

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA

Quarterly IMPACT REPORT

Spring 2022

Jan | Feb | Mar



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About our work at CSS



Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska is comprised of five key program areas with each program encompassing multiple projects and services:

- **Emergency Services:** Financial assistance, employment services, furniture delivery, and walk-in services such as clothing, diapers, and more.
- **Food Market & Meal Services:** Food Pantry, Catholic School Food Market Program, breakfast and lunch programs.
- **Immigration Legal Services:** Legally represent clients on USCIS petitions and applications.
- **Refugee Resettlement Services & Employment:** Welcoming new arrivals and secondary migrants, refugee employment services, New American Encounter, and Career Ladder.
- **St. Gianna Women's Homes (SGWH):** Housing for survivors of domestic violence, counseling referrals, and community-based learning opportunities for residents.

Other services provided by CSS:

- **Gift & Thrift Stores** Our sorted, clean, and organized Gift & Thrift stores in Lincoln, Hastings, Auburn, and Imperial are another way CSS brings **Hope in the Good Life** while elevating the dignity of the person. Individuals who cannot afford items in our stores can apply to receive items for free through our Emergency Services programs in each of our outreach offices. The sales of store goods and recycled items pay for our staff and overhead costs. All of the merchandise in our stores has been donated by our generous supporters across Southern Nebraska.
- **Mental health counseling** through the Immaculate Heart of Mary Counseling Center. The primary objective of the IHMCC is to provide the highest standard of psychological services in an environment that respects the psychological and spiritual needs of its clientele.

Recently renovated **St. Louise Gift & Thrift Store in Lincoln** is one of our four agency thrift stores providing donated items and a dignified shopping experience.



For more about our work, please visit our website: csshope.org



Quarter Highlights

Celebration of Hope: Our gala event returns with a fresh new face

Celebration of Hope (formerly known as Celebration of Caring) was held on March 27th. Over 300 supporters gathered at Embassy Suites in Lincoln for fellowship, entertainment, a delicious meal, and the presentation of the "Heart of Christ" Award to the St. John Knights of Columbus Sandwich volunteers (see more about the Knights in our Meal Services report on page 6!). We unveiled our 2021 Impact Report video, which can be viewed at csshope.org. **It was exciting to celebrate Hope in the Good Life together, in person, after almost two years of COVID-related delay.**

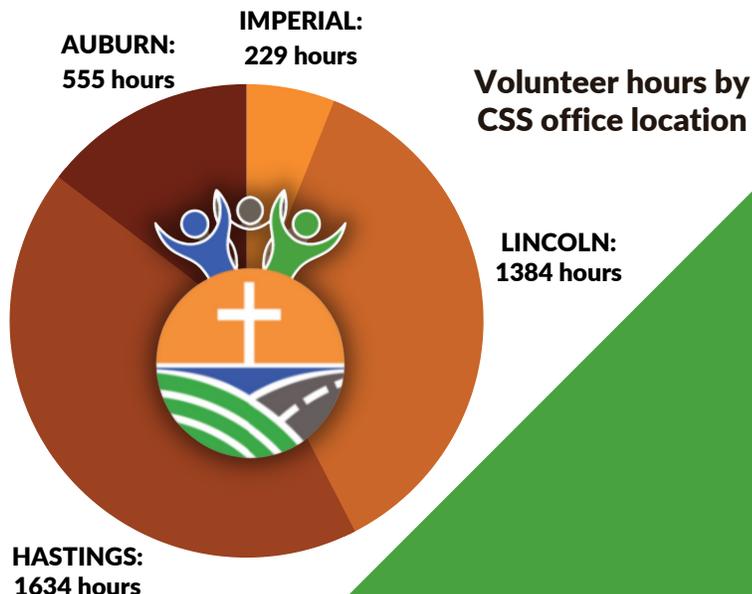


CSS Recycling Program: We recycle unusable fabric and clothing items including purses, belts, & shoes.

87,610 pounds (almost 44 TONS!) of donated clothing, shoes, and fabric were sold this quarter. The sale of these items generated revenue for our programs to bring **Hope in the Good Life** here in southern Nebraska. In addition, some usable items will be used in other communities to bring Hope in the Good Life there as well.

CSS Volunteers: Partners who are vital to our mission.

