Local AmeriCorps Member Assisting the Homeless

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Eau Claire Area School District Homeless Program
3rd U.S. Congressional District
91st State Assembly District
31st State Senate District

When I was seven years old I sat on Santa's lap and told him I didn't want anything for Christmas. Instead, I wanted him to give bags of groceries to the homeless people around the world. I saw Santa cry that day and from then until the day he passed away, he would occasionally stop by my house to see how I was doing. For as long as I can remember, I've cared deeply about helping the homeless. So it's no surprise that I became an AmeriCorps member in order to build volunteer support for the Eau Claire Area School District (ECASD) Homeless Program.

Serving as an AmeriCorps member for the district has strengthened my desire to assist those who are homeless. I enjoy accepting donations on behalf of the district knowing that they will end up in the homes of the families who need them most.

One donation in particular stands out to me. Someone had donated one large garbage bag of blankets and another grocery bag of little boys' clothing. The day after we accepted the donation, a family walked into our office, defeated and smelling of smoke. I overheard the mother mentioning to my supervisor the things that were lost in their house fire. Knowing that I would be the one to pull the items they needed, I paid close attention to what she was saying. She became very emotional when she started talking about her young son. His room had been burned the worst and he didn't have any clothes or pajamas. At that moment I remembered the donation of clothing we'd received the day before. The clothing was exactly the size they needed! The entire donation, including the blankets, was exactly what that family needed at that moment to get through the day. I sent a special thank you letter to the person who made that donation, letting them know how much their generosity meant to a local family who suffered a house fire. My hope is that they will spread the word about how important it is to donate to the ECASD Homeless Program.



Left: Elisa Steinmetz accepting a donation on behalf of the ECASD Homeless Program.

Elisa Steinmetz is a graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where she majored in Speech Pathology and minored in Psychology with an ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) emphasis. She has been married to her high school sweetheart for 11 years and they have two children together. She enjoys working with children who have special needs. She tutors for the district and takes children with behavioral needs whenever the opportunity arises.