



mothers' milk bank  
of north texas  
EST. 2004

*Take a look back at 2025 as we worked to improve the health and survival of infants through breastfeeding advocacy and the safe, equitable provision of pasteurized donor human milk.*

# 2025 BANK STATEMENT



BREASTMILK • PUMPED MILK • DONOR MILK • EVERY DROP CONTAINS A MIRACLE.

Dear friends and community partners,

In the history of our organization, 2025 was a defining chapter. With an annual all-time high dispensation of 906,509 ounces of donor milk, the year was marked by increased demand, resilience, compassion, and an unwavering commitment to the families and fragile infants we serve.

As our biggest year yet, all of the work to achieve our mission would not have been possible without my team. Each and every employee plays a vital role through their passion and perseverance. It truly requires daily care, effort, and excellence.

Several significant milestones over the year will guide us well into the future. Chief among them was the writing, publishing and implementation of our new five-year strategic plan. I want to thank our board of directors for thoughtful planning, collaboration, and a shared vision for sustainability and expanded impact. This plan reflects where we are today, and where we aspire to be as we continue to respond to growing needs across our region.

The year also brought moments of profound meaning. For the first time, we hosted a Wave of Light ceremony, creating a space for bereaved parents to gather, remember, and honor their babies. Standing alongside families in both hope and grief is central to who we are, and this new tradition reflects our commitment to compassionate, family-centered care.

As always, helping breastfeeding families remained a priority. We added a second weekly session of Baby Café, welcoming more parents, siblings, and family members in our doors and ensuring that caring support is free and more accessible.

To the 1,594 milk donors approved in 2025 - thank you. When a baby needed donor milk, it was there because you chose to open your freezer and share your extraordinary gift, your heart, and your time.

Together, we demonstrated what is possible when passion meets purpose and when a mission-driven community comes together in service. To all our supporters, thank you for making this year one to remember, and for continuing to shape a future where every baby has the opportunity for a healthy start.

## Shaina Starks, MPH, CPH

Executive Director



### Announcing Our Five-Year Strategic Plan

After months of thoughtful collaboration, our Board of Directors approved and launched our new strategic plan.

Working collaboratively, we defined the essential priorities that will **shape our growth, strengthen long-term sustainability, and reinforce our unwavering commitment to safety, education, and equitable access to donor human milk.** This forward-looking roadmap is designed to strengthen our mission and expand our impact for fragile infants and families across our region.

VIEW THE STRATEGIC PLAN HERE:



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Carver Upton  
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CLINICAL COORDINATOR

Suzanne Walling  
GENERAL ADMINISTRATOR



## A Texas-Sized Welcome

As part of the **Human Milk Banking Association of North America (HMBANA) 2025 Symposium**, we were honored to host masterclass sessions for milk bank professionals from across the continent. We welcomed colleagues from throughout North America for a day of shared learning, collaboration, and forward-thinking innovation in human milk banking.

# From the NICU to Giving Back: Seyerra and Gabriel's Story



When Seyerra welcomed her son, Gabriel, on August 13, 2025, nothing about the moment was what she had imagined. Born at just 27 weeks and 5 days, Gabriel weighed 1 pound, 10 ounces and arrived via emergency cesarean section after a week of intense monitoring for severe growth restriction and complications affecting blood flow between the placenta and his heart.

Seyerra says, "I was able to hear the tiniest cry before he was whisked away to the NICU." He was placed on CPAP for breathing support, and surrounded by wires, monitors, and machines that would define the months ahead.

The early days were overwhelming. Gabriel required blood transfusions, a PIC line and later, a nasogastric (NG) feeding tube. Each day brought new challenges. Like many NICU parents, Seyerra experienced intense emotional strain. She explains, "I had the baby blues and spent days stress cleaning, pumping, and crying."

Because of Gabriel's fragility, Seyerra wasn't able to hold him for the first time until 19 days after his birth. On September 1, she finally held her son. She says, "Being able to hold him was the mental boost I needed." Sadly, she wouldn't be able to hold him again for another month.

For 128 long days, Seyerra made the trip to the hospital nearly every day. Finally, on December 5, 2025, Gabriel came home.



One unexpected bright spot in Seyerra's journey was her milk supply. Just two days after her premature delivery, she says, "I became a mean, green pumping machine!" A lactation consultant quickly recognized her significant production, and pumping became the one thing Seyerra felt she could fully control during an otherwise uncertain time.

By September, she had pumped more than 2,000 ounces. Her supply grew so quickly that a deep freezer was purchased just for her milk, and it was filled in less than a week. Soon, her milk was stored across seven different households, with help from her large family.

Determined not to let a single ounce go to waste, Seyerra searched for ways to use or share her milk. It was a NICU nurse who ultimately connected her with Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas. After being approved as a donor, Seyerra found new purpose in her pumping journey.

