

THE MEAL TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF MEALS ON WHEELS CENTRAL TEXAS



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MEALS ON WHEELS
CENTRAL TEXAS



Meet MOWCTX's New CEO, Adam Hauser Dan Pruett Retires and Passes the Torch to Hauser

Adam Hauser's fierce passion for helping the homebound was triggered by a single tray of food three decades ago.

Hauser, a young attorney at the time, signed up to be a Meals on Wheels volunteer a few years after graduating from the University of Texas School of Law. "I was hooked as soon as I handed a meal to that first client. I immediately grasped the beauty and importance of the mission – to help older adults and people with disabilities maintain their independence with dignity," he recalls.

Five-thousand meals and 29 years later, Hauser still takes time every Friday to deliver hot food and warm smiles to the homebound people we are honored to serve. But these days, he's both a volunteer and President & CEO of Meals on Wheels Central Texas.

The MOWCTX Board of Directors named Hauser to replace Dan Pruett, who retired March 31, 2017 after 14 years at the helm of the agency. Hauser was well known to the board, having spent 17 years on the governing



New MOWCTX President & CEO Adam Hauser during a recent visit to client Vicki Ratcliffe's North Austin home.

body, including two years (2006-2008) as Board Chair. In fact, he was on the search committee that hired Pruett as President & CEO in 2003.

Hauser has extensive experience

in leading successful teams. He was Managing Partner at Brown McCarroll, a local law firm, and later was the Office Managing Partner at the Austin office of Husch Blackwell LLP, a national legal firm, after its merger with Brown McCarroll. His predecessor, Pruett, believes that strong work history combined with Hauser's unyielding devotion to the MOWCTX mission makes him the perfect person to head the agency. "Adam has a mind for business and a heart for helping those in need. He knows what it takes to empower people to perform their jobs in ways that not only assist and inspire the client, but also the people doing the work," Pruett says.

Hauser credits Pruett for dramatically increasing both the number of life-sustaining services MOWCTX provides, as well as the number of homebound people it serves. "Under Dan's

(Continued on back page)

Federal Funding for Meals on Wheels at Risk

Meals on Wheels organizations across the U.S. will find out in a few weeks whether proposed funding cuts that reduce federal dollars to MOW programs are included in the White House's final 2018 budget plan.

In March, the Trump Administration released its budget blueprint, which called for the elimination of a number of federal programs, including the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Many Meals on Wheels programs rely on CSBG and CDBG money to deliver nutritious food, safety checks, and friendly visits to our most vulnerable seniors.

At the same time, the blueprint did not give any details about funding for the Older Americans Act (OAA), a primary source of federal dollars for senior nutrition programs. OAA accounts for, on average, 35% of total funding

for Meals on Wheels programs nationally. Details about OAA will be included in the administration's final budget plan, which will be released in May.

"I think it shows an incredible lack of understanding at the highest levels of government at how effective Meals on Wheels is," says Adam Hauser, President & CEO of MOWCTX. "We hope the White House and Congress will come to realize that programs like ours save taxpayers money, and that millions of homebound older adults depend on our life-sustaining services." (See sidebar graphics)


If you believe federal funding for Meals on Wheels programs should not be reduced, we ask you to contact your U.S. Representative and both U.S. Senators from Texas. To find out who represents you in Congress, as well as contact information,

please go to www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/

**MEALS ON WHEELS
CENTRAL TEXAS SAVES
TAXPAYERS MONEY**

\$2,100/year
cost to provide lunch meals,
safety checks and a wide array
of other services to a client

\$40,000/year
cost for a client to be in
an assisted living facility



**MEALS ON WHEELS
CENTRAL TEXAS CLIENTS
DEPEND ON OUR SERVICES**

98% of our clients say their overall quality of life has improved due to our free services

96% of our clients say they feel more socially connected because of daily visits by our dedicated volunteers

99% of our clients say they feel the volunteers who deliver their meals care about their well-being



Amplify Austin Amps Up Giving!

Our holistic approach to helping older adults maintain their independence certainly resonated with generous Central Texans taking part in Amplify Austin 2017.

The final tally of the 24-hour festival of on-line giving, which took place on March 2-3, revealed Meals on Wheels Central Texas had raised \$132,000! The amount includes matching gifts from our wonderful partners at

Saint David's Foundation and University Federal Credit Union.



Overall, the event collected more than \$9.8 million for approximately 700 local nonprofits. Many thanks to St. David's Foundation, University Federal Credit Union, and everyone who made a donation!

Follow us:



Friends Team Up to Deliver Meals and Compassion

"I think you brought it up, didn't you," Julie Fernandez – Helton asks her good friend, Maria Rodriguez.

The two women are trying to remember what prompted them to become Meals on Wheels volunteers. There's a good reason why the details are a little fuzzy – the pair began delivering our hot, nutritious lunches 20 years ago.

