

# MY

*Who faces hunger in Arizona?*

# STORY

We've been food insecure for 20 years. It started when my daughter died. She was nine and got killed in a crosswalk on her way to school. My husband and I couldn't handle the grief and ended up losing our jobs.



**Delores Barden**  
Yuma, Arizona

We never recovered from the loss, and I eventually had a nervous breakdown. I turned to drugs, and my husband to alcohol. I'm not making any excuses for our decisions, but the circumstances were too much for us. Before we lost our daughter, I was a registered nurse. I never touched drugs, and my husband never drank until she died.

We were hungry, but I had to make sure my son had food to eat. I cleaned houses for money, and a friend's church helped us with food. We tried to apply for benefits but because we made too much money the previous year, we didn't qualify for SNAP. Ultimately, I spent some time in jail. My rights have been restored, but I'm still not getting SNAP benefits because trying to explain my previous conviction just takes too much effort, and there is so much paperwork.

My husband now has a stable job at \$13/hour. After bills, we have \$200 left to pay for food and gas. I don't know what I would do without the food bank and my wonderful friends, who I can always lean on. Last week I had my second stroke. At 52 years old in this condition, I'm not going to find a job. I'll be coming to the food bank for a long time.

Today my son is 31 and a warrant officer in the U.S. Army, stationed at Fort Bragg. I am so proud of him, but he is even prouder of my recovery.