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Message from the CEO

Hello and welcome to the 2019 Family Support Services of Amarillo (FSS) Annual Report. On behalf of the FSS staff and the clients we serve, thank you for your interest in the services we deliver.

Here you will learn about the resources and help we provide to your friends, family members, neighbors, and you: behavioral health and counseling



services; crisis services, safety, and housing for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking survivors; assistance for veterans and their family members in need; and prevention and education services for people at every stage of life. It is my heartfelt belief that the more informed and educated you are about the services we provide, the more likely you and the people you know will be able to access our services when you need them, and know the positive difference they can make in your lives. Every day we aspire to be the best we can be at helping our fellow citizens in Amarillo and the Texas Panhandle.

We at FSS join you in having high expectations for the care and services we provide. Thank you, and please remember that your overall well-being is your most important possession, and we are here to help you protect and restore it.

Best regards,

Jim Womack Family Support Services of Amarillo, Inc

FSS Mission

To empower individuals and families through comprehensive advocacy, education, and intervention services.

The Right Thing to Do

Family Support Services is a private, non-profit, multi-service agency that has been providing services to those in need in Amarillo and the Texas Panhandle back to 1908.

We are proud to trace our roots back to Amarillo's first social charity. For over 100 years, volunteers, donors and staff of FSS and its predecessors have asked, "What can we do to help those in need?"

1908 - A group of businessmen met in the old Amarillo City Hall and asked themselves "What can we do to help those in need?" They decided to form Amarillo's first charity - Associated Charities... because no one else was doing it and it was the right thing to do.





1949 - Family Service of Amarillo was created to help both residents of Amarillo and travelers in need... because no one else was doing it and it was the right thing to do.

1975 - The High Plains Women's Political Caucus asked themselves "What can we do to help survivors of sexual assault?" They established Amarillo Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Service... because no one else was doing it and it was the right thing to do.

1993 - The Rape Crisis/Domestic Violence Center merged with the Family Guidance Center to form Family Support Services so that Amarillo residents in need would have access to a wide variety of crisis services, affordable counseling services and education services in one location... because no one else was doing it and it was the right thing to do.



1979 - Amarillo was in desperate need of a safe place to escape to for adults and children who were victims of domestic violence. Plans were drawn, grant requests were written, a shelter was built... because no one else was doing it and it was the right thing to do.



2014 – The Veteran Resource Center opened for veterans and their family members where they can build relationships with their peers, access valuable resources like employment resources, therapy, and other community referrals all in one place, or just have a place to come to where they feel like they belong... because no one else was doing it, and it was the right thing to do.

2020 – The FSS main office is destroyed in a fire. With the help of our community partners, we are able to continue to provide vital services as we transition to a new location. As the needs of the world change, so do the needs of the most vulnerable in our local community. Family Support Services will continue our mission to empower individuals and families through comprehensive advocacy, education, and intervention services and providing unduplicated services because it IS and always will be the Right Thing to Do.



Programs

- Crisis Services- 1,277 served
- Behavioral Health and Wellness- 6,215 served
- Education and Prevention- 6,764 served
- Veterans Resource Center- 805 Served
- Emergency Housing Services- 2,912 served

CRISIS SERVICES

The FSS Crisis Services Team provides assistance to victims of sexual assault, family violence and human trafficking in Amarillo and surrounding areas of the Texas Panhandle. Our programs are designed to provide safety as well as advocacy for victims, along with the prevention of these crimes.

Crisis Intervention and Advocacy Services are available on a walk-in basis (no appointment necessary) during FSS hours of operation (8 am-8 pm Mon-Thurs, 8 am-4:30 pm on Fri). Crisis Advocacy is also available afterhours at Northwest Texas Hospital, the Bridge, and other designated locations. Crisis services are offered at no charge.

