

# Phillips Murrah Dallas Office Volunteers at Family Gateway Shelter



From left: Wanda Stephens, Angela Buchanan, Janet Hendrick, Charli Pierrelouis, Trent Jenkins, Kim Kelly, Laurel Baker, and Michele Spillman. Photo by Mark Golman.

On April 17, attorneys and staff from Phillips Murrah's Dallas office volunteered their time to help assemble snack bags for children who arrive daily at the Family Gateway facility.

Family Gateway is a Dallas organization that assists families with children experiencing near-homelessness. They operate the only emergency shelter in Dallas that serves all types of families and keeps them together, including those with boys over age 12 who are often separated from their families at other shelters. They provide affordable housing, education, and employment opportunities in the community.

According to the [Family Gateway website](#): “Many shelters have restrictions on what constitutes a family or have multiple requirements that families must overcome before they can be housed; here a grandmother/grandchild, single mother/child, single father/child, a married couple with child – all are welcome.”

[Michele C. Spillman](#), a Phillips Murrah Director in the Firm’s [Dallas office](#), organized the group activity. Also participating were Directors [Mark Golman](#) and [Janet Hendrick](#), attorneys [Laurel Baker](#), [Angela Buchanan](#), and [Kim Kelly](#), and staff members Trent Jenkins, Charli Pierrelouis, and Wanda Stephens.

“Family Gateway is an organization my family started partnering with during the pandemic,” Michele said. “We were looking for a volunteer opportunity to participate in as a family, but with the shut-down, there were very few on-site opportunities. I came across Family Gateway and really loved their mission. I reached out to see how we could help and learned about the snack bags they provide—which are so needed and such a fun group project to do off-site. We’ve hosted several in-home events where my daughters and their friends assemble snack bags, and I thought it could be a good group activity for our office. With a small office of only 9, I hope this would be a team building opportunity that would allow us to contribute to this incredible organization.”

The Phillips Murrah group assembled a total of 120 snack bags, each of which included non-perishable items such as juice boxes, granola bars, fruit snacks, goldfish, and raisins.

Family Gateway operates three emergency shelters for families with children, including a 35-room shelter in downtown Dallas, a 50-room shelter at a former Candlewood Suites property in Far North Dallas in partnership with the City of Dallas, and 10 rooms at The Salvation Army. According to their website, their shelter rooms turn over on an ongoing basis as families

gain self-sufficiency and move into a different level of housing support. They provide arrangements with apartment complexes across Dallas to house more than 200 additional families who need a different level of support.

To volunteer at Family Gateway, [click here](#).

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