



mothers' milk bank  
of north texas  
— EST. 2004 —

# THE BANK STATEMENT

## 2020 IMPACT REPORT





Amy Vickers, RN, MSN, IBCLC  
Executive Director

# A LETTER FROM THE **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## **TAKING 2020'S LESSONS IN RESILIENCE ONWARD**

As the saying goes, the hardest part of moving forward is not looking back. In many ways, this phrase seems applicable; tackling 2020 at the milk bank was no easy feat. However, when I reflect on our strength and success during those twelve months, a more fitting figure of speech comes to mind: the only time you should ever look back, is to see how far you've come.

In January 2020, after a full year in our shiny, brand-new facility, we were filling our calendar with community education events while working to expand our mission. Weekly enrichment classes and breastfeeding support groups meant we had babies down the hall. Their coos (and cries) were music to our ears. The processing lab was in constant motion and life was golden in our world of liquid gold.

By February we were learning, with the rest of the world, about a novel virus called SARS-CoV-2, now referred to as COVID-19. We hit high gear in early March assessing safety for babies, donors, employees and visitors. We canceled events, reorganized workspaces, implemented alternatives and sadly, locked our doors to the public. Several staff members worked from home while numerous safeguards protected those needed on site.

As they say in Texas, "this wasn't our first rodeo" confronting a public health crisis. When Ebola arrived in Dallas in 2014, we immediately analyzed scientific studies, modified donor screenings and participated in critical research that confirmed the effectiveness of pasteurization in inactivating Ebola and Marburg viruses.

When the Zika virus spread to North America in 2015, our milk processing protocols again enabled us to navigate yet another passing storm.

Then last spring, the COVID-19 pandemic hit like a monsoon and evolved quickly, without mercy. With experience and science backing us, three important factors proved crucial to moving our mission forward: specialized pasteurization, a caring community and a top-notch milk bank team. Here's how:

### **OUR MILK IS SAFE.**

Research confirms that Holder pasteurization inactivates the virus that causes COVID-19. Every bottle is heat treated to 62.5 degrees Celsius for 30 minutes, destroying pathogens and protecting the immunological properties so imperative for fragile infants.



Pasteurization Technician, Danyel.



## OUR COMMUNITY IS BEHIND US.

Mothers have donated a lot of extra breastmilk. In 2020, 906 donors were screened and approved! Donating during the pandemic was, and still is, a unique way that lactating mothers can make a difference from the safety of their homes. This dedication and generosity stocks our freezers and enables us to meet the demand of North Texas NICUs.

Numerous organizations and foundations have gallantly responded to many of our urgent pandemic-related needs. Two brand-new transport vans have doubled our ability to pick up donations and make deliveries to hospitals.

The gift of three new industrial freezers expanded our storage when our huge walk-in freezer had suddenly, and remarkably, become too small.

COVID-19 relief funds from the City of Fort Worth and Tarrant County have covered a large portion of unbudgeted expenses for safe, at-home blood screenings and the increased need for shipping more frozen milk overnight.

## OUR EMPLOYEES ARE SUPERSTARS.

Working for a nonprofit requires wearing many hats and this has never been more true than in 2020. Challenges in a crisis require stamina, flexibility and problem-solving skills. Staff members helped where needed, adapted to new policies and looked out for each other. Experiencing teamwork during a pandemic is truly a beautiful thing.

While 2020 is over, the pandemic rages on. But now, in 2021, we have hope. Like you, I am looking forward to something closer to normal such as typical days in the office, mom and baby yoga classes in our community education room, office birthday parties and in-person meetings. Until then, I will look ahead with gratitude and reassurance because I know how far we have already come.

Best wishes for recovery and healing in the months ahead,



Amy Vickers, RN, MSN, IBCLC  
Executive Director



Donor mom Adriana  
and Valentina



Zoom staff meeting

## OUR MISSION

Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas strives to improve the health and survival of infants through breastfeeding advocacy and the safe, equitable provision of pasteurized donor human milk.

## OUR VISION

Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas envisions a future when all babies have the opportunity to receive human milk.



Donor mom Cynthia and Mateo

## 2020 BY THE NUMBERS



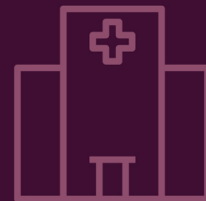
**569,370**

ounces dispensed to babies in need



**906**

approved donor moms



**75**

hospitals served



**48**

milk drop off locations/depots



**60,960**

miles traveled picking up and delivering milk



**96%**

of milk dispensed to Texas hospitals



# DOING OUR PART TO ADVANCE EQUITY

To emphasize equity as a leadership-driven priority for Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas, the board of directors amended our mission statement in April 2019 to include "equitable provision of pasteurized donor human milk." As issues of race, equity and social justice became defining features of 2020, we translated this amendment into tangible action.

A need for deeper awareness and effective strategies for change set the wheels in motion for the formation of the MMBNT Equity Task Force. We are very grateful for the employees, board members and community friends who have joined this important initiative.

This diverse and accomplished group has started the process of examining the external delivery of our mission and the ways we can improve internal diversity and inclusion. This will involve the comprehensive assessment of our donor milk services, recipients, messaging, community education tools and employment policies.

While our growing workforce of 20 employees might seem small, our community presence is extensive and our commitment to integrity is strong.

Donor mom Aiditi  
with her husband and Elina



## Baby Noah

# CONQUERING A LIFE-THREATENING INFECTION IN THE NICU

## HOW A PREMIE'S SURVIVAL MOTIVATED HIS MOTHER TO GIVE BACK

Born early at 31 weeks in Abilene, Texas, Noah developed necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC), an intestinal disease with a high mortality rate that affects thousands of premature infants a year. The condition is all too common in hospital NICUs. It appears suddenly and advances quickly by causing inflammation and infection in the colon that can lead to tissue damage and death.

Noah's case was urgent, so he was flown from Abilene to Cook Children's Medical Center in Fort Worth for emergency surgery to remove the affected area of his intestine. His mother Alyssa now sees his scar as a reminder of how strong he has been since birth.

Throughout Noah's 61-day hospital stay, Alyssa was encouraged to breastfeed due to the healing and immunological properties of breastmilk. However, for mothers of premature infants, this often isn't easy. While Alyssa pumped every four hours to increase her supply, Noah was able to receive donor milk from Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas.

By the time Noah graduated from the NICU, Alyssa was exclusively breastfeeding and ended up with an excess supply of milk. She says, "I knew I wanted to give it back to the NICU to help babies like my son."

After completing the three-step donor screening, Alyssa dropped off her frozen milk at Abilene Regional Hospital where it would be safely stored and transported to the milk bank. She says, "My first donation was the 1,800 ounces I pumped while Noah was in the NICU, so it was especially meaningful to me."

**"I am a full-time student and stay-at-home mom to the sweetest one-year-old boy who happens to be a NICU graduate. I hope our story educates others about NEC and how donor milk can help babies like Noah." - Alyssa**

*For more information about NEC, visit [www.necsociety.org](http://www.necsociety.org).*







# GIVING BACK TO HELP OTHER BABIES

## A DONOR'S STORY

*Kristian is very similar to many of the donors at Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas. When mothers struggle to produce enough breastmilk for their own babies, donor milk becomes a miraculous and treasured gift. If they end up with an excess supply in the future, many moms pay it forward by donating to help other families.*



*"Becoming a donor has made me realize how precious a mother's milk is. There is so much joy in not only being able to feed your own child, but in helping other mothers who may not be able to do the same."*

### Kase and Keeton

Kristian's first encounter with the power of human milk happened shortly after the birth of her first son, Kase. Kristian had been diagnosed with gestational diabetes, a condition when blood sugar levels become high during pregnancy.

Consequently, Kase was born with low blood sugar. Kristian says, "Donor milk was the only thing that helped get his blood sugar up so that we could take him home from the hospital."

After struggling to maintain an adequate supply of breastmilk for Kase, Kristian's breastfeeding journey with her second son, Keeton, was completely different. With lessons learned the first time around, she had a much more successful experience.

Kristian ended up with more milk than Keeton needed, and after learning about Mothers' Milk Bank of North Texas from her Ob-Gyn, decided to become a milk donor. She says, "I'm so blessed to be able to help other babies like the mothers who donated milk to help Kase."

### Baby Keeton



# GETTING HELP WITH BREASTFEEDING... **VIRTUALLY**

Our breastfeeding support group, Baby Café, went virtual in 2020. While the original program was designed to provide in-person guidance, COVID-19 challenged us to reach parents effectively online instead. Amanda Alvarez, our in-house lactation consultant, set up the new format and Virtual Baby Café was born.

Virtual Baby Café is designed to provide free breastfeeding education and support for families. Sessions are held twice a week and are designed to be casual and interactive. Discussions address all aspects of breastfeeding and its impact on daily life – from prenatal to weaning, as well as assistance with pumping and maintaining an adequate supply for working moms.

Amanda says, “While nothing can replace personal interactions and the opportunity to hold lots of babies, the virtual format has worked out quite well. I can evaluate what is going on through my computer screen and there is a big convenience factor for both the babies and parents getting help from the comfort of home.”

Supportive community partners for Baby Café include Abide Women’s Health Services, Dallas Area Breastfeeding Alliance and Tarrant County Breastfeeding Coalition.



**Amanda Alvarez,  
In-house Lactation  
Consultant**





# OUR TEAM

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President

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Vice President & Treasurer

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Secretary & Founder

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**Shanequa Williams, PharmD, MPH**

**Sally Zukoski, RN, IBCLC**



Donor mom Kristian  
and Kase

## STAFF

**Amy Vickers, MSN, RN, IBCLC**  
Founding Executive Director

**Shaina Starks**  
Director of Operations

**Salvadora Estrada**  
Director of Programs

**Leslie Leach**  
Director of Resources

**Amy Trotter**  
Community Relations Director

**Amanda Alvarez, MS, IBCLC**  
Education and Enrichment Manager

**Fabiola Andrade**  
Donor Coordinator

**Allanah Bennet**  
Pasteurization Technician

**Casey Furgeson**  
Shipping and Receiving Technician

**Danyel Jones-Minor**  
Pasteurization Technician

**Pamela Lopez**  
Pasteurization Technician

**Courtney Margotta**  
Program Coordinator

**Samantha Martinez-Berlanga**  
Donor Program Supervisor

**April Suarez Olvera**  
Community Relations Coordinator

**Tina Passah**  
Pasteurization Technician

**Nansy Sanchez Perez**  
Donor Coordinator

**Judy Maltos Pesina**  
Pasteurization Technician

**Lindsey Stecker**  
Lab Supervisor

**Nancy Thomas**  
Courier

**Carver Upton**  
Shipping and Receiving Lead

# THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS FOR BRIGHTENING OUR YEAR!

## FOUNDATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & CORPORATIONS

Albertsons Safeway  
Altar'd State Fort Worth  
Amazon Smile Foundation  
America's Charities  
The Benevity Community Impact  
Comunelli Family Fund  
Customized Communications, Inc.  
Dubose Family Foundation  
Fash Foundation  
Fidelity Charitable Giving  
The Frill Foundation  
Frontstream  
Give inLieu Foundation  
Kendra Scott Fort Worth/Clearfork  
Kroger Community Awards  
Lockheed Martin AERO Cares  
Mednax Pediatrix Medical Group,  
Fort Worth Neonatology  
The Michael and Elizabeth  
Stevener Charitable Fund

Nancy and John Snyder Fund  
The National Leadership  
Foundation  
Network for Good/Facebook  
Fundraiser  
The Ninnie L. Baird Foundation  
North Texas Community  
Foundation  
Parker Analytical, Inc  
Sally & Scott Mooring III  
Charitable Fund  
Social Running  
Texas Instruments  
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas  
United Way of Tarrant County  
Your Cause

**Tarrant County**  
and the **City of Fort Worth**  
provided COVID-19 relief funds  
through  
Non-Governmental Organization  
(NGO) assistance programs.

The **Benbrook Economic  
Development Corporation**  
approved a matching  
storefront-improvement grant  
for the installation of eco-friendly  
landscaping in 2021,  
including the addition of 15 trees.

Through the **North Texas Cares**  
COVID-19 collaborative,  
the **DuBose Family Foundation**  
and **United Way of Metropolitan  
Dallas** doubled our donor milk  
transportation capabilities with a  
gift of two new vans.  
*(pictured below)*

Mimosa Run 2020,  
fundraiser hosted by Social Running



Donor mom Marili



Donor mom Morgan





# INDIVIDUALS

## IN KIND\*

Amy Aaron  
Kathy Adcock-Smith  
Patricia Alridge  
Stella Amaechi  
Andrea & Adam Arabia  
Sharnet Arberry  
Joel Baden  
Rosie Balbo  
Anjanette Butler  
Lauren Butschek  
Michelle Caraballo  
Anastasia Cavanaugh  
Amanda Cernicek  
Amanda Clark  
Sharon Cooper  
Jordan Covington  
Pamela Cox  
    in honor of Dr. & Mrs. Alan  
    Roberts  
Molli Crenshaw  
    in honor of Joy Crenshaw  
Alondra Criss  
David Cylkowski  
Meredith Daigrepont  
Dara Dallas, MD  
Carolyn Dobson  
Rae Doss  
    in honor of  
    Dr. & Mrs. Alan Roberts  
Sarah Dudley  
Kelley Durrant  
M. Boone DuVall\*  
Christopher Ericson  
Julie Etter  
Amy Foster  
Jennifer & Christopher Gage  
Rebecca Gibson  
    in memory of Henry Piccolo  
Merrill Glasgow  
    in honor of Gaylord Lummis  
Christina Gorczynski  
Barbara Greer  
Bill Hallgren  
Kelly Hanes  
    in memory of Christian Kelly  
    Hanes

Rachel Harrison  
Gina Hill  
Katie Hoefert  
Amna Iftikhar  
Carrie Ives  
Yvette Johnson, MD  
Prameela Karimi, MD  
Mahathi Katragadda  
Linda Kiraly  
Jake & Gloria Kuykendall  
Katelin Lanting  
Emily Latiolais  
Leslie Leach  
Mary & Sammy Lewis  
Philip Marinelli, DO  
Brian Meadors  
Dr. & Mrs. Darryl & Winjie Miao  
Mary Miller  
Melissa O'Neill  
Joel & Kathy Parker  
Kristen Parker  
Melissa Parra  
Adrian & Bianca Perez  
Jyoti Rawat  
Mary Ashley Ray  
Mr. & Mrs. Bradley Richter  
Ashley Robbins  
Sarah Romack  
Erica & Daniel Salzman  
Margaret Sanders  
Lisa Schiller  
Jamie Schweitzer  
    in honor of  
    Dr. & Mrs. Alan Roberts  
Sean and Brooke Scogin  
Rebecca Skaparas  
Kristin Sloane  
Erin Hamilton Spence, MD  
Melvin & Brenda Starks  
Christi Stinson  
Susan Sward-Comunelli, MD  
Kim Terrell  
Verral Tolia  
Amy Trotter  
Genna Tucker  
Samantha Valadez

Amy Vickers  
Kimberly Wagner  
Brittany Walker  
Sharon Washburn  
Amanda Welky  
Sarah Wetzler  
Anna Williams  
Shanequa Williams  
Stephanie Whitman  
    in memory of William O. Sward  
Sarah Zamzow  
Sally Zukoski



Curbside donation drop-off



mothers' milk bank  
of north texas

EST. 2004

## JOIN OUR MISSION:



**Call us** to donate your extra  
breastmilk: 817-810-0071



**Make a gift** to support our programs:  
[texasmilkbank.org/donate](http://texasmilkbank.org/donate)



**Volunteer** to make a hands-on  
impact: [a.trotter@texasmilkbank.org](mailto:a.trotter@texasmilkbank.org)



**Learn more** about milk banking:  
[www.texasmilkbank.org](http://www.texasmilkbank.org)



MOTHERS' MILK BANK OF NORTH TEXAS  
7617 BENBROOK PARKWAY  
FORT WORTH, TX 76126  
817-810-0071

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