SERVICES AVAILABLE INCLUDE:

- Safe shelter in our Emergency Safe House for victims who are in imminent danger
- On-Site Kennel at Safe House so pets don't have to be left behind.
- Face-to-face crisis intervention
- 24-hour Crisis Hotline, 374-5433 (LIFE) or Spanish 1-800-799-7233 (National)
- Advocacy services, including accompaniment through medical, legal, and judicial systems
- An accredited crisis volunteer advocate program serving victims who present at Northwest Texas Hospital or The Bridge Children's Advocacy Center
- Public education services to increase knowledge of the dynamics of sexual violence and family violence, the causes, and consequences of both, and the related intervention and prevention services that FSS provides.
- DV Support Group Tuesdays at 6:00-7:30 p.m. currently provided remotely through your phone or computer.
- Rediscover You Sexual Assault Trauma Group Thursdays at 5:45-7:15 p.m., currently provided remotely through your phone or computer.
- Grupo de apoyo para traumatismos en español: miércoles a las 5:30-7:00 p.m., actualmente proporcionado de forma remota a través de su teléfono o computadora. Llame a Estefania al 806-342-2521 para más información.

CRISIS SERVICES IMPACT

1,277 Total Crime Victims Served in 2019

Hospital Crisis Volunteer Advocacy Program

Hours spent at NWTH/The Bridge: 774.75

Crisis Volunteers trained in 2019: 16

• Volunteer Hours (Direct Services): 220

Volunteer Hours (On Call): 5,591

Non-Resident Intervention/Advocacy Services

Non-Resident Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Victims Served:
 1,277 (780 domestic violence, 497 sexual assault)

Legal Advocacy

Victims assisted through the legal process: 126

• Victims assisted with Crime Victim's Compensation: 174

Support Groups

• Domestic Violence Support Group Attendees: 280

• Sexual Assault Survivors Support Group Attendees: 8

• Child Support Group Attendees: 29

Crisis Services Presentations

Sexual Assault presentations: 44

Attendees: 13,206

• Domestic Violence presentations: 47

o Total Attendees: 15,828

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

The Behavioral Health and Wellness (BH&W) department provides counseling services to individuals, couples, and families. The department also provides mediation and supervised visitation services.



At FSS, our caring and professional staff are dedicated to your well-being. We can help those struggling with depression, stress management, grief recovery, divorce recovery, eating disorders, anxiety and phobias, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, self-esteem, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress, behavioral problems, emotional trauma, parenting challenges and many other issues.

We know that no single approach is the right one for every person, so we have been trained in a range of counseling techniques. Our counselors pride themselves on being caring, competent and professional. Counseling is available in English and Spanish for children, adolescents, and adults in the community. Services are available on a sliding fee scale. Learn more at fss-ama.org/counseling-services/

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS IMPACT

Behavioral Health and Wellness Programs

- Women's Anger and Violence Group (WAV)
- Equine Therapy
- Trauma-informed Yoga Therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Eye movement Desensitization & Reprocessing Therapy
- Batterers Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP)



• Clients receiving counseling services: 6,215

• Hours of supervised visitation: 1,567

• BIPP Groups: 325

 $_{\circ}$ Individuals completing BIPP : 122

EDUCATION AND PREVENTION SERVICES

The Education and Prevention Department strives to provide programs that help children and families to grow in strong, healthy environments. The mission of the Education and Prevention programs is to empower families and youth through parenting education, life skills for youth, peer mediation programs, youth advisory committees, and other programs.



The department also focuses on child abuse neglect prevention, substance abuse prevention, teen pregnancy prevention, and human trafficking prevention.

In 2019, the Education and Prevention programs served a total of 6,764 individuals in the community.

Peers Making PEACE (Peer Meditation): a peer mediation program aimed at improving the school environment by reducing violence and discipline referrals and increasing academic performance. **Successful mediations: 55**

Love and Logic Parenting Education: This program is designed around weekly 60 classes that teach parents how to raise self-confident, motivated children who are ready for the real world. **Served: 63**

Youth Advisory Committee (YAC): Advises the FSS Education Division on key policy issues affecting youth gaps in services locally organizes school and community activism efforts and meets with civic leaders to advocate for youth needs. **Total members: 27**

Strengthening Families Program (SFP): an evidence-based family skills training program found to significantly reduce problem behaviors, delinquency, and alcohol and drug abuse in children and to improve social competencies and school performance. The program was offered to families at Power youth adults and communities by providing several programs through the agency, schools, shelters, hospitals, businesses, and law enforcement agencies. Church, Domestic Violence Shelter, Oakdale, Lawndale and Forest Hill. **Total served: 682**

