

FOUR FACES OF HUNGER 2021

Contributed by [MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger](#)

Source:

ALEX - SENIOR FROM NEW YORK

"Even though for much of my life gay people had more challenges than we do today, I used to think, 'Oh, life is fine.' Then all of a sudden I became almost a complete invalid after a few strokes. I never thought that someday I'd be like this— struggling to make ends meet, unable to do things myself. Seniors should be able to live out the rest of their lives in their homes— to have things around them that are familiar. Now, I get Meals on Wheels delivered. It has been a godsend. Otherwise, I was subsisting on toast and tea, cans of soup. Sometimes, I'd buy grapes. I don't think I'll ever be able to walk on my own, but I'm going to do the best I can."

AUDREY - TEENAGER FROM ARIZONA

"My parents split up when I was young. Finally six years ago, my brother and I were able to go live with our Mom on the reservation. It's hard because my mom can't find a job, even though she tries really hard. The only money we get is from TANF and food stamps, but it's not very much so we only eat what's cheap. I don't think about eating more because I know my mom and brother need to eat too. Still, we run out of food stamps and have to go to the pantry. Sometimes my mom says it might be easier if we moved back to the city, but I don't want to leave. Living on the reservation has taught me strength. My dream is to go to college and support my family."

DARLA - WIDOW AND SINGLE MOTHER FROM NEW MEXICO

"I speak five languages and have a resume you wouldn't believe. I studied mental health and arbitration at university. I never imagined that one day I'd be standing in line at the Salvation Army to feed my boys. I'm doing everything I can to get back on my feet. Every day I take my little boy to school at 8:00am and then go straight to the unemployment office. This month I decided to fix my vehicle instead of paying the rent, so I'd be able to look for work, but I still didn't have money left for gas. How can a \$229-per-week unemployment check cover the rent, the car insurance and feed three people? I'd like to see our politicians try to live on this."

TIM - NAVY VETERAN FROM MAINE

"The time limit on the SNAP program is harmful to veterans, who have the unique need to adjust back into society after an entirely different existence. When did we decide that three months is enough to get your life back together after being in a combat zone? I myself was dropped from SNAP because of the time limit. There were many times, more than I'd like to try and count, when I would go two or even three days without food. SNAP would go a long way to bolstering my health as I continue to wade through the seemingly endless appeals process before me."

Story courtesy of Preble Street

Read more stories at mazon.org/this-is-hunger/stories.