

ONE SPIRIT END HUNGER PROJECT



Planning for the future

Increasing our impact

Becoming self-sufficient

Your generous contributions over the last 8 years has allowed the One Spirit food program to grow from providing food for a few families to distributing groceries monthly to every corner of Pine Ridge reservation, as volunteers drive hundreds of miles and feed more than 3,000 people. The Lakota are grateful to you and to the Lakota volunteers who manage and deliver the food.

We believe we can serve more families by becoming more cost-effective in the way we distribute food. We also believe that reservation families can take more responsibility for feeding themselves high-quality, nutritious, fresh food that is needed to combat the rampant diet-related diseases. But we are asking your help in transitioning to a more effective system.



This is what we hope to accomplish in the next year:

- We would like to set up **food banks** in several locations around the reservation where families can pick up groceries instead of having them delivered. The savings on fuel and other transportation will help us serve more. The food banks will help us store fresh produce from Rilling's Produce in Pierre and freshly processed meat from nearby facilities, we are also utilizing the Feeding South Dakota food bank in Rapid City. Groups of Lakota people are working on plans that will have traditional foods as part of the food banks, such as choke cherry juice, wild turnips, and traditional breads.
- A generous philanthropist is working with One Spirit to develop commercial size **greenhouses** on the reservation that can function year round and bring a continuing supply of fresh produce. We would appreciate any support you can provide to help with initial operating costs for the greenhouses.
- In the works is a meat processing facility to be located on the reservation. Currently, buffalo and hunted animals are taken to Nebraska for processing at a cost of \$800 per animal. A meat processing facility would allow animals to be harvested in traditional ways that are more humane, respect the spiritual ceremonies of the Lakota people, and provide a degree of employment here on the reservation where 80% of the people are unemployed. (In the case of both the greenhouses and the meat processing facility, 10% of all produce and meat will be given to the food banks.)



What Resources do we need?

- \$30,000 to complete the initial meat processing facility.
- \$30,000 to outfit 3 buildings to be food banks.

The Lakota people will supply the labor. Money currently being used for the food program will help to sustain the food banks during the process to be self-sufficient. The monthly cost of the current food program is \$20,000.



What are we asking of you?

- Utilize your network to get the word out about this urgent need.
- Make a donation.

Food needs on the reservation have grown faster than you and we have been able to meet. With the cut of government food programs, families now go even more days skipping meals and providing inadequate nutrition to their children. Elders go without food in order to feed grandchildren. The Lakota people who manage the food program and deliver the food, find themselves often confronted with groups of angry parents demanding food. Whenever the distribution center is open, large groups of people walk in asking for food. Forever ringing in my ears is the voice of a 10 year-old girl telling me how it feels to go to sleep to forget about the hunger pains in her stomach. The picture in my head that haunts me daily is one of little kids attacking a bag of fruit that we had just delivered.

Ways must be found that allow the Lakota to take care of the food needs of their people. Your generosity has helped thousands survive. By cutting transportation costs and enabling more food production on the reservation, the Lakota will be on their way to more sustainable, and healthier, nutrition. Please help us as we help them.

Love & Peace,

Jeri Baker
Director, ONE Spirit



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Pine Ridge Reservation

Pine Ridge, South Dakota

The Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota is part of a larger territory established for the Lakota in 1868 by the United States government and later parceled out to non-Native homesteaders and broken up into smaller tribal reservations. According to the US Census Bureau, the reservation lies within the poorest counties in the United States. It is the second largest reservation in the U.S with 11,000 square miles and 2 million acres. There is an estimated population of 40,000 - 35% of that population is under the age of 16.

Life on the reservation can be grim, even on the best days.

- 90% of the population lives below the federal poverty level.
- 85-90% fluctuating unemployment rate.
- People go without adequate medical facilities.
- Average life expectancy is 50 years old, the shortest in the western hemisphere, outside of Haiti. 33% of households lack running water and sewage systems.
- 39% are without electricity, heat and insulation and families are freezing cold in subzero temperatures in the winter.
- Many homes have been infested with toxic black mold.
- Families, children and elders are without food on an ongoing basis.
- Per capita income is \$4,000.
- The school dropout rate is approaching 70%.
- Infant mortality is five times higher than the national average.
- Diabetes, Heart Disease, Cancer and Malnutrition are epidemic.
- Alcohol-related illnesses and crashes are epidemic.
- Teenage suicide, perhaps the biggest problem of all, is believed to be as much as 20 times higher than it is for a teen who lives a few miles away, in Nebraska.

Despite hardship and adversity, the Lakota maintain their cultural knowledge and traditions to preserve them for their children and for the world, ancient wisdom that contributes to quality of life.

- About 1/3 of the population still speak the Lakota language.
- Almost all maintain their traditional spiritual and cultural beliefs.
- They are leaders in knowledge of environmental preservation.
- They are a sharing society - when one eats, they all eat - or they all do without.
- Their exquisite beadwork, quillwork, quilting, sewing, painting is art at its best.
- They wish to preserve their culture and find ways to be self-sufficient.

WHO WE ARE: ONE Spirit is an all volunteer, federally registered non-profit organization. We work in partnership with the Lakota people of the Pine Ridge Reservation to assist in preserving and revitalizing the Lakota culture, language, and self-sufficiency while meeting the basic needs of Lakota families, children, and elders. ONE Spirit people are from all over the United States and many parts of Europe and Australia.



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