School and Community Based Prevention: Programs implemented in the schools and community to enhance skills among youth to resist harmful social influences to use drugs and to improve general competence of violence prevention and mental health awareness and increase self-esteem. Curriculum focus on increasing knowledge about harmful effects of substance use, providing realistic prevalence of substance use, bullying, Teen dating violence, resistance, and communication skills among youth. Curriculum programs include: Rising Up, Teen Truth, Planting the Seeds of PEACE, Choose Respect, Walk the Way, Too Good for Drugs/Violence. **Total Served: 6,764**

Healthy Outcomes through Prevention and Early Support

(HOPES): The HOPES program is intended to address child abuse and neglect prevention of young children by focusing on parent education and support, home visiting services, and wrap-around services for families, with children 0-5 years of age, who are considered at-risk for child abuse and neglect. Services provided this year include:

- Home Visitation
- Equine Therapy
- Educational Sessions
- Case Management
- Group Connections
- Fatherhood Services

Total Families Served: 126

Sounds of Success-Helping youth BEAT the odds!: Utilizing beat making to reach at risk youth. With a strong belief in activating student's passion for music as a pathway to build entrepreneurial skills, leadership and life skills, we provide students with the structure, tools and knowledge necessary to become self-directed, creative producers who harness their creative potential to benefit their community.

Total Served: 75 students

Human Trafficking Outreach and Coalition Building: enhance the quality and quantity of specialized services available to assist victims of human trafficking and increase outreach and awareness efforts and support efforts to increase the capacity of our community to respond to human trafficking victims through the development of interagency partnership, professional training, support Freedom in the 806 coalition efforts and increase public awareness activities.

Total Coalition Members: 223

Total served through education and outreach: 1,312

Labor Trafficking Task Force Coordination: This year we expanded to include labor trafficking outreach through a partnership with the Buffet–McClain initiative. The Buffet-McClain Institute Initiative to Combat Modern Slavery (the initiative is a three-year multi-disciplinary effort to combat human trafficking in the agricultural sector).

Total served:18

Outreach Partners: 27

Substance Abuse Prevention Rural Outreach: Through funding by the Amarillo Are Foundation, we are now able to provide substance abuse prevention across the entire 26 counties of the Panhandle! We utilize Project ALERT curriculum with an emphasis on 6th thru 9th grades. Additionally, we will provide campuses with a train the trainer program using indicated prevention counseling strategies.

Total Served: 2,588

Teen Pregnancy and Poverty Prevention: Targeting youth during the times when they are most at risk after school, weekends and school breaks using the Teen Health Project/4Me. Then Teen health Project is a community level intervention that helps adolescents develop skills to enact change, and provides continued modeling, peer norm and social reinforcement for maintaining the prevention of HIV risk behavior and pregnancy.

Total served: 1,762 youth and 133 parents

EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SERVICES

Family Support Services Safe House provides safety, shelter, food, and necessities to individuals and families in urgent need of safety from violence. We provide three meals per day to all residents in the home.

The facility is locked to the outside for safety. Residents have the freedom to come and go as needed, based on work schedules, school for children, and other obligations and preferences in their lives.



Advocates are on-site at all times, with the goal of assisting individuals and families in assessing needs, case manager for stabilization and short-term and long- term goals, as well as assist in linking to other services as needed. Advocacy is client-centered: our goal is to provide information and referrals to residents, so they can make their own decisions, what they determine as relevant to their family. Our advocates, through continued training, focus on trauma-informed care: we understand that all victims coming into the safe house have experienced extremely traumatic events – at times a long history of trauma – and services are provided with this in mind.

All safe house residents are invited and encouraged to participate in services which contribute to their future stability: individual counseling, support groups, equine therapy, children's groups, cooking and recipe events, job searches, addiction recovery, linking to mental health services, educational guidance and assistance, or other programs as relevant individually. Advocates meet with safe house residents frequently to check-in and discuss progress and troubleshoot barriers to success.