**As a NICU mom, she understands the fear of not being able to feed your baby as one of the most vulnerable and painful experiences a new parent can face. Knowing that her milk could ease that burden for another family transformed her hard work into something bigger than herself.**

Today, Seyerra is proud not only of how far Gabriel has come, but also of the role she is able to play in helping other fragile babies thrive. Her journey is one of resilience, generosity, and hope. It's a powerful reminder that even in the most difficult seasons, it's possible to become a light for someone else.

# Baby Café: Growing Access & Strengthening Support in 2025

In 2025, our Baby Café program continued to advance our vision of a world where every baby has the opportunity to receive human milk, and every parent is supported in achieving their breastfeeding goals. Through expanded outreach, dedicated lactation professionals, and strong community partnerships, Baby Café remained a trusted, welcoming space for families across our region.

Baby Café USA is a national nonprofit organization that licenses and supports 133 programs across 25 states. As part of this national network, our local Baby Café offers free, drop-in lactation support in a welcoming setting. Certified lactation professionals ensure families receive evidence-based guidance in a comfortable and encouraging environment.

In 2025, five lactation consultants at the heart of the program generously lead a combined 12 sessions each month, many available in Spanish. Together, they provided qualified, accessible, no-cost breastfeeding education, and support through nearly 500 visits with parents.

New pop-up Baby Café sessions magnified reach in meaningful ways. We hit the road to meet parents in their own neighborhoods and community spaces. These pop-ups removed barriers to care and strengthened access for families who may not otherwise receive in-person lactation support. In recognition of this commitment to accessibility and inclusion, we were honored with the **2025 Baby Café USA Access & Equity Award**, a testament to the dedication of our team and the impact of bringing support directly into the community.

Our success would not have been possible without the collaboration of valued community partners. We extend our sincere gratitude to Abide Women's Health Services, North Texas Area Community Health Center, Inc., and Catholic Charities of Fort Worth for helping us reach families and expand supportive services.

We are thrilled that so many families walked alongside us last year. Baby Café continues to be a vital extension of our mission as we work to support parents, nourish babies, and strengthen the health of our community, one family at a time. Scan the QR code for more program information.



## Texas Steps Up to Support Human Milk

During the 89th Texas Legislature, Representative Caroline Harris Davila (District 52) authored House Concurrent Resolution 56 (HCR 56), officially designating **May as Necrotizing Enterocolitis (NEC) and Breastfeeding Awareness Month in Texas for a 10-year period**, through 2035. Following a March 27 hearing, the resolution was passed by both the House and Senate and signed by Governor Abbott on May 24. This designation affirms the life-saving power of breastmilk and recognizes the vital role of nonprofit milk banks.

## Celebrating the Power of Human Milk

Continuing our August tradition, we celebrated National Breastfeeding Month with meaningful opportunities to strengthen community partnerships and reaffirm our commitment to ensure that every baby has the healthiest possible start. We attended multiple breastfeeding fairs, amplified education, shared resources, and recognized the dedication of breastfeeding parents, lactation professionals and milk donors.

# Our Supporters in 2025

Anonymous	Brittani Goodson	Joel & Kathy Parker
Dr. George & Mrs. Abraham & Family	Meghan Gora	Kristen Parker
Cassy Albrecht	Nicole Green	Mary Ashley Ray
Patricia Alridge	Bill Hallgren	Jeannie McGuire Reis
Amanda Alvarez, IBCLC	Kelly Hanes	Ashley Robbins
Rosie Balbo	Dustin & Audra Herman	Natalie Robles
Nancy Barton	Danielle Hicks	Monique Romero
Zachary Bokelman	Gina Hill	Megan Schmidt, MD
Vamsi Bollineni	Carrie Ives	Julie Seale
Taylor Bunn	Mark E. Jacobs	Pamela Smith
Michelle Caraballo	Prameela Karimi, MD	Beverly & John Snyder
Brian Coburn	Linda Kiraly	Erin Hamilton Spence, MD
Kallie Covington	Lera Leach	Shaina Starks
Alondra Criss	Laura Maxfield	Christi Stinson
Meredith & Kevin Daigrepoint	Melinda McCullough	Susan Sward-Comunelli, MD
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Andrea DeYoung	Valencia Moore	Page Trotter
Carolyn Dobson	Melissa Morgan	Genna Tucker
Nicolas Forcade-Perkins	Naga Indrāja Mudunuri	Joshua Warner
Francie Freeman	Melissa O'Neill	Sarah Wetzler
Christopher & Jennifer Gage	Zarahi Solano Orantes	Shanequa Williams
Kailey Gonzales	Gretchen Owensby	Sally Zukoski

## Organizations & Foundations

Babies and Bumps	The Jeppson & Hall Family Charitable Fund
Baylor Scott & White Health	Kroger Community Rewards
Charities Aid Foundation America	Liberty Mutual
Compliments of Caroline	Nancy & John Snyder Fund at
Comunelli Family Fund	North Texas Community Foundation
DuBose Family Foundation	The Ryan Foundation
Fash Foundation	Service Now
The Frill Foundation	Texas Instruments Foundation
HCA Healthcare	Texas Perinatal Association
Higginbotham Community Fund at	The UK Online Giving Foundation
North Texas Community Foundation	



## Boxing for Brooks

For the 4th year in a row, a heartfelt fundraising event benefited Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas in loving remembrance of Baby Brooks, who passed away in 2021 at just one week old from a life-threatening infection.

