

Protection in Her Time of Need

Jodi Thanks You for Helping Her Make Ends Meet.

Jodi is an insurance agent in the Pierre area. Professionally, she understands the importance of safety nets and coverage. But personally, Jodi never imagined needing a safeguard concerning her own food at home.

Last year, Jodi's insurance company suffered massive layoffs amid the Coronavirus pandemic. Jodi's income plummeted 60 percent.

Recently, we met Jodi at one of our mobile food distribution sites in Pierre, where she gathered fresh produce supplied by generous friends like you.

"Normally, I don't utilize these types of services, but I'm very glad it's here," Jodi shared. "It helps substantially, even just the basics. Groceries are expensive. You just walk into a store and you've spent 100 dollars.

"The butter and the milk I get here means there is less that I have to purchase from the grocery stores. It reduces my grocery bill significantly."

Making Ends Meet

Last summer, Jodi's electric bill became almost unmanageable ... But with friends like you by her side, she found a way to push through. Today Jodi aims to help others.

"I've told family and friends about this place. I see so many families that are struggling. I've told them about it too.

"I know there are so many people that are living in fear and poverty, and at a time when we need to be as healthy as we can, and money is tight, it's a pretty big dilemma. It truly does cause a lot of stress."



"I would have been in dire straits if these people hadn't been there for me when I really needed them. Thank you so much."

- Jodi

Jodi is grateful for the volunteers and staff working at the distribution site, and shares their generosity with her own community. If Jodi and her friends ever find themselves not using some of the donated food, they find a neighbor in need, and pass it on.

"I would have been in dire straits if these people hadn't been there for me when I really needed them. Thank you so much."

So many friends who have lost their jobs over the past several months are still fighting to keep food on their tables. For neighbors like Jodi, who are simply trying to get on their feet again, your kindness is considered a true godsend. Thank you for touching hearts and lives throughout our communities.



AROUND THE TABLE

WITH LORI
DYKSTRA, CEO

Thank You Feeding South Dakota Family



Leave Your Lasting Legacy

Here at Feeding South Dakota, we know that philanthropy is a choice — and one that should not be made lightly. When you make a planned gift to us, you ensure that your commitment to fight hunger continues beyond your lifetime.

Tailored to your financial needs, these gifts can make a meaningful contribution to impacting hunger in South Dakota and offer many advantages as well:

- Allow you to make a much larger gift than you thought possible
- Support vital needs/programs of Feeding South Dakota, both now and in the future
- Reduce (or avoid) capital gains taxes
- Reduce estate taxes
- Receive a current income tax deduction

Your gift will put food on the table of individuals who could be your family, friends and colleagues. Your gift will bring us closer to a hunger-free South Dakota.

For more details contact Megan Kjose, Development Director at 605-335-0364 ext. 106 or megan.kjose@feedingsouthdakota.org

Often, visitors to our food distribution sites mistake recipients for volunteers, and vice versa. Telling the difference between the two can be difficult because everyone at these locations pitches in to help simultaneously, like a loving family.

I've met individuals, like Jodi, who have never received aid in their life and suddenly need our assistance. I've also witnessed neighbors who used to receive regular food from us return to help others out.

Life is unpredictable. You never know who will be the next neighbor in need. This is why our community is so thankful for your heartfelt commitment and generosity.

As we approach the summer season, your compassion continues to help working people and families fill in the gaps when it comes to healthy produce. The single mother without her job due to cutbacks during the pandemic. The young boy no longer receiving school lunches. The widow now fending for herself.

One family receiving food assistance for the very first time recently told me how impressed they were with the caring people they met at their distribution site. "The volunteers and staff were so happy to see us," the parent shared. "They laughed with us and gave our kids stickers. Any embarrassment or shame we may have been feeling, quickly disappeared."

Yet every day, inflation and rising food costs continue to jeopardize more and more of our food-insecure neighbors. Across South Dakota, people are being forced to make grueling decisions between buying lifesaving medicine or putting healthy food on the table – paying the utility bill or paying for basic nutrition.

Luckily, they have extended family like you standing by their side.

Thank you for continuing to reach out to your neighbors in need this summer and beyond. One person, one family at a time; together, we will end hunger across our great state.





A Little Love Goes a Long Way

How your gifts help struggling, multi-generational families living on Native American reservations.

“I lost my employment due to the pandemic,” Elaine shared with us while waiting in line at our Fort Thompson mobile food distribution site along with her granddaughter. “Right now, we’re income-less. It’s hard for me to get a job. It’s been a tough year. Very stressful.”

One of the ways Elaine seeks peace in her life is by caring for her granddaughter, Keturah, and her grandson. She babysits for them while their mother works. Keturah loves the milk provided by friends like you.

