



mothers' milk bank  
of north texas

EST. 2004

Safely connecting generous mothers to fragile babies.

# THE BANK STATEMENT: 2023 IMPACT REPORT

Life is full of firsts. Firsts are special, memorable and usually the beginning of something new and exciting. For me, 2023 will always feel extraordinary. It was my first year as executive director, a journey that started on my first day at the milk bank in 2010. Back then, I fell in love with the mission but never anticipated how the organization would guide my continued education or career.

If I had to summarize the past 12 months, I could talk about the meetings, emails, Zoom calls, tours, presentations and more meetings and emails. However, it's the big picture and all of the people in it that are truly impressive. Not only did we help a lot of babies and families, YOU helped a lot of babies and families, too!



Transitioning to a broad leadership role, as I have, provides a unique opportunity to see how it all comes together. We can't feed babies without mothers who donate their extra milk. We can't feed babies without staff who ensure the milk is safe. We can't feed babies, help mothers with breastfeeding, expand our programs, purchase needed equipment or improve systems without dedicated board members, volunteers, employees, funders, community partners, healthcare providers - the list goes on and on.

Our impact in 2023, outlined in this report, speaks volumes about the power of community support and collaboration. We are in this together and I feel privileged to help take the mission forward.

Thank you for being a part of the milk bank family. Here's to more firsts.

*-Shaina*

In 2023:



1,234

donor moms were approved  
so we could process..



829,082

ounces, which were  
dispensed for a total of ...

8  
million  
ounces

dispensed since opening  
in 2004!

**MISSION:** We strive to improve the health and survival of infants through breastfeeding advocacy and the safe, equitable provision of pasteurized donor human milk.



**VISION:** We envision a future when all babies have the opportunity to receive human milk.

## MEET OUR TEAM:

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shanequa Williams, PharmD, MPH  
PRESIDENT

Rosie Balbo  
VICE PRESIDENT & TREASURER

Susan Sward-Comunelli, MD, FAAP  
SECRETARY & FOUNDER

Patricia Alridge, BSN, RNC-OB, MHA  
Alondra Criss, MPH, RD, LD  
Dara Dallas, MD  
Bill Hallgren  
Kelly Hanes  
Gina Hill, PhD, RD, LD  
Valencia Moore, BSN, IBCLC  
Melissa O'Neill, RN-NIC, BSN  
Ashley Robbins  
Sarah Wetzler, MS, RD, LD  
Sally Zukoski, RN, IBCLC

### LACTATION SUPPORT FACILITATORS

Amanda Alvarez, IBCLC  
Karen Bell  
Connie Rico, IBCLC

### STAFF

Shaina Starks, MPH, CPH  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Leslie Leach  
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

Lindsey Stecker  
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Amy Trotter  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Danyel Jones-Minor  
LAB SUPERVISOR

Samantha Martinez Berlanga  
DONOR PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

Nathalie Avila  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Allanah Bennett  
LAB SYSTEM SPECIALIST

Amy Boyd  
GENERAL ADMINISTRATOR

TaKasha Ehiogu  
INTERN

Casey Ferguson  
DONOR/RECIPIENT COORDINATOR

Lily Gilpin  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Liliana Granados  
SHIPPING & RECEIVING

Sabrina Hitri  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Maggie Kipper  
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Fabian Licona  
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Jennifer Lifshutz  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Pamela Lopez  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Judy Maltos-Pesina  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Courtney Margotta-Bonham  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Brittany Nunn  
SHIPPING & RECEIVING

Tina Passah  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Nansy Sanchez-Perez  
DONOR COORDINATOR

Guadalupe Silva  
SHIPPING & RECEIVING

Jason Simpson  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN

Carver Upton  
SHIPPING & RECEIVING

Amy Vickers, MSN, RN, IBCLC  
EMERITUS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Suzanne Walling  
GENERAL ADMINISTRATOR

Morgan Winkfield  
PASTEURIZATION TECHNICIAN



# OUR DONORS: MAKING MIRACLES EVERY DAY IN 2023

"I felt the need to donate after my baby was in the NICU and I learned about the struggles that moms of premature babies go through when wanting to breastfeed...I preferred to donate my extra milk rather than keep it in the freezer... I hope it has helped many babies!"

~Donor Michelle



"[Donating] is very special to me. Knowing that I can give a gift to other mothers and fragile babies really means the world because I personally know the struggles of breastfeeding and trying to produce enough milk for my baby."

~Donor Jennifer

"Donating my extra breastmilk means I get to help another mom who may want to breastfeed but is not able to do so. It means I get to help a baby grow healthy so they can go home to their family."