Hotline Calls- Received 4,760 calls, service provided to 2,646 callers. 357 of those calls were lethality assessment calls; a collaboration with 6 law enforcement agencies serving Amarillo and Canyon, to utilize a lethality screening tool when on scene for Domestic Violence (DV) with an intimate partner. Calls are there placed to FSS Hotline; caller receives validation, safety planning, and available services through FSS, including Safe House if needed.



806 ACTS- This new program, in collaboration with Refugee Services of Texas, was created to provide comprehensive services to victims of sex trafficking. It has both a community education and case management component. During these time period, case management primarily focused on developing relationships within the community that might interest with a sex trafficking victim, and developing the structure to service provision. Individuals assisted in 2019: 3

Emergency Safe Housing- In2019, e served 142 adults and 121 children totaling 263 clients. 18 of these clients had more than one Safe House stay and 36 of these clients were Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) referred. 12 clients exited to Permanent housing options, and only 18 exited to another emergency shelter. The Safe House provided a total of 9,796 bed nights

In 2019, the Safe House also made dramatic improvements. We refocused on how we engage with survivors of abuse, viewing the program through the lens of trauma informed services. We made changes to the environment; making spaces to support healing to be more sensitive to trauma responses. We began using empowering language, eliminating rules, and a 30-day length of stay; instead operating from a place where individual needs, healing and barriers to obtain safety were the focus. We hired more staff, did intensive staff training, worked with Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) with a pilot trauma project, and ultimately have seen dramatic changes in the number of multiple stays at the Safe House, along with higher numbers of survivors and their children exiting to permanent housing.





Kennel Facility- Many domestic violence victims have to leave their pet at home when they escape. In these situations, there is an increased risk of the pet being physically abused or killed. Often, a victim of violence in dire need of safety will elect not to enter the safe house if they are not allowed to bring their beloved pet. This is why the kennel facility is now an integrated part of our Safe House.

Our facility has four individual kennels which enables the safe house to bring in up to four animals of small to medium size. There is an outside run for animals to exercise, and the safe house residents have the ability to be with and interact with their furry family members at any time. The kennel facility is climate controlled, with ventilation, heating and air conditioning. Clients have the responsibility of caring for their pets: feeding, watering, walking and cleaning the individual kennels.

Family Support Services currently has agreements with several local veterinarians who will help with this program by offering emergency veterinarian services at reduced cost as needed. The safe house receives donations of dog and cat food, as well as other pet needs.

Transitional Housing Program- The Transitional Housing Program serve individuals and families who are survivors of Domestic Violence. The program provides financial assistance through monthly rental payments toward housing. IT also provides intensive case management and help connect clients to other resources in the community. The transitional Housing Program aims to promote healing, self-sufficiency, and independence. The program focuses on clients attaining housing stability in order for them to continue to heal and grow in a life free from abuse.



VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) is a veteran-staffed drop-in facility that provides veterans, family members, and surviving spouses with the opportunity to make their lives better.

We partner with local organizations who help military veterans and family members, including Socks for Soldiers, VetStar, Texas Workforce Solutions, West Texas Legal Aid, Texas Panhandle Centers, Panhandle Honor Flight, the Amarillo VA, and many others.



We help each other by finding hope, healing, and new purpose after enduring hardship through service to our nation or other obstacles we have faced.

We help through connections with peers, housing and employment, benefit eligibility, help with PTSD, anxiety, depression, and traumatic brain injury.

Veterans Resource Center- In 2019, the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) served 805 Veterans, Family Members, and Surviving Spouses. Our partner VetStar Program housed 45 homeless Veterans and Families and provided 10,891 units of services.

Services provided are to identify and address the needs of individual Veterans, surviving spouses, and dependents then navigate to the resources that best fit their needs, such as:

- Homelessness
- Housing & Basic Needs
- Peer to Peer Support
- Canine Training
- Equine Therapy
- Therapeutic Riding
- Counseling
- Bike Program
- Day Room
- Justice Outreach
- Wounded Warrior Program
- Equine Therapy (Horse Riding Therapy)
- Gas Cards (for employment/counseling)

for Vets Program was established to assist those Veterans who are actively seeking job opportunities that are commuting to and from work or school. Bikes, helmets & locks are donated to the VRC and are then given to Veterans on a case by case basis to assist in their transportation needs

Bikes Supplied: 11

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE: The VRC is committed to providing Veterans who are seeking employment with application assistance, referrals for training and employment opportunities, and assistance with building skills and careers. We are committed to promoting programs and training that help the nation meet the daunting challenge of seamlessly transitioning into civilian jobs.

