobile: 972.890.3776, office: 214.346.5505.**

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**About [Communities Foundation of Texas](#)**

Communities Foundation of Texas (CFT) works with individuals, families, companies, and nonprofits to build thriving communities locally and across the state through a variety of charitable funds and strategic initiatives. The foundation professionally manages 1,000 charitable funds and runs several key initiatives like Educate Texas, North Texas Giving Day, and the W. W. Caruth, Jr. Fund. CFT has awarded over \$2 billion in grants since its founding in 1953. Learn more at [www.cftexas.org](http://www.cftexas.org). Follow us on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/CFTexas>) or Twitter ([twitter.com/GiveWisely](https://twitter.com/GiveWisely)).

**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. CFT4B 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). Follow us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CFTforBusiness>) or Twitter ([twitter.com/CFT4B](https://twitter.com/CFT4B))