INSIDE
the
GATE
Dear Friends of Iron Gate —

There is a saying behind-the-scenes at Iron Gate and it is “Every day is a good day at the Gate.” We use it as a mantra, an answer to the questions “How are you today?” or “What’s going on?”. However, the sentiment behind it is true, every day IS a good day. The staff and volunteers approach everyday with an open heart and a desire to serve our guests. While the day-to-day may be the same, each day brings a new opportunity for a connection. It may be a conversation with a guest, telling you about a job opportunity or their journey to find housing. It could be a new volunteer who brightens our day with a kind word or an unexpected food delivery. Since we have no barrier to entry for those in need, Iron Gate has become an integral part of Tulsa’s social safety net. We believe once your basic need for food is met, you can begin to address some of the other challenges you may be struggling with in your life. In that way, Iron Gate acts as a unique bridge to other social services. We are a safe and welcoming space that provides an avenue to support.

Our ability to meet the need is increasing. At the beginning of April, we signed a 99-year lease with Tulsa County at the intersection of West Archer and Frisco. The dream is becoming a reality. The building committee and staff are working with GH2 architects, Flintco, Wallace Engineering and other professionals to design a facility to better serve our guests. Our new location in downtown Tulsa will allow us to create a facility with modern kitchen equipment, an expanded dining room, and more food storage capacity. This new building will serve more people, more comfortably. We are excited about our new home and the opportunity to serve our community in an expanded capacity.

June kicks-off Iron Gate’s 40th Birthday Celebration! We will begin with birthday cake in the dining room, dining-out days in July, an opening reception for our Faces portraits and end the party with our groundbreaking in August. I hope you will participate in the celebration. Iron Gate is built on the generosity of many. As we grow our building, our needs will grow and we will continue to grow our circle of friends who provide support. Thank you for being a part of our circle of friends and helping feed our hungry neighbors.

With gratitude,

Carrie Vesely Henderson, CFRE
Executive Director
918-359-9017
chenderson@irongatetulsa.org
FLINTCO STOCKS THE SHELVES

It was after Spring Break and there had been a rush on kids’ packs. The quart-sized bags filled with kid-friendly healthy snacks were flying off the shelves, faster than we could replenish them. By early April those shelves were practically bare. And our friends at Flintco took notice. They hosted a two-week food drive to stock our shelves. Employees donated hundreds of juices, granola bars, crackers, and fruit cups, so every child who walks through the iron gate has a special snack made just for them. It’s something special to see a child’s face light up when they receive a kids’ pack. One mother who frequents our community meal says her two toddlers look forward to them every morning.

FACES OF IRON GATE

Iron Gate serves 210,000 meals a year. Behind every plate, there’s a story. We invite you to view the:

FACES OF IRON GATE

Kendall Whittier After 5 | July 12th | 6pm – 8pm |
Adam Murphy Photography Studio | 2318 E. Admiral Blvd
Thanks to the talents of local photographer, Adam Murphy, Iron Gate puts a face to Tulsa’s hungry. Come see the joy, the struggle, and the grace that makes up the guests of Iron Gate.

ADAM MURPHY

For our 7th annual Faces campaign, Iron Gate recruited Adam Murphy to capture a unique perspective on Tulsa’s hungry. Through his lens, we see the many faces of our guests and the many faces they show the world, from sheer joy to pure stoicism. Murphy is a graduate of the Brooks Institute of Photography, who spent almost a decade in California honing his craft. He now lives in Tulsa with his wife and son.

With gratitude,
Carrie Vesely Henderson, CFRE
Executive Director
918-359-9017
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IT’S A STEAMY, BUSTLING DAY AT THE IRON GATE.
The morning started with a line wrapped around the building, dozens of
hungry Tulsans waiting for a good meal. Once the gates opened at 8:30 in
the morning, it was a steady stream of humanity. When the guests entered
they were greeted by a familiar face. Just past the hot pans of spaghetti,
green beans, and breadsticks, Kathie Bollick stands serving up desserts
with a smile. Something she’s been doing for 30 years. She says in the early
days, Iron Gate served mostly sandwiches and crock pots full of beans. “If
we were lucky, we had a can of ravioli to mix-in,” Bollick said. Iron Gate has
come a long way since then.

“I guess one constant over 40 years is we have fed people who are
hungry, no questions asked,” said Keenan Barnard, one of the three found-
ers of Iron Gate.

