

MY

Who faces hunger in Arizona?

STORY

I graduated from high school in May 2018, and the minute I turned 18, I lost my SNAP benefit. My mom isn't able to work a regular job, so there wasn't a day that went by that we didn't use SNAP—it was the only way we could pay for food.

I'm now a full-time student at Phoenix College, with a goal of earning a degree in social work. In September, I submitted the paperwork needed to re-enroll in SNAP as a full-time student. I've checked on the status of my application, and they said it hasn't been received. I've had to keep going back to the DES office to ask about my application and fill out more paperwork. It's frustrating.

In addition to my full-time class schedule, I am working part-time earning \$288 every two weeks. Every penny of this money goes to expenses—household and personal items, textbooks, school supplies, transportation. After these expenses, there is nothing left for food. Fortunately, through the kindness of friends, my mom and I are living in a space where she can exchange cooking and cleaning for rent.

I'm glad there is a mobile pantry here on campus. I pick up fresh vegetables, fruits, and other food here. Coming here to the mobile pantry, along with going to the food bank is our only source of food. Hopefully, my SNAP benefit will be approved soon so I can concentrate on school and not have to worry about what we will eat.



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