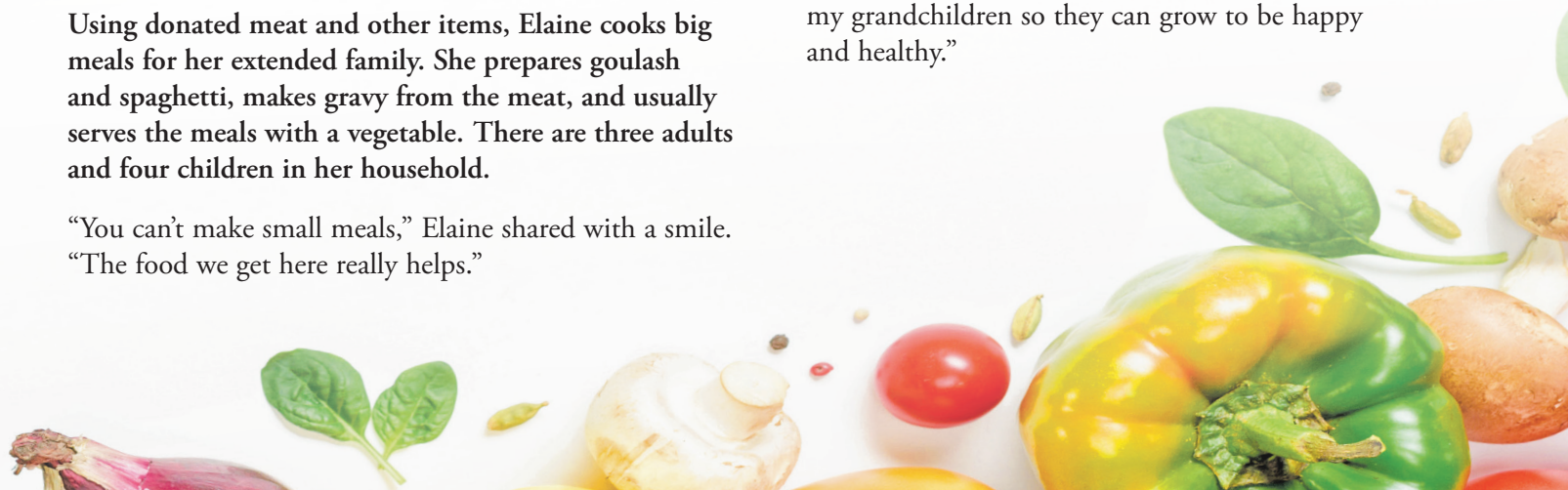
Using donated meat and other items, Elaine cooks big meals for her extended family. She prepares goulash and spaghetti, makes gravy from the meat, and usually serves the meals with a vegetable. There are three adults and four children in her household.

“You can’t make small meals,” Elaine shared with a smile. “The food we get here really helps.”

“I want them [grandchildren] to make it ... so they can grow to be healthy and happy.”

- Elaine

Elaine lives for her grandchildren’s happiness, but worries about their future. “I want them to make it,” she shared. “There can be a lot of peer pressure and dreariness here on the reservation. I want to have a positive impact on my grandchildren so they can grow to be happy and healthy.”



Meet Roxie, a Special Pierre Warehouse Volunteer

After retiring from her 46-year career with our state's Department of Education, Roxie wanted to give back to her community. "I needed to do something, so I started coming out here and I got hooked on it," Roxie shared with a laugh.

"Plus, the volunteers here are great. There's an elderly lady that helps even though her husband is paralyzed and at home in a wheelchair. And there are young ones who come out to help too. You hope that you're helping to plant good seeds for the future in them."

Roxie heard about the opportunity on a radio advertisement asking for volunteers. She thought it would be a nice way to give back while staying active. So far, Roxie has done everything from sweeping floors to packing vegetables. What she didn't prepare for was witnessing the overwhelming needs of neighbors.

"The need is just unreal," Roxie reflected. "There are more people who need help than we would like to believe. When I go to serve at a mobile distribution, cars are lined up for two or three blocks. We might serve 200 or 300 per day.

"Sometimes you forget that people are homeless in your city, but they are. With the costs of everything going up, the next person in need could be you, or your next-door neighbor, somebody who's even got a big family."

Roxie likes visiting the distribution center to see her work come full circle. As she helps pack goods into people's cars, Roxie gets to know those she's helping.

“There's such a big need,” she continued. “It still amazes me.”

- Roxie

Now that the pandemic crisis is lessening and health restrictions are easing, we need volunteers more than ever. If Roxie's story has inspired you, we would love to have you on our team! To learn more, please visit feedingsouthdakota.org/volunteer.



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