On November 30, family and friends gathered for "Boxing for Brooks," a boxing class and GoFundMe event that raised over \$7,000 in honor of what would have been Brooks' 4th birthday. Laura, Brooks' mother, shared, "It was wonderful. We were able to celebrate and honor Brooks in such a special way and had an amazing turnout!"



## In Memory of Brooks Wassam:

Brittney Avila	Rachel Davis	Shelbye Harbour	Shelby Strohla
Trent Bailey	Ileana Fernandez	Kyle Mock	Rebecca Thomas
Jeff Comess	William Firth	Carlton Sanders	Laura & Logan Wassam
Ashley Costales	Sarah Hantak	Allie Savage	& 34 Anonymous Donations

## In Memory of:

Shannon Etter Thompson	<i>By:</i> Julie & Jeffrey Etter
Maddie	Dara Dallas, MD
Faith Zoe Lux	Christopher Lux
John Major Walker	The Ross Richardson Family
Barbara Quinn	Susan Schultz
Caleb Turner	Rick Tubb
Caleb Turner	Chris Wilmoth

## In Honor of:

Arlo Akerley	<i>By:</i> Austin Akerley
Angela's birthday	Anonymous
Asher	Anonymous
Asher, Natalie & Ross Parket	Miriam Carlitz
Millie Hall	Matthew & Kristen Hall
Annie Watson	Anne Harvey
Ramadan	Amna Iftikhar MD
Our preemie babies	Kathryn Jacob
Gloria Kuykendall	Jake & Gloria Kuykendall
Amy Trotter	Sterling & Larry Lauer
River Maben	Trey Maben
Grace Chen	Jessica WebsterLove
Gina Hill, PhD	Susan Weeks
River Maben	Jennifer Wheeler



## Honoring NEC Awareness Day

We recognized NEC Awareness Day on May 17 to bring attention to necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), a deadly intestinal disease that most often occurs in the NICU. For milk bank teams, NEC Awareness Day is not just a date on the calendar. It is a reminder that every ounce processed, every donor screened, and every shipment delivered represents protection, prevention, and **hope for a baby who needs it most.**



# Samuel's Legacy: Transforming Grief Into Hope Through Milk Donation



Delimar began her pregnancy with joy and anticipation. While the early weeks progressed normally, sudden and severe complications changed everything. At just 22 weeks, her son Samuel was born too small to survive.

Though his time in this world was heartbreakingly brief, Samuel left behind a meaningful and healing legacy. Delimar produced an abundant supply of breastmilk. She says, **"From the beginning, I felt that his life had a purpose, and it was then that I decided to donate his breastmilk to Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas to support vulnerable infants and help save lives."**

Donating became an important part of Delimar's healing process. "It helped me find meaning in my grief," she explains. "It allowed me to give life through Samuel. Every drop of milk I donated carried my gratitude and love."

Each donation was a reminder that Samuel's life could continue to touch others. Knowing his milk helped premature and fragile babies grow and thrive gave purpose to Delimar's journey.

Delimar visited the milk bank to place a leaf engraved with Samuel's name and birthdate on Carmen's Tree, a memorial honoring babies whose lives are remembered through milk donation. The experience remains an intimate memory she says she will carry in her heart forever.



Delimar donated Samuel's milk for 17 months, from July 2024 through December 2025. When asked what donating means to her, her answer is simple and profound: "It's an act of love that gives life, inspiration and hope to those who need it most."

Today, Samuel's impact continues to grow. Delimar founded Samuel's Comet, a foundation created to support bereaved parents with respect and compassion. Through this work, she reminds grieving families that their pain matters, their love endures, and they are not alone. She says, "Even when faith seems to fade, comfort and restoration can carry us."

Delimar adds, **"I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to share my baby's story. I hope it inspires other grieving parents to find strength to move forward, honor their baby's life, and keep their love alive."**



## A Ceremony of Remembrance

We hosted our first **Wave of Light Ceremony**, an evening dedicated to families who have experienced the loss of a baby. The event brought bereaved parents together in a space of compassion, reflection, and community. As candles were lit, each flicker of light represented a precious life - **deeply loved, forever remembered.**

# 2025 STATS

ALL-TIME  
RECORDS!

906,509  
OUNCES  
DISPENSED

1,594  
DONORS  
APPROVED

76%  
dispensed  
to hospitals

24%  
dispensed  
to outpatients

## LOOKING FORWARD TO 10 MILLION OUNCES

In the fall, we surpassed the extraordinary milestone of *dispensing more than 9.5 million ounces of pasteurized donor milk.* It was a moment worth celebrating, not only for the number itself, but for the lives, families, and stories represented by every single ounce.