~Donor Sharvonne

# 2023: FIVE YEARS OF HELPING BREASTFEEDING FAMILIES

Establishing a successful breastfeeding routine can be stressful for new and experienced parents alike. Problems like low milk supply, pain and poor latching can usually be resolved with professional help; but that help isn't always accessible or affordable.

Supporting breastfeeding families equitably is a vital part of the milk bank's mission. Through a free program called Baby Café, Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas continues to advocate for families through the expertise of certified lactation consultants. Families drop in on Tuesdays for individualized support and have the opportunity to meet other families and check their baby's weight. Spanish sessions and evening virtual sessions are available twice a month.

In 2023, 146 breastfeeding or pregnant participants received help through the program. Lactation consultant, Amanda Alvarez, says, "Now, in our sixth year, we strive to adapt each session to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve. We want the atmosphere to be casual, relaxed and welcoming as we help families reach their breastfeeding goals."



Amanda adds, "I remember one mother who came to our Baby Café off and on throughout her baby's first year. She started off with this tiny newborn and what felt like a mountain of questions. Over the course of that year she mastered the deep latch, overcame dips in her milk supply, and survived sleep regressions. She became more confident as the months went by and helped other new parents do the same. Parents like her are an important part of what makes Baby Café so unique. Breastfeeding families need access to qualified care; but they need one another too."

Abide Women's Health Services in Dallas has been a valued community partner in the program. Paige Jackson, VP of Clinical Services for the organization, says, "I'm incredibly proud of Abide's partnership with Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas for Baby Café, a program dedicated to providing vital support to breastfeeding families, with a special focus on Black breastfeeding families. Baby Café not only offers a safe space for sharing experiences but also delivers essential education, actively contributing to positive outcomes. Together, we're nurturing bonds and paving the way for improved health outcomes for both mothers and infants. Each session is a step towards combating disparities and fostering resilience. It's evident: with the right support, we can rewrite the narrative and save lives."

For more information about the milk bank's free lactation support program, visit: [www.texasmilkbank.org](http://www.texasmilkbank.org).

## LACTATION CONSULTANT AMANDA ALVAREZ SAYS:

"While I love helping families feel more confident and comfortable feeding their babies, my favorite thing about Baby Café is seeing the parents connect with one another. There is something really incredible about being in a space where you know you will be understood and supported unconditionally. Baby Café is about so much more than breastfeeding support. It's about helping families thrive."



## MOM WHO ATTENDED BABY CAFÉ SAYS:

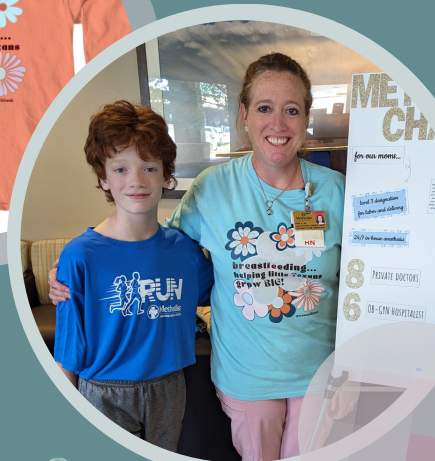
"I received helpful information every time I went. The instructors at Baby Café helped me feel heard and seen, and they validated the issues I was having. They even helped debunk some ideas I had going into Baby Café about breastfeeding and supply. I even felt comfortable coming back when I had other breastfeeding issues later in my breastfeeding journey. I have referred some friends to them when discussing breastfeeding difficulties. I will definitely return if I have a second child and struggle with breastfeeding again, or if another issue arises before I complete my breastfeeding journey."

## BREASTFEEDING...HELPING LITTLE TEXANS GROW BIG!

Our 2023 t-shirt fundraiser was another wonderful success.

\$2,000 in proceeds benefited Baby Café, our free breastfeeding support program.

We appreciate everyone who celebrated National Breastfeeding Month with us and helped spread the word that breastfeeding is helping little Texans grow big!



# CAIO'S RECOVERY

## FROM NICU TO OUTPATIENT TO 80'S DANCE PARTY

Caio was born prematurely, weighing a little over four pounds at birth. He began receiving donor milk in the NICU when his mother, Becky, was unable to produce breastmilk.

He was making great progress until he transitioned to formula. Becky says, "That's when everything changed, and our world was turned upside down." Caio was near death. Unable to breathe, he was intubated and transferred by helicopter to a better equipped hospital.



Caio was diagnosed with necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), a devastating gut infection. His team started antibiotics before his tiny intestines perforated. After receiving donor milk again, he progressed enough to be discharged and switched to formula.



Then, it happened again. Caio's intestines became inflamed and infected, requiring donor milk at home by prescription through the milk bank's outpatient program. When Becky lost her job, the milk bank's Milk Money Fund kicked in, covering all milk processing fees.

