

MY

Who faces hunger in Arizona?

STORY



**Lacey
Cardlock**
Prescott Valley,
Arizona

I'm from New York. I moved to Prescott Valley after graduating from college with a degree in international studies and Spanish. I'm an AmeriCorps VISTA assigned to the West Yavapai Guidance Clinic Foundation, which provides low-cost mental health services to individuals on a sliding scale. I'm a grant writer and support fundraising. Once my placement ends in May 2019, I hope to continue working in the non-profit sector, ideally with refugees and underserved populations.

I get a stipend of \$460 every two weeks, for a total of \$12,000 a year. I enrolled in SNAP as advised by the US government, as we are government employees. I receive about \$150 in SNAP each month, which has been enough so far to get me through each month.

There's only one DES office in Quad Cities. It's in Prescott Valley, and, fortunately, I have a car to get there because there's no public transportation in the area. I worry about what happens to people without transportation or access to the online application. Walking to the DES office from Prescott is really dangerous because there are no sidewalks and you have to walk on a major transportation route (SR69). I've seen people walking along the guard rails: on the outside, they're very close to speeding cars, and on the inside, they could fall into a ravine. There should be more public transportation or at least a sidewalk for the eight-mile walk to the DES office.

It took three weeks for me to receive my SNAP benefit, even after I was told I was approved. The first time I used my EBT card, it didn't work, and I had to put nearly \$100 of food back on the grocery store shelves because I only had \$7 in cash on me. That was embarrassing.