They first met one another five years before that when they both started working in the Communications Department at Capital Metro. They found they enjoyed each other's company and a friendship blossomed. In 1997, "someone (from Meals on Wheels) came and did a presentation to Capital Metro, and afterward, I said 'ah, I want to do that'," Maria recalls.

She quickly recruited Julie; the two went through our volunteer



Maria Rodriguez (l) and Julie Fernandez-Helton have been Meals on Wheels volunteers since 1997.

orientation training and began delivering healthy food to our homebound clients in East Austin.

In the two decades since then, our agency has added a vast array of programs to the list of services we provide. East Austin has also evolved as the effects of gentrification squeeze many of our clients out of the neighborhood due to skyrocketing property values. But Maria and Julie insist one thing hasn't changed.

"The mission is still the same. We meet some great people and some folks that really need the service," Julie says. "Our visits are important to a lot of these people. Sometimes it's the only connection they have, we're the only people they might see all day," adds Maria.

Besides giving back to their community, their volunteer efforts also afford them time to visit during their deliveries. "We get to chat along the way," Maria says. "I always drive because she has a terrible sense of direction," Julie says of her friend. Regardless of who's driving, the two plan to keep delivering those lunches for years to come. "It's just another part of our friendship that we do," Maria states. She quickly adds "hopefully we can continue doing this until we have to get Meals on Wheels ourselves."

Dan Pruett Honored for Helping Older Adults

Austin Mayor Steve Adler recently issued a proclamation honoring Dan Pruett, who retired on March 31 after 14 years as President/CEO of MOWCTX.

Mayor Adler praised Pruett for being "a vocal advocate for Central Texas' older adults – particularly those who are most vulnerable. Under Dan's leadership, MOWCTX expanded its meal service delivery area and added 11 quality programs to improve the lives of older adults and enable a holistic approach to client services."

The proclamation, which also referenced Pruett being Past Chair of the Austin Commission on Seniors and Past Chair of One Voice Central Texas, declared

Thursday, April 6, 2017 as Dan Pruett Day in Austin.

Congratulations on this well-deserved honor, Dan!



Austin Mayor Steve Adler declared Thursday, April 6, 2017 as Dan Pruett Day in the capital city. (l-r: Austin City Councilmember Leslie Pool, Mayor Adler, Dan Pruett, Susan Pruett, and Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo).

“Meals on Wheels Helps Me Stay Independent”

AA glance at Golda Huston’s resume reveals a fascinating journey from the dusty cotton fields of West Texas to the trendy department stores of Manhattan.

Ms. Huston grew up on a cotton farm. “I worked in the fields with my brothers,” she recalls. In her early 20’s, she started work at a clothing store in Abilene. She soon found she had a knack for fashion and that skill launched a career

Lone Star State. “I’m glad I’m from West Texas because they’re down to earth and they made me appreciate everything, and I still do appreciate everything,” she says. That’s especially true of Meals on Wheels Central Texas and its dedicated volunteers. She’s been receiving our nutritious lunches since 1996. “Those that deliver the meals, they’re so friendly. They’re like your best friends,” says Ms. Huston.



Golda Huston (3rd from right) poses for a photo with the Meals on Wheels volunteers who deliver her lunch every Friday.

that included managing fashion stores in New York and selling couture at Saks Fifth Avenue in Beverly Hills, CA. Ms. Huston also was a modeling instructor, a charm school operator and, eventually, a high-end buyer for the old Yaring’s department store in Austin.

Now 95 years old, Ms. Huston lives alone in a North Austin apartment and stays busy tending her potted plants. “I think the way to stay youthful is to keep doing things. My aunt told me a long time ago, ‘use it or lose it,’” she tells a visitor. Ms. Huston embraces her years spent working in New York and L.A., but she remains true to her roots in the

Several of her “best friends” come to visit every Friday. That’s when Mary Marcia Kirkland, her friend, Jennifer Wilcoxson, and Wilcoxson’s five children, deliver meals to the woman they affectionately call “Ms. Golda”. “Ms. Golda just took a liking to all five of these kids. She’s like another grandmother to them,” says Kirkland. “Oh, they mean a lot to me. Their momma knows that. I call them my kids. I look forward to seeing them every time,” Ms. Huston says with a smile.

But our help doesn’t end with the home-delivered meals. Ms. Huston is also a client of our Groceries to Go (GTG) program. Her GTG

GRATITUDE

- Carl C. Anderson, Sr. & Marie Jo Anderson Charitable Foundation
- Austin Empty Bowl
- Austin Start up Games and Boundless
- Boomerang’s Pies
- James R. Dougherty, Jr. Foundation
- HDR Foundation
- The Jacob & Therese Hershey Foundation
- The High Road at Dawson
- Mac N Cheese fest by Austin Food Magazine
- Planet K
- St. David’s Foundation
- Salt Lick BBQ
- Snout by Snoutwest
- Strake Foundation
- Tito’s Handmade Vodka
- Topfer Family Foundation

volunteer helps her on a regular basis with grocery shopping.