In 2023, at 12-months old, Caio successfully transitioned off donor milk. Becky says, "He has moved to the toddler room at daycare, is ahead in most milestones and loves playing with our dog Abby and dancing to 70's and 80's pop music."

Becky adds a special message to the moms who donate their extra breastmilk:

**"Your gift is a blessing beyond measure.**

**It has saved my son's life and enabled him to continue to live, thrive and experience life."**



Home from the NICU, Caio holding his bottles of donor milk, growing big and strong!

# OUR SUPPORTERS IN 2023

## FOUNDATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & CORPORATIONS

Abbott Laboratories  
The Addy Foundation  
Amazon Smile Foundation  
Ann & Charles Florsheim Family  
Foundation  
Bank of America Charitable Foundation  
Baylor Scott & White Health  
Costco Wholesale Corporation  
DuBose Family Foundation  
Dutch Bros

Fash Foundation  
Fidelity Giving Marketplace  
The Frill Foundation  
Harold D. and Eleanor F. Hoopman  
Charitable Foundation  
HCA Healthcare  
Higginbotham Community Fund at North  
Texas Community Foundation  
Hoblitzelle Foundation  
Kroger Community Rewards  
Liberty Mutual

Nancy & John Snyder Fund at North  
Texas Community Foundation  
Network for Good  
Newborn Nightingales  
Orix Foundation  
Progressive Insurance Foundation  
Santander Holdings USA  
Shell Oil Company Foundation  
Thomas M., Helen McKee & John P.  
Ryan Foundation

## INDIVIDUALS

Anonymous  
George Abraham  
Kristin Allen  
Patricia Alridge  
Sharnet Arberry  
Salma Ayoub  
Rosie Balbo  
Natalie Burris  
Henry Campos  
Michelle Caraballo  
Thomas Carr  
Steve Carter  
Anastasia Cavanaugh  
Eric Chang  
Laurin & Mason Chevaillier  
Ross Couvillon  
Alondra Criss  
Cathy Crow  
Dara Dallas, MD  
Raquel De Fraites  
Carolyn A. Dobson  
Carlotta & David Endsley

Mary-Fran Filipowicz Leo  
Lauren Ford  
Christopher & Jennifer Gage  
Kailey Gonzalez  
Miguel Enrique Campos  
Gonzalez  
Meghan Gora  
Greta & Bill Hallgren  
Danielle Hamilton  
Kelly Hanes  
Shannon Hargrove  
Alicia Head  
Gina Hill  
Katherine Hoefert  
Trent Ibarra  
Carrie Ives  
Melanie Jacks  
Kathryn & Benjamin Jacob  
Mark E. Jacobs  
Prameela Karimi, MD  
Linda Kiraly  
Gloria Kuykendall

Alicia Landry  
Larry D. Lauer  
Marisa L. LePak  
Brittany Madlem  
Nichole Malkowski  
The Maxfield Family  
Orla McCormack  
Melinda McCullough  
Winjie & Darryl Miao  
Claire & Herd Midkiff  
Leia Montgomery  
Joe & Nancy Moore  
Melissa Morgan  
Hunter Nelson  
Melissa O'Neill  
Billye Paris  
Joel & Kathy Parker  
Kristen Parker  
Sheila Marie Ratcliffe  
Mary Ashley Ray  
Ashley Robbins  
Sarah Romack

Megan Schmidt, MD  
Beverly & John Snyder  
Erin Hamilton Spence, MD  
Adriana & Rene St. Julien  
Shaina Starks  
Christi Stinson  
Susan Sward-Comunelli, MD  
Jonathan Taylor  
Tara Thomas  
Heidi Tomlinson, MD  
Amy & Eric Trotter  
Genna Tucker  
Virgilio Ulloa  
Cesar & Samantha Valadez  
Abbey Van Booven  
David Vrla  
Joshua Warner  
Sarah Wetzler  
Shanequa Williams  
Amanda Wood  
Emily Young  
Sally Zukoski

## TRIBUTES

### IN HONOR OF

**Ruby** by Cassy Albrecht  
**Katie Whitten** by Layla Bates  
**Mary & Andrew Mercier & baby  
Madelynn** by Dr. Stephen &  
Nancy Benold  
**Ann Connell** by Kendall Connell  
**Shannon Elizabeth Etter Thompson**  
by Julie & Jeffrey Etter &  
Stephen Filipowicz  
**David & Kathy** by Mary-Fran  
Filipowicz Leo  
**Ramadan** by Amna Iftikhar

**Fionan** by Jennifer and Michael Kellam  
**Cyrus** by Neema Khonsari  
**Marisa Elle Tenari** by  
Felicia Lopez  
**Nora** by the McCranor Family  
**Caio Crutcher** by Carolyn & Bob Philo  
**Vrishaank & Tejas** by Jyoti Rawat  
**Evelyn & Nick Thomson**  
by Courtney Thomson  
**James DuBose & Tori Adams**  
**DuBose** by Floy Wakuya  
**Grace Chen** by Jessica WebsterLove

