



Loretta and David Elledge, third and fourth from left, with the 2021 BHP Community Quarterback Finalist Award winners.

Elledges Win Community Quarterback Award

For over 20 years, the dynamic duo of Loretta and David Elledge has devoted time, talent and compassion to the mission of CCSC. Their outstanding dedication recently earned the Elledges a 2021 Houston Texans BHP Community Quarterback Finalist Award.

The BHP Community Quarterback awards, developed by United Way of Greater Houston, the Houston Texans and BHP, recognize "individuals who have shown true volunteer leadership in their communities and have gone above and beyond in their volunteer roles," according to the United Way. Nine Community Quarterback award finalists were honored at the December 5 Texans game and each received a \$5,000 gift in their name to their respective organizations.

"David and Loretta have been central to CCC's work, having positively impacted nearly every work area," said Executive Director Michelle Shonbeck. "Because of their good judgment, commitment to CCSC's clients and mission, and reliability, staff members in all work areas have engaged them in various projects throughout the years. I don't think they've ever said 'no' to us, and they always serve with a joyous heart."

The husband-wife team has volunteered in CCSC's administration, finance, development, Emergency Services, and Youth Services programs. They have served clients directly and also held board positions and chairmanships, but the Emergency Services and Youth Services programs are closest to the Elledges' hearts.

"The best part about volunteering with CCSC is helping people, especially those who need food or financial assistance with rent or utilities. And, of course, the youth programs," David said. "It's wonderful to bring children books and toys at the holidays, but also to give the family food so that it can be a real family celebration," Loretta added. "The basic needs and youth programs help so many people and that is important to us."

"I look forward to every Tuesday when I go to the food pantry. I get to work with a wonderful group of people who have become my friends and we enjoy working together, helping clients," David said. "We do the work, but we also have a lot of fun. It is an extraordinary experience to provide clients with such a basic need as food."

"CCSC is thrilled to see David and Loretta recognized in the community for the commitment we have seen on a daily basis over many years," Shonbeck said. "They generously share their skills and time with our organization, greatly enhancing our ability to serve the vulnerable in our community. Our staff team loves and respects them and joins me in saying thank you to the Houston Texans for this honor."



Mariela P. shows Jingle Bell Express volunteers the sign her daughter made to thank CCSC for providing her family with toys, books and a gift card for food this Christmas.

Jingle Bell Express Delivers Christmas Cheer

More than 1,700 children received Christmas toys and books through CCSC's Jingle Bell Express program this year, and the constant among the families was gratitude.

"The number one best part is just seeing their faces, the happiness," said Melissa Murray, a first-time Jingle Bell Express volunteer and member of National Charity League Heart of Texas, a CCSC community partner. "The parents are all truly grateful. The kids are all waving from the cars and saying thank you. They've all said thank you and Merry Christmas."

"This is just so helpful," said Jennifer R. as she picked up her gift bags at the drive-thru event. "I can now say my kids will have a good Christmas this year. With COVID, having a disabled child, and having only my husband working right now, it's been hard. All I can say is thank you. God is good."

"I wasn't expecting the gift card," said Keila V., a first-time Jingle Bell recipient. "Toys, books and a \$100 gift card make it Christmas for the whole family."

"Jingle Bell is a terrific program because it satisfies a variety of needs for clients, not only toys and books but also a gift card for food," said 2021 Jingle Bell Express Committee Chair Julie Gremillion, who is in her fifth year serving on the committee.

"We had a tremendous amount of high-quality, really generous donations this year that allowed us to provide a bit more than normal and to put pretty much exactly what each family asked for in every gift bag," said Youth Services Program Manager Cathy Brown. "And, once again, we had the generous support of the Ladies for Literacy Guild - Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation, so that each child received two to three books.

"So many people came together to make this event happen," Brown said. "We'd like to especially thank our Jingle Bell Express Committee: Chair Julie Gremillion, Manju Monga, Cyndi Coselli, Mylene Bole, Kristy Trieu, Marty Speer, Cindy Featherston, Beth Cooper, Leigh

Anne Hill, Steve Hurysz, Sandra Kang, Patti Osburn, and Steve Smith. This team thought of everything to make our drive-thru successful.

"Thanks also go to our churches, schools, businesses and community groups that held donation drives," Brown added. "And a special shout out to Rev. Seann Duffin and Rev. Lataya Simpson and the congregation of Bellaire United Methodist Church for hosting Jingle Bell. Bellaire UMC has been a phenomenal host site. This year they provided us storage space from October on and that was so helpful.

"Our other thanks, as always, go out to all the volunteers that organized toys, packed gift bags, ran the drive-thru and made sure the right bags got into the right cars," Brown said. "Everyone did exactly what needed to be done to make Jingle Bell Express 2021 a great success."

Our Food Pantry Cup Runneth Over

Thanks in great part to recent food drives conducted by CCSC member churches, and schools, businesses and service organizations, our Emergency Services food pantries are well stocked for the holidays.

Donation drives are a highly effective, meaningful and relatively simple way to raise awareness about hunger in the community. Church and community food drives encourage others to help our neighbors in need.



Each day at CCSC's two food pantries we witness how hunger impacts every aspect of the Greater Houston community. Many do not realize that two of every five people we feed is a child. Other clients include adults facing serious illness, seniors living on limited incomes, and those facing job loss or transition.

CCSC is fortunate to have such a broad range of supporters who donate groceries. "Food drives keep our shelves filled and bring in such a great variety of items," said Emergency Services-Central Manager Lydia Bias. "In November, our Emergency Services sites provided 2,419 food packages of nutritious groceries to Houstonians in need."

Thank you to all CCSC's donors and volunteers for thinking of others and sharing your abundance in this special season.

CCSC Event Updates: Save These Dates in 2022

Thank you all for the tremendous outpouring of love and support at our Azalea Gala in November. We were overwhelmed by your response.

Save the date for the 25th annual Azalea Gala on September 21, 2022. In the spring, we will share more information on how to purchase tables and tickets for the Azalea Gala.

Please add our next event to your calendar. We are launching a new annual event, the CCSC Fostering Hope Luncheon, on Saturday, March 5, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at 1811 Briar Oaks Lane.

The luncheon will feature a panel discussion with CCSC program staff and Pastor Clint Reiff of Rice Temple Baptist Church. We will be sharing reflections on CCSC's service to the community during this challenging pandemic season. Staff and volunteers implemented



several changes and innovations to our programs to meet these challenging times and these innovations enabled us to serve clients in unique and meaningful ways. Watch for more information and opportunities to purchase a table or tickets for the luncheon.

The Fostering Hope Luncheon will replace our long-running Grow, Gather & Give! annual event. Thank you to the many volunteers and attendees who helped make the Grow, Gather & Give! events successful. We are excited about this new luncheon format and can't wait to share insights on the impact of your partnership with CCSC.

We are grateful for your support over the years at our fundraising events, and we are excited to see you again next year at the luncheon and the gala!

Our mission is to serve the poor, hungry, disabled, and otherwise needy while respecting their religious, ethnic or cultural differences.



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