In 1978, Barnard, Gene Buzzard, and Father Jack Powers stepped out
of a bible study class at Trinity Episcopal Church to fix a homeless man a
sandwich. It was that act of kindness that has inspired four decades of
generosity and a mission to feed Tulsa’s hungry.

“I recall that we were serving hot meals almost from the beginning,
initially using some leftovers from area restaurants like the Cherry Street
Bakery and the Tulsa Club,” said Founder Gene Buzzard. Buzzard said Iron
Gate volunteers cooked food in crock pots and the primary focus was feed-
ing people who lived on the street. As the organization grew, Iron Gate
added the grocery pantry, so families in need could receive groceries.

“An early issue was how many days a week shall we feed our guests,”
Founder Father Jack Powers recalled. “I, as rector, was reluctant to serve
on the weekends, as brides were often [taking] pictures in the garden and
Sunday there were all the parishioners. The Senior Warden (head layman of
the parish) quickly reminded me that our guests are hungry every day of
the week. Thus, we feed every day!”

All three men, who are still active with Iron Gate, are amazed at the
progress the organization has made over the last forty years.

“One great thing is that a very caring community has developed,”
added Barnard. “I believe those who have served or volunteered have felt
more blessed through their giving. They receive more then they give. Jesus
was right!”

Buzzard says Iron Gate wouldn’t be where it is today, if it wasn’t for
the support of the Trinity church community. “From the very beginning
the people of Trinity embraced the project,” said Buzzard. “And, perhaps
because the program from the beginning was not only non-denomination-
al, but imposed no religious test of any kind, it soon gained support from
people of all faiths or no faith; from those who simply had a desire to help
feed the hungry.”

Father Powers agreed. “One thing we should not forget is that the
parishioners were spiritually filled by Iron Gate,” Powers said. “They volun-
teed but also were excited that the church took on this enormous task
and never failed to accomplish it. In that period in parish history Iron Gate
inspired the parish and there was growth.”

“I don’t think any of us had any notion that a simple street-feeding
program would develop into a program as significant and beautiful as Iron
Gate,” Buzzard said. “But I am thankful that it did.”

1978
Iron Gate begins when
three Trinity parishio-
ners step outside of a
bible study class to fix a
homeless man a sand-
wich. Word on the street
begins to spread – if
you’re hungry go to the
church with the iron gate.

1979
Iron Gate began serving
hot meals during the week.

1984
Trinity parishioners meet
weekly to prepare 400
sandwiches to serve on
the weekends.

1986
Iron Gate expands to in-
clude regular weekday hot
meals and grocery bags
from the food pantry.

1987
Iron Gate begins
serving meals 365
days a year.

1992
A $50,000 Zarrow foun-
dation grant enables Iron
Gate to renovate a room
in Trinity’s basement as a
dining room.
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1997
Iron Gate Trust is established as a 501c3 nonprofit organization under the umbrella of Trinity Episcopal Church.

2001
A $54,000 investment provides toilet facilities, expands the dining area.

2002
Iron Gate renovates its dining room, adding counters new flooring, a bigger sink, and newly painted walls.

2007
TulsaPeople partners with Iron Gate to launch Cooking for a Cause. It has become a major annual fundraiser and has raised more than $1.3 Million to date. Join us for the 12th Annual Cooking for a Cause on October 11th.

2010
Iron Gate deepens its mission by partnering with other social service agencies, including Youth Services of Tulsa and Day Spring Villa.

2012
Iron Gate surpasses $1 Million in contributions.

2015
Iron Gate begins its search for a new location.

2017
210,000 MEALS SERVED
300 GROCERY BAGS PER WEEK
137,755 POUNDS OF FOOD DONATED
8,316 VOLUNTEER HOURS WORKED
2017 BUDGET: $1,124,872

2018
Iron Gate secures 99-year lease for a new building.

2019
Iron Gate begins working with Lawyers Against Hunger to provide Thanksgiving dinners to 500 families. Iron Gate becomes a stand-alone 501c3 organization.

We are collecting Iron Gate stories and photos from the last 40 years. If you have a story to share, please email Ashli at asims@irongatetulsa.org.
Six-year-old Jane Eller is your typical kindergartner. She likes to draw and play in the front yard, while her dad mows the lawn. What’s not so typical is what Jane decided to do with her art and that sunny day in her front yard. Ryan Eller, Jane’s father, says he was busy mowing when they noticed his daughter had stopped a neighbor passing by with a dog. When he went to see what the precocious six-year-old was up to, he discovered Jane wasn’t making conversation. She was on a mission. The kindergartner was trying to sell her drawings to raise money for the homeless.