Ms. Huston credits MOWCTX with helping her live on her own: “They have improved my whole pattern of life,” she says. “Meals on Wheels helps me stay independent.”

Adam's Corner

Dear Friends,

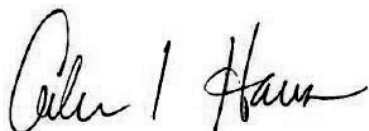
Little did I know when I began volunteering for Meals on Wheels in 1988 the powerful impact this indispensable non-profit and the vulnerable people it serves would have on my life. As I step into the voluminous shoes of my predecessor and dear friend, Dan Pruett, I am deeply honored to lead an agency that offers a vast array of services designed to address the myriad needs older adults and people with disabilities often face.

Here at MOWCTX, we care for the “whole” person. Our volunteers know we offer more than a meal, providing companionship and safety checks for our homebound clients, as well as a number of other life-affirming services. Helping our clients with the assistance they need in order to age in place with dignity is the right thing to do. It's also a much more cost-effective approach than the drastically more expensive alternative of assisted living.

I am committed to our holistic philosophy of helping low income older adults maintain their independence. We will continue to build upon our strong infrastructure of nourishing programs for the people we serve and, at the same time, be an entrepreneurial incubator for new and innovative ways to assist our neighbors in need.

Our free services are made possible thanks to your generous support, financial and otherwise. All of us at MOWCTX thank you for your continued support of our mission and the incredible impact you have on our clients' lives.

With Deep Gratitude,
Adam



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Adam Hauser
Meals on Wheels Central Texas

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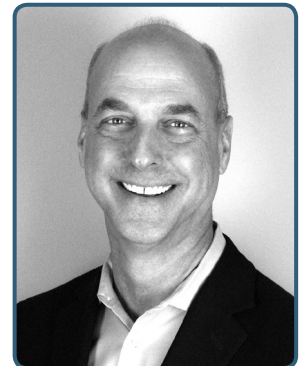
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Glass Blowers Perfect the Art of Giving

Dozens of the best glass artists in Texas will converge on Austin in May to help raise money for MOWCTX.

They'll be taking part in the Armadillo Art Glass Initiative (AAGI) on Friday-Sunday, May 19-21. AAGI is an organization of glass artists dedicated to helping people in need. The group's

annual spring festival spotlights artisans from across the Lone Star State, and features live glass blowing demonstrations, art booths, a silent auction, food trucks, and live music. All proceeds benefit MOWCTX. Since 2013, AAGI has raised \$145,000 for Meals on Wheels Central Texas!

What: Armadillo Art Glass Initiative Spring Festival

When: Friday-Sunday, May 19- 21

Where: Grav Labs (3501 Dime Circle, Austin, 78744)

Urban Roots Teams Up with HOPE Program to Help Seniors

HOPE Coordinator Nora Salinas (top right) poses with youth volunteers from our great partners at Urban Roots. The youngsters donated 300 heads of lettuce they grew themselves; they then helped distribute the nutritious greens to our HOPE



clients. HOPE (Healthy Options Program for the Elderly) is a grocery delivery service providing additional food items to seniors and adults with disabilities who have been identified as being the most nutritionally at risk.

Meet MOWCTX's New CEO, Adam Hauser (cont.)

wise leadership, this agency grew and further expanded programs designed to enrich the lives of the people we serve. We're definitely going to keep that momentum going," Hauser says.

He envisions MOWCTX as a "one-stop shop" for low-income, homebound Central Texans – an agency that can quickly assess the needs of people seeking its services and then rapidly address those needs in a holistic manner. "We already help our clients with a wide array of services such as home-delivered meals, home repair, in-home personal care, specialized care for Veterans, respite care for people suffering from memory loss, and pet food

and basic veterinary care for our clients' beloved pets – and that's just a portion of the programs we already offer. But we're also ramping up programs designed to connect older adults with technology as well as telehealth treatment for depression," says



MOWCTX President & CEO Adam Hauser greets volunteers during his first day on the job

Hauser. "We will continue to explore new, innovative and cost-effective ways to serve our most vulnerable neighbors, allow them to age safely in their own homes with dignity, AND save taxpayers money in the process," he adds.

Nearly three decades after delivering that pivotal plate of food, Adam Hauser relishes the road ahead: "I look forward to working with and learning from MOWCTX's amazing staff, committed board of directors, dedicated volunteers, and generous donors and partners. I love this organization, its people, its mission, and I'm deeply honored and humbled to serve as its leader."