

AROUND THE TABLE

FEEDING
SOUTH DAKOTA

MEMBER OF
FEEDING
AMERICA

News and Notes on Solving Hunger in South Dakota

His Actions Speak Loudly

This student is part of the next generation joining the fight against hunger.

Hunter, a senior at Rapid City High School (RCHS), is a bit of a philosopher.

“I don’t believe there’s a point to existing if we can’t help each other,” he says. “All of society, all good things in life, come from people working together.”

One of those good things is the school pantry at RCHS, where Hunter serves as a student manager. It’s one of seven in the Feeding South Dakota School Pantry Program, an initiative that keeps growing.

The pantry at Hunter’s school serves “anyone who has a kid in their family who’s in the Rapid City Area School district,” he says. A student or relative simply comes during monthly pantry hours, signs in, grabs a cart, and then shops for the free food on the shelves. A volunteer then helps them load the food into their car.

Each month, Feeding South Dakota provides almost 3,000 pounds of food to the pantry, serving an average of 68 families, plus about 400 students who would not be able to eat during the school day. When the pantry opens for its monthly distribution, there’s a line down the hallway and out the door.

Hunter was aware of food insecurity in his school and communities before volunteering at the pantry, but he didn’t know how widespread it was.

“I now realize that almost anyone can experience it, no matter your walk of life,” he says. “So I can’t just sit there and not help when I can rely on a good, steady source of food. I want to put my best foot forward, you know? Actions speak louder than words.”

Hunter is providing hope for the future by joining the next generation in the fight against hunger. Thank you for being part of that fight too!

HOPE
for the
FUTURE



Almost anyone can experience food insecurity, no matter your walk of life.”

— Hunter, a volunteer at his school’s pantry

Our Mission is to End Hunger in South Dakota.

We envision a state where no one person's health, well-being, or potential is hindered by the availability of nutritious food.

Our Core Values



Serve with Compassion

We ensure every person's dignity is preserved by respecting our differences, displaying empathy, and showing no judgment.



Work with Purpose

We have ownership of our mission when, as a team, we work with consistency and operate with integrity.



Connect with Intention

We grow through a culture of transparency, being receptive to others, and practicing humility.

AROUND THE TABLE WITH LORI DYKSTRA, CEO



You Help Us Create Community-Led Solutions

Dear Friend,

There's a lot of hope and optimism for the future going around Feeding South Dakota these days. Spend a few minutes reading the inspiring stories in this edition of Around the Table, and I am sure you'll start to feel it, too.

Take the story about Hunter, for example. It's impossible not to feel hopeful when you hear about this young South Dakotan stepping up to help his classmates who are facing hunger.

Hunter's commitment to helping others embodies the spirit of Feeding South Dakota. With young leaders like him, we can confidently say that the future of hunger relief is bright and in good hands.

Then there's Rose. She devoted herself to more than simply finding ways to feed her neighbors facing hunger. She asked, *"How can I help them grow and empower themselves to grow and empower our community?"* Her solution was ingenious! Through it, she's cultivating a culture of sustainability and togetherness that can be passed along to future generations.

Passionate and caring people like Rose and Hunter give me so much hope. And not only because they are exemplary neighbors and human

beings, but because they are shining examples of passionate leaders helping create community-led solutions to the root causes of their friends and neighbors' food insecurity.

They know their communities and their challenges best, and they'll know the best solutions, too. Feeding South Dakota exists to empower and equip them with the necessary food and resources. That way, they can feed their neighbors while confidentially moving their community toward a hunger-free future.

I believe there are many, many more Hunters and Roses across South Dakota. In fact, you're one of them! The fact that all of us are working together to create a better future for South Dakota gives me hope. That hope powers our mission, and I hope it continues to fuel you, too!

Together, we are not just feeding South Dakota; we are building stronger, more compassionate communities. With your support and the inspiring efforts of people like Hunter and Rose, I have no doubt that we will achieve our shared vision of a hunger-free South Dakota. Thank you for all you do.

With gratitude,



Partner Agency Profile: Rose Fraser

Running Strong – Oyate Teca Project



Not so long ago, fresh fruits and vegetables were sometimes hard to come by for people living on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The nearest major grocery store was 65 miles away. Local convenience stores had limited supplies, and they were quite expensive.

Then, Rose Fraser stepped in and started the Oyate Teca Project, an initiative of the Running Strong for American Indian Youth Inc. and a partner of Feeding South Dakota.

The project, overseen by Rose with help from volunteers, provides gardening classes, resources, and support for residents to begin gardening and food preservation methods.

About 65 people participate in the education program every year, coming from miles around: “I never realized how much people wanted to learn about gardening!”

Oyate Teca’s main site in Kyle includes a one-acre demonstration farm for teaching, a greenhouse, several “high tunnels” to extend the growing season, and an off-site three-acre farm.

The gardening and preservation program has helped to meet the local need for fresh produce. Excess is added to a monthly distribution of food items acquired through Feeding South Dakota, serving 150-200 families.

“I want everyone to know that this is something you can do at your house and have food to eat, and if you have an overabundance, you can sell a portion at the farmer’s market,” she says. “We want to create entrepreneurs, because there are no jobs around here.”

Rose says some neighbors are a bit reluctant to come to the free distributions, but she puts those concerns to rest.

“There are some proud people who don’t like accepting things,” she says. “But I tell them we’re here for everybody, we never turn anybody away.”



Rose Fraser has a vision that every home will have their own garden.

Rose envisions every household in the area growing their own food — feeding their families, saving some for later, and selling some for extra income.

“I want our community, our Pine Ridge Reservation, to all have their own gardens,” she says. “What we’re doing here is making a difference for the whole community.”

Your support helps sustain local initiatives like this, helping thousands of our Native neighbors.





Tackling Hunger Head-On

This Miss South Dakota contestant is committed to fighting food insecurity.

Julia Stanek has made it her life's mission to look out for neighbors in need ... and that especially includes people who are facing hunger.

A student at the University of South Dakota majoring in criminal justice and political science, she is the epitome of a younger generation committed to Hope for the Future. She wants to be a human rights attorney, and as a recent contestant in the Miss South Dakota pageant, her community service initiative was titled, "Fueling South Dakota: Eliminating Hunger."

"I want to spread awareness on how our communities can eliminate hunger in South Dakota," she says. "By donating our time, money, and nonperishables, we can slowly eliminate hunger that continues to spread throughout the state."

In her current role as Miss Huron, Stanek has a platform to get things done by hosting food drives, informational sessions, and sharing food resources. "I want to halt the number of those experiencing food insecurity, but my dream is to eliminate barriers that are present throughout the state."

When she's not spending hours in the library studying, Stanek is active in the USD Women's Rugby program, where she serves as president. She's also a member of the Pi Beta Phi sorority, which emphasizes community service and "contributing to the betterment of society."

As an attorney, Stanek wants to focus on "how programs impact communities that are at risk" — which is also the emphasis of the programs in place at Feeding South Dakota.

Feeding South Dakota is grateful to young people like Julia who are committed to tackling hunger in our communities — a commitment we know you share as well.

How to Help All Year Round

When you become a monthly donor to Feeding South Dakota, you join a group of the most dedicated and compassionate supporters in the fight to end hunger by creating a reliable source of funding year-round. Monthly donations also allow us to expand our efforts to reach more people in our communities.

You can be a crucial part of the solution to end hunger in our state by signing up to be a monthly donor today.

Learn more at feedingsouthdakota.org/ways-to-give/donate/monthly-giving.



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