When so many people look passed the homeless, Jane saw them and wanted to help. Ryan Eller said this all started a while ago when Jane saw a homeless man who was hungry. She told her father they needed to stop and get him something to eat. Her father tried explaining the practical reasons that this pit stop wasn’t going to happen in the middle of their busy day. But his young daughter insisted. They went and bought a pizza, but by the time they returned the man had disappeared. The experience stuck with Jane and it helped fuel her project.

Ryan re-directed Jane from trying to sell her artwork to strangers to asking friends and family. She started out drawing what she loved, a picture of a dog named Spot. But soon was taking requests, when she took her cause to Facebook, posting live updates on her fundraiser. Little Jane drew more than 40 pictures and raised enough money to provide 450 kids packs, which are quart-sized bags full of kid-friendly snacks. Iron Gate hands out kids packs to any child who comes to our community meal and to families who receive groceries from our emergency pantry.

When Jane arrived at Iron Gate to deliver her check, she was more excited about getting to make kids packs then she was all of the praise we heaped on her little shoulders. She and her family helped stock our shelves, so children less fortunate than her would have a healthy snack. In fact, she didn’t want to leave. She asked her dad, “can we come back tomorrow?”
IRON GATE ON ARCHER

Soon Iron Gate will have a multi-million dollar new home, which promises to double our capacity.

“This is a wonderful day for those in Tulsa who do not have consistent access to food,” said Iron Gate Board Chair Shane Saunders. “We have dramatically outgrown our current location, and this property allows us to expand our capacity, so we can continue our mission of feeding the hungry every day.”

After three years of starts and stops, Iron Gate signed a 99-year lease with Tulsa County officials signed for a nearly two-acre lot near Frisco and West Archer in April. The location is currently an empty lot.

“Hundreds of Tulsans go hungry every day and this new location will allow us to better serve them,” said Iron Gate Executive Director Carrie Vesely Henderson.

Henderson and the board of directors is working with GH2 Architects to design a building that is not just bigger, but maximizes functionality for the organization. By more than doubling our footprint, Iron Gate will be able to purchase in bulk, stretching donor dollars even further. Right now the organization is limited by a lack of storage space.

Iron Gate plans to break ground on the new facility in August. The building will take approximately 12-18 months to complete.

“This wouldn’t be possible without the generosity of our donors,” Henderson said. “We want to especially thank the Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation for being the lead donor of our capital campaign. Their leadership paved the way for many other foundations to provide financial support for our new home.”

The Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation are long-time supporters of Iron Gate and major contributors to Iron Gate’s capital campaign funding the construction of this new building.

“We knew that they had outgrown their space and were limited in their service by the constraints of the space they were in,” Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation Executive Director, Bill Major, said. “We provided early and strong support to their campaign and later provided additional support to help grow their capacity and find the best location from which to serve.”

“We are thankful for the work of Tulsa County officials in helping to facilitate this location,” Major continued. “Now, closer to other vital services, there is an opportunity to collaborate to expand and improve services to those in need. We are also grateful for the leadership and volunteers of Iron Gate in providing this essential service to those in need in our community and look forward to helping Iron Gate meet those needs many years to come.”

FOUNDERS 2018 Iron Gate celebrated its 6th Annual Founder’s Dinner in April. Long-time supporters and new friends gathered to honor Trinity Episcopal Church and our 40 years of working together to feed Tulsa’s hungry. For the last six years Founders’ Dinner has been a way to honor those who have made a significant impact on Iron Gate and its mission to feed the hungry and homeless of Tulsa. Iron Gate’s Board President, Shane Saunders, presented Father Steve McKee with a plaque commemorating the partnership that’s spanned four decades and hundreds of thousands of meals. Long-time supporter and board member, Mike Moore, gave a moving testimonial of support and pledged to match every dollar raised that night. Thanks to his incredible gift, Founders’ Dinner exceeded our expectations!
Please Join TulsaPeople and Iron Gate for our

12TH ANNUAL

COOKING FOR A CAUSE

OCTOBER 11, 2018

METRO APPLIANCES
& MORE

A dozen chefs, a dozen dishes, dozens of ways to feed Tulsa’s hungry

IRONGATEGULSA.ORG/EVENTS