Employed Veterans for 2019: 40

with other job preparations, the VRC teamed up with Clothing Exchange to provide vouchers for veterans seeking employment. The vouchers are used to supply the veterans with work-appropriate attire.

Vouchers Total: \$400

MEMORIAL SERVICES: The VRC provides memorial service assistance to family members with any questions they have regarding VA benefits, assistance in filling out the required VA forms, referrals to local Veteran Service Officers (VSO). The VRC will assist the family by connecting Volleys for Vet to provide Military Honors for the Veterans at the time of their funeral or memorial service for the service they have rendered to our great country.

Memorial Services: 12

JUSTICE OUTREACH

provides a deferment program centered on treatment instead of incarceration for veterans struggling with issues like depression, anxiety, and PTSD. Addresses co-morbid issues that arise like substance abuse, alcoholism, and homeless by connecting veterans to appropriate resources in the VA and local providers.

Clients Served:14

INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM:

designed to help wounded warriors suffering from moderate-to severe brain injury, spinal cord injury, or neurological conditions; take positive steps towards independent living in services as social and recreational, wellness, volunteer work, education, and other life skills.

Clients served: 2

HORSE RIDING THERAPY

PROGRAM: activities and therapies assist veterans suffering from PTSD, depression, and anxiety. It works off the premises of creating a rhythm that creates a sense of calm for the brain. Veterans also gain the sense of purpose when engaging in this form of therapy.

Clients Served:20

GAS CARD PROGRAM:

Transportation is a huge barrier for veterans trying to get back on their feet. Local sponsors assist in providing gas cards to veterans starting out in the workforce or needing to continue therapy orgo to medical appointments.

Amount Provided: \$5,000.00

VRC Success Story: Terrance Messer

Some time ago a young veteran by the name of Terrance Messer stepped across the threshold of the Veteran Resource Center. Terrance had been a regular at the Salvation Army due to being homeless. From the moment he walked into the VRC, it was plain to see that Terrance was a different young man. Every moment he visited, he would walk to the day room and grab a book and get lost in the words that leaped from the pages.



Verlene, the VRC Director, began conversing with Terrance every time he visited. She began encouraging Terrance to go out and seek employment and to have confidence in himself to achieve his goals. Terrance had lived a hard life, riddled with substance abuse and other issues. He was honest with the fact that the struggles he faced were constantly on his mind.

With encouragement from VRC staff and the motivation to attend Narcotics Anonymous, Terrance began putting one foot forward toward a better life. In January 2019, he gained employment with the City of Amarillo. Even though this was a new beginning for Terrance, he still struggled with self-doubt and anxiety. The VRC gave him tools to help him on his path to success and restoring faith within himself. He began watching videos on hope and acquiring apps to help with budgeting.

Terrance has certainly come a long way since he first graced the VRC with his presence. He acknowledges the struggles he has seen and the small victories he has overcome. From the time he was living on the street and found a blanket to keep him warm in the cold to having his own place and owning his own truck. He knows he has a purpose, and he is meant to move forward and to overcome any struggle he may face. Terrance states, "Any Veteran or Family member that has the desire to change their lives, the VRC gives you hope."

We are proud of Mr. Messer and his accomplishments, and we continue to stand by him and support him through every chapter. We look forward to seeing him make his dreams a reality. No Veteran left behind!

Development Report

Family Support Service depends on a combination of fundraisers and contributions to cover expenses not included in grant funding. In 2019, \$440,158.82 was raised to support the vision of FSS for a community where individuals are healthy, stable and violence-free.

During 2019, Family Support Services implemented three major fundraising events and a new awareness event tested as a future fundraiser.

The fundraising events netted \$154,265.79 as follows:

- The Original Harley Party \$106,311.80
- Mardi Gras party \$29,746.50
- Over the Edge \$18,207.49

It was determined that Over the Edge would not be continued in 2020 due to the decrease in proceeds from the prior year.



