

For Immediate Release
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Fort Worth chef named Volunteer of the Year by regional food bank

FORT WORTH, TX (April 15, 2009) – Tom McGrath III, owner and executive chef of Ultimate Cuisine and Events in Fort Worth, will be honored Thursday, April 23, 2009 for his volunteer service to Tarrant Area Food Bank during a reception recognizing volunteers from 4 to 6 p.m. at the Food Bank, 2600 Cullen St., Fort Worth 76107.

Chef Tom, as he is known, will be presented the DEBBY BROWN VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD for his contributions of time and talent to the food bank's Operation Frontline nutrition education and cooking program for low-income families and for his other volunteer activities with the regional food bank.

Over the past year, Chef Tom has devoted almost 150 hours of volunteer work to Tarrant Area Food Bank's Operation Frontline program, nearly 100 hours of it to teach healthy nutrition and cooking on a budget to adults, children, teens and senior citizens from low-income households. He also trains other volunteers for the program and, to raise money for the program, he has served on the steering committee for Chefs Holiday Pantry by the local chapter of the TEXAS CHEFS ASSOCIATION. In addition to the hours given to Operation Frontline, he has donated soups for five consecutive years to the Food Bank's premier fundraising event, Empty Bowls—An Artful Luncheon to End Hunger.

Upon learning of the Volunteer of the Year award from Tarrant Area Food Bank, Chef Tom talked about how he became involved with nutrition education for low-income families. "When I started out in business, I was overloaded with requests to give donations to all types of charities. You just can't help them all and stay in business. I was already donating and serving soup at the Empty Bowls event when Micheline [nutrition education manager at Tarrant Area Food Bank] came to me and did not ask for anything tangible, but just to come and share my knowledge with others.

"I committed to the request and started with Operation Frontline," continued Chef Tom. "Immediately after the first class I was hooked. It is such a good feeling to see less fortunate people actually learn something that can help them in life. They were truly interested in the information that we presented, and I knew that I was here for a reason. I so enjoy the children's classes, seeing their faces light

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up and their determination to do what is right. Sometimes you just know when you have touched someone, and truly made a difference for the rest of the child's life," he concluded.

Last year, 3,400 VOLUNTEERS DONATED NEARLY 50,000 HOURS OF SERVICE TO TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK in its efforts to eliminate local hunger.

TARRANT AREA FOOD BANK and its network of 300 hunger-relief programs, each month, distribute emergency food to about 35,000 families and serve more than 500,000 meals and snacks on agency sites. This network of food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters and other social services agencies serves low-wage workers and their families, economically disadvantaged children in childcare and after-school programs, elderly and chronically ill or disabled individuals on fixed incomes, family violence victims, homeless families, laid-off workers and others in need.

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