

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Miss Houston, Betsy Uschkrat entertains East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry Volunteers during National Volunteer Week

Sugar Land, Texas, (April 21, 2005) – Fort Bend County residents who share their time and talents to make a difference in our community by helping the hungry and those in need were honored during National Volunteer Week, April 17-23. Sugar Land First United Methodist Church hosted **East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry's** Volunteer Appreciation dinner on Thursday, April 21, 2005. Miss Houston, Betsy Uschkrat whose platform is to help the hungry, thanked and encouraged volunteers for their selfless work and dedication to helping the needy in her home community. Miss Houston then entertained the volunteers with some songs. Ms. Uschkrat will be graduating next month from the University of Houston.

During National Volunteer Week, EFBHNM joined other organizations throughout the country not only to applaud the efforts of volunteers, but also to encourage others to get involved in helping strengthen their communities. Last year (2004), **4765 volunteers** contributed **25,443 hours** to the Interfaith Food Pantry, Financial Assistance Program and Tri-City Churches Resale Shop. This year, volunteers have an additional program to volunteer their time and talents to. In February of 2005, EFBHNM opened the doors to their newest program – Fort Bend Family Promise. Fort Bend Family Promise was created to provide shelter, meals, and comprehensive support to homeless families.

“It’s easy to overlook the importance of volunteers because they rarely sing their own praises; yet they change so many lives,” said Robert K. Goodwin, president and chief executive officer of the Points of Light Foundation. “National Volunteer Week is a way of saying ‘Thank you!’ to the selfless men, women, and young people who embody the American spirit of caring for one another.”

Goodwin noted that according to Bureau of Labor Statistics’ latest study on volunteers, over 64 million Americans volunteered their time – nearly 29 percent of the population. “We hope that National Volunteer Week will inspire others to become volunteers,” concluded Goodwin.

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National Volunteer Week began in 1974, when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing an annual celebration of volunteering. Every president since has signed a proclamation promoting the week.

Call 281-261-1006 or visit www.humanneeds.org to learn more about volunteer opportunities at East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry.

East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry, Inc. is a 501©(3), non-profit, charitable organization comprised of a coalition of twenty-five local congregations who, through their desire to serve God, address the basic human needs of families in financial crisis in East Fort Bend County. The crises often result from illness, temporary loss of employment, family breakdown, and lack of resources. Programs include: Adopt-a-Family, Financial Assistance, Food Fair, Food Pantry, Supply our Students (S.O.S.), Tri-City Churches Resale Shop, and the newest program, Fort Bend Family Promise, which provides shelter, meals and compassionate assistance for homeless. For more information contact East Fort Bend Human Needs Ministry, Inc. at (281) 261-1006; email: EFBHNM@ev1.net; visit our website: www.humanneeds.org; or drop by our offices at 425 Stafford Run in Stafford.

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