A new event - October FeSSt - was staged in October in conjunction with Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The event at Starlight Ranch Event Center featured a cook-off, entertainment, community booths and games and a partnership with the Texas Panhandle Builders Association for a cornhole tournament. In its first year, the event more than covered costs. It was decided that this event would be grown to become the replacement for Over the Edge as a fundraiser.

The agency raised \$285,93.03 in contributions from individuals, organizations, businesses, foundations, and trust. Of this total, \$228,770.62 was program - restricted and \$57,122.41 was unrestricted. The largest donors by category were:

- Individuals \$16,200
- Business/Corporate \$14,500
- Foundation/Trust \$41,000
- Organization \$25,000

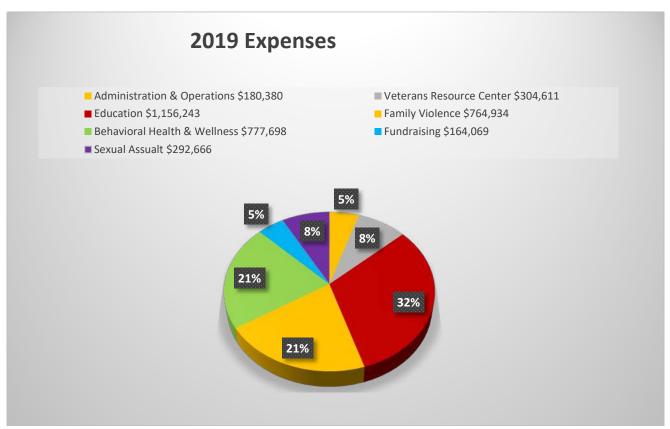
The agency participated in the Panhandle Gives, organized by the Amarillo Area Foundation in conjunction with Giving Tuesday. Donations through TPG totaled \$22,166.75, which is included with unrestricted contributions.

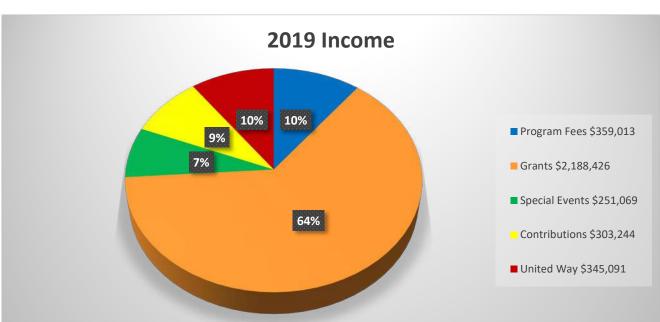


The FSS Board of Directors continued to support the agency's mission with 100% of Board members making a personal contribution. In addition, Board members contributed hundreds of hours volunteer service.

The Luminaries support group continued to assist the agency in various capacities, primarily at the Emergency Safe House.

Financial Summary- 2019





WITH THANKS

Your gift(s) make a direct difference to at least one of the thousands of individuals we assisted this year. You are a part of their lives, too. A special thank you to:

- Amarillo Area Foundation
- Anderson Trust
- Bank of America
- Bivins Foundation
- Brumley Foundation
- Community Development Block Grant
- Department of State Health Services
- Dunaway Foundation
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Health and Human Services Commission
- Interfaith Campaign for the Homeless
- Kimble Foundation
- Office of the Attorney General
- Office of the Governor
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice
- Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Texas Veterans Commission
- W.E. Scott, Jr.
- Weyerhaeuser Foundation
- United Way 79107 Grant

SUPPORTING FSS IS EASY!

- Like our Facebook Page and Share our Posts <u>www.facebook.com/FSSofAmarillo</u> <u>www.facebook.com/VRCofAmarillo/</u>
- 2. Attend the Annual Harley Party, Mardi Gras Party, and other events!
- 3. Volunteer! fss-ama.org/volunteer/
- 4. Educate yourself on our website and share with your community about how we help.

 www.fss-ama.org
- 5. Donate to:
 Family Support Services
 7136 West Interstate 40
 Building B
 Amarillo, Texas 79106

Or

fss-ama.org/donate/