



Texas Health Resources is a faith-based nonprofit health care system. The health system currently provides care for 16 different counties across North Texas. As a market share leader, more North Texans choose Texas Health Resources for their care than any other health care system. Its growth across the state of Texas is unprecedented. The Texas Health Resources system values respect, integrity, compassion, and excellence. It consists of 29 different hospitals that employ over 29,000 employees.

The hospital care system has also found itself for the last 11 years in a row ranked on the Fortune 100's best Companies to Work For list and Best Workplaces in Health

Care. The vision of partnering with its patients for a lifetime of health and well-being and its mission to improve the health of the people in the communities that it serves is one that its current foundation employee Alicia Barker, takes seriously.

She has worked for the foundation for over two years. Her role as the annual giving specialist in the north region has taught her a lot about the importance of growth and strength within a community. "Our foundation at Texas Health Resources is rooted in the belief that everyone deserves a chance to be healthy, receive proper treatment, and have a lifelong journey of wellness," she explained with an uplifting tone of voice. "While a lot of people know about the health care aspect of Texas Health Resources, they don't all know about what the health care system does with its foundation. The foundation focuses on a variety of different philanthropic projects."

One of the many current projects that Texas Health is involved in is called Community Strong Farms, a 14-acre community garden that helps fill an empty void in the city of Sanger. Community Strong Farms was established as part of the Together Harnessing Resources to Give Individuals

Voice and Empowerment (THRIVE) program. This program, which addresses behavioral health and nutrition security for school age children and their families in Sanger, was funded through two Texas Health Community Impact grants totaling over \$600,000.



The idea to expand the garden was originally pitched to Cross Timbers Rotary by Danelle Parker, Director of Community Impact in the Denton-Wise-Parker and Collin Regions. The goal was to provide continued support for the THRIVE project. As a result, the project has served as an extra-curricular and co-curricular program for students at Linda Tutt High Schools in addition to the original THRIVE program goals to improve mental health and nutrition insecurities, and to also help teach



resiliency skills that may be needed to overcome childhood trauma.

"It's (the THRIVE program) free," Alicia begins. "There's no cost for those that need it the most. And the thing that I love the most about this is how it works. This makes our community stronger and healthier. It's built literally by the residents of the county, for the residents of the county. The Cross Timbers Rotary Club agreed to support the continued development for it and build a \$31,000-plus project including hoop houses and a rainwater catchment system."

The farm, which is managed by First Refuge Ministries in partnership with Denton County Master Gardeners Association, welcomes community volunteers on Mondays to help with various gardening tasks, such as planting and harvesting. Alicia said that the goal for this phase is to have the hoop houses and rainwater harvesting system finished by the end of June 2025.

"Once it's finished, we plan on holding an event at the farm so the community can see the garden and the farm, all the while networking with those who are directly involved in this community-wide project," Alicia said.

"We hope that once the hoop houses and rainwater catchment systems are fully finished that this is just the beginning of the Community Strong Farms and the foundation," Alicia said. "In all honesty, we could not have done this project without the robust leadership from Will Carlton and Bobby Dollak of Cross Timber Rotary Club, and Julie Wright of the THR

Community Impact. These individuals led numerous volunteers in the project. I mean really, we are truly grateful, and this is such an amazing thing for the community and the entire county."

Alicia believes in the project and is motivated by the thought of how something such as having a community farm in the

county can help others. She also takes it a step further.

"This is huge. The ability to have access to food is a life necessity. But to provide free access to healthy food, and see it change the lives of others like this..." she pauses briefly before adding... "It's a game changer."



Texas Health Resources wants to see individuals and families across the great state of Texas thrive. If you or somebody you know would like to take part in donating your time, money, or resources to help assist in a project like this, please check out [TexasHealth.org/Foundation](https://www.texashealth.org/foundation)

If you would like to see what the Cross Timbers Rotary Club is doing in the county, visit their website at [CrosstimbersRotary.com](https://www.CrosstimbersRotary.com)

