

NAU nursing students help out at Feeding South Dakota November 2015

In October, NAU nursing students who volunteered and conducted clinical coursework saw first-hand what something as basic as food means to Black Hills residents who would otherwise go without.

“These individuals are not just people who are poverty stricken but middle class people who had bad luck or emergencies that happened financially and are just between paychecks,” remarked Tara M, an NAU nursing student. “Then there are the elderly who do not get enough social security and are in need. I was amazed at how even our veterans need help and are often times in great need.”



Feeding South Dakota is a nonprofit hunger relief organization located in Rapid City, Pierre and Sioux Falls. Dr. Jennie Denker, MSN, RN, NAU’s Associate Dean for the School of Nursing arranged for students to volunteer at Feeding South Dakota for a day.

“When they graduate, our students will be working with most needy individuals in our communities,” said Dr. Denker. “It’s important that they know that many individuals – their future patients – will be in need of simple nutrition and be able to refer them to Feeding South Dakota and other community resources.”

“As nurses, we spend a lot of time with our patients and conversation is bound to happen,” said Ashley, a participating student. “Most likely patients are going to open up to you and let them know their problems. This would be a perfect resource for low-income families or families that struggle to pay bills, let alone get groceries.”

“The experience was truly eye-opening for many of these students,” remarked Dr. Denker. “They will be more empathetic practitioners in their future careers.”

The participating students’ testimonials can be found [here](#).