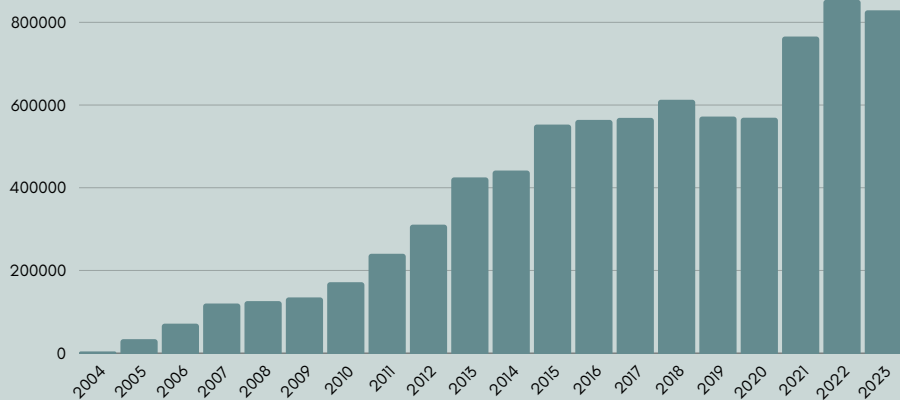
### IN MEMORY OF

**Eliana Solis** by Maria Avila  
**Joy** by Toyneisha Lomax  
**John Major Walker** by Elise &  
Ross Richardson  
**Brooks Wassam** by  
Stephanie Arnold  
Brittney Avila  
Trent Bailey  
Ashley Costales  
Jaime DeWees  
Krystal Lee Griffin  
Shelbye Harbour  
Naomi Harper  
Trent Havens  
Megan Maenius  
Ross McDermott  
Amy Montgomery  
Timothy Simeone  
Walter Simeone  
Alexandra Skinner  
RebeccaThomas  
Lori Wassam  
Logan Wassam  
& 21 anonymous  
donations

# OUR YEAR IN PICTURES & NUMBERS



## GROWTH IN OUNCES SINCE OPENING IN 2004:



83

hospital accounts served in 2023.





**\$389,764**

of charitable care distributed in 2023.



**154**

hours of **FREE** lactation support provided through Baby Café.



**50**

milk collection sites/depots.



## A TALE OF TWO TREES

The reception room at Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas is home to a very special wall memorial, Carmen's Tree. More than five hundred leaves are engraved with a baby's name and birthdate. The display serves as a tribute to little lives lost and breastmilk donated in remembrance to help other babies.

By 2023, leaves filled the branches of Carmen's Tree to capacity, necessitating the addition of a second. After connecting with Chisholm Trail Woodworkers, artists with the nonprofit donated their time and expertise to craft an additional memorial installation.

The outcome is stunning and arches colorfully across the corner of two walls. While the need for more space is bittersweet, the milk bank couldn't have found better partners to complete the project.

Kevin Pilgrim, president of Chisholm Trail Woodworkers, says, "Many of us were unaware of the mission or the need for a mother's milk bank. The tree was designed to complement the original and to be built by different crafts people yet look as if only one person built it. The install day ended with folks asking what our next project will be; that was inspiring. The mission, cause and need touched us all. I believe we will have no other project that will affect us as this one did."



## THE ACCESS TO DONOR MILK ACT

In 2023, the Access to Donor Milk Act was introduced to both the House and Senate with bipartisan cosponsorship. If enacted, the legislation would be the first federal donor milk policy passed by Congress. The bill would significantly strengthen infrastructure for milk banks and protect infant nutrition security. Use the QR code to voice your support by contacting your legislators:



## THE PUMP ACT

On April 28, 2023, the PUMP Act (Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers) went into effect. Employers of all sizes are now required by federal law to provide a reasonable amount of break time and a clean, private space for lactating workers to express milk. These accommodations must be provided for up to one year following the birth of the employee's child.

# MILK MATTERS

1 OUNCE



of donor milk can feed up to 3 premature infants.

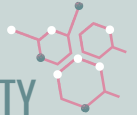


NUMEROUS SAFEGUARDS

protect the quality and integrity of every bottle processed in our laboratory.

Immunological properties of human milk prevent devastating complications and

ENHANCE SURVIVABILITY



As a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, we depend on a supportive community to help us meet the demand for safe donor milk across North Texas and beyond. Learn more at

[WWW.TEXASMILKBANK.ORG](http://WWW.TEXASMILKBANK.ORG)

PROUD MEMBER:

HUMAN MILK BANKING  
ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA