



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**MFAN distributes 1,000,000 meals to military families**

*Nonprofit reaches milestone in fight against hunger, vows to continue to address issue*

WASHINGTON – A promise to deliver urgent relief to military and veteran families experiencing food insecurity has materialized in Killeen, Texas.

The Military Family Advisory Network (MFAN), a national military service organization, provided their one millionth meal to a military household during a food distribution event near Fort Hood today.

It's all part of the organization's [1 Million Meals Challenge](#), a nationwide campaign to combat the upsetting trend of rising hunger rates in the military. In 2019, MFAN's research revealed that [one in eight national survey respondents](#) were experiencing food insecurity. That number rose to [one in five](#) in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In April 2021, MFAN decided to put their research into action. And with the help of CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell, the [1 Million Meals Challenge was introduced](#) on a national stage.

The campaign promised to bring together key players – corporate sponsors, military families, food bank partners, elected officials, military leaders, and subject matter experts – to identify both immediate and long-term solutions to food insecurity. MFAN announced a three-pronged approach; hosting local food distributions in areas of the country where food support is needed most, connecting families to ongoing support and resources, and conducting research to understand and ultimately address underlying factors that lead to food insecurity among military families.

The 1 Million Meals Challenge has not only helped to feed America's military families, but has been a powerful tool in elevating the issue of food insecurity to a national, mainstream audience and has lessened stigma and promoted help-seeking behavior.

"So much of the battle against food insecurity is education and awareness," said Delia Johnson, MFAN's director of programs and an active duty Air Force spouse. "We've heard from the families who have attended our events that they feel valued, appreciated, and that our

volunteers have made them feel welcome rather than embarrassed. As military spouses, we can often feel apprehensive to ask for assistance, but the more we can normalize the conversation the more we hope families will seek the help they need to thrive.”

The distribution of the one millionth meal to a family on-site at the Food Care Center in Killeen, Texas is a special culmination of everyone’s contributions over the past year. In fact, the first-ever 1 Million Meals Challenge event was held in conjunction with the Food Care Center.

“It has been an honor to partner with the Military Family Advisory Network to shine a spotlight on food insecurity among military families and to march together to provide meals to military families in need in our community and country,” said Raymond Cockrell, Food Care Center’s executive director. “It seems only fitting that we will hit one million meals served here at the Food Care Center since this is where this journey all started over a year ago.”

To military families, this is about more than meal.

"Combined with current events and the stresses of military life, the food and the friendly faces made our day," said an active duty Army spouse who attended the MFAN food distribution event. "It is a relief to know we won't have to go hungry. Thank you all."

In total, MFAN has delivered real results and made a direct impact in the lives of military families through the 1 Million Meals Challenge, including:

- Distributing over **1,000,000 meals to military families** since May 2021
- Serving over **6,500 military families** locally within the span of five months
- Hosting **12 food distribution events** near Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Fort Hood, Texas, San Antonio, Texas, Norfolk, Virginia, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington
- Tyson Foods donating over **400,000 pounds of product**
- Each family receiving an average of **50 pounds of nutritious food** at every distribution – including protein, seasonal produce, breakfast items, canned goods, and household products – at no cost

“I’ve had the pleasure of meeting so many heroes at food distribution events throughout the year, and it breaks my heart to see these families struggling,” said Shannon Razzadin, MFAN president and executive director and an active duty Navy spouse. “I am incredibly grateful for the families who have shown up at these events. You put your family first and made it easier for others to do the same.”

This effort was only made possible by the collective will and backing from partners and supporters. The Bob Woodruff Foundation, Wounded Warrior Project, Cigna, CVS Health, and Humana Military each sponsored food distribution events. Tyson Foods served as the protein partner for the entire series, donating truckloads of product and providing industry expertise at each event. Local partners Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore, Food Care Center – Killeen, Manna Church, Nourish Pierce County, and San Antonio Food Bank provided

host venues, staff and volunteers, and logistics support. Food Lifeline, Coastal Pacific, MDV SpartanNash, and the major suppliers of the commissary such as Kellogg's, P&G, DelMonte, and many more offered hundreds of thousands of pounds of produce, dry goods, and household products. MFAN's individual donors and volunteers, as well as the generous viewers of CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell, raised vital funds and awareness. And most importantly, our nation's service members, veterans, and their families compelled us all to take action.

While MFAN and its partners have made significant headway, ending food insecurity among military and veteran families is a complex, decades-old issue that will require further response.

In a video released to supporters today, MFAN recommitted to the cause and outlined the organization's plans to continue the fight against military hunger in the coming year.

"We are just getting started," said Razsadin. "We've already scheduled additional food distribution events across the country in 2022 where food relief is most needed. Next year, MFAN is also bringing together military families, elected officials, civilian leaders, and military service organizations for a solutions summit to identify innovative approaches to alleviate hunger and get food more directly to military families so that they don't have to attend events like these. We are also working with our partners to make sure that those who interact with military families know how to identify food insecurity and get families the help they need."

To learn more and to join MFAN in making a difference in the lives of military families experiencing food insecurity, visit [combatmilitaryhunger.org](https://combatmilitaryhunger.org).

[Watch the video message](#) from MFAN's leadership and [download event photos](#).

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**About MFAN:** The Military Family Advisory Network is the authentic voice of the modern military family and the bridge that connects military families to the resources, people, and information they depend on to successfully navigate all phases of military life. To learn more about MFAN, visit [militaryfamilyadvisorynetwork.org](https://militaryfamilyadvisorynetwork.org).