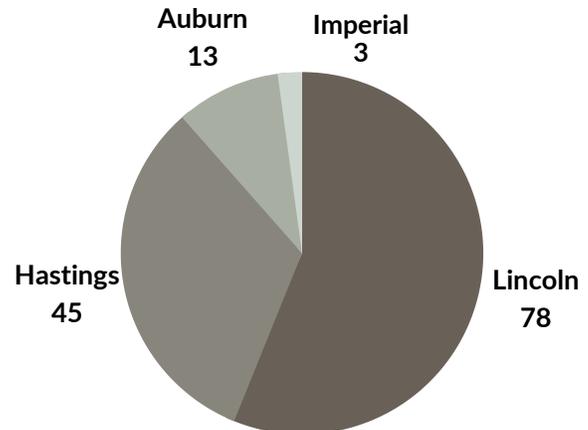
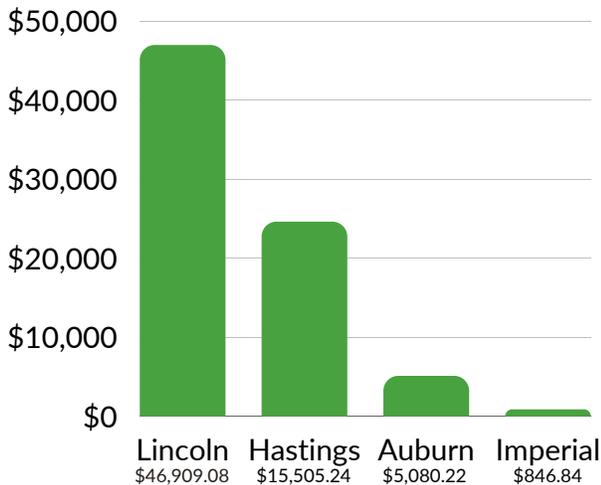
We simply could not perform our work without our volunteers. During this quarter, they partnered with us across 24,000 square miles of southern Nebraska for a **total of 3,802 hours.**





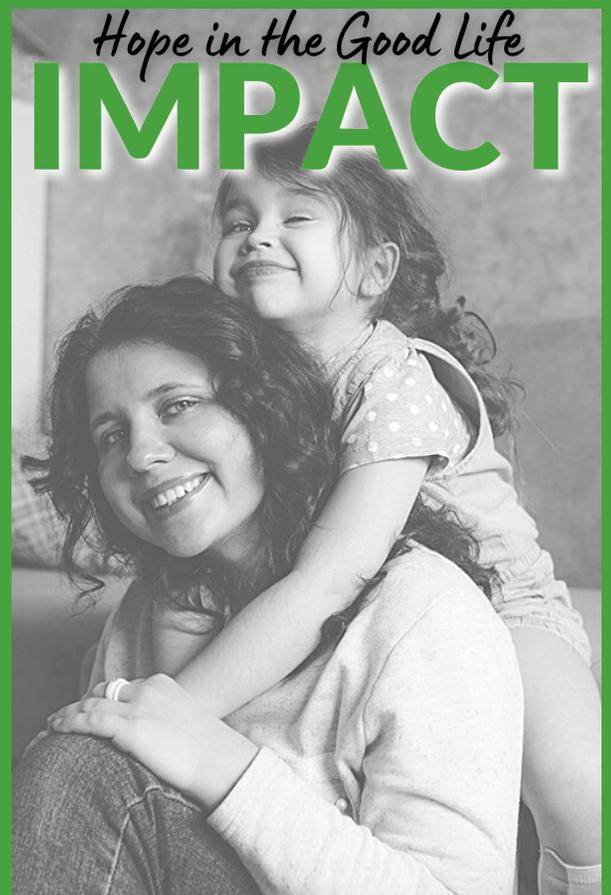
Emergency Services

Total financial & item assistance provided by location this quarter:



Number of clients served through each CSS office location

CSS provided our southern Nebraska neighbors with \$68,341.38 in overall cash and in-kind assistance this past quarter. This support covers rent payments, provides shelter and food, pays utility and medical bills, buys bus tickets, repairs vehicles... and also alleviates the barriers that cause so much stress and worry and literally keeps our clients up at night. Quite often, our grateful clients circle back when things calm down in their lives and express their appreciation for the help- like this email recently received by our Emergency Services team: *I really appreciate your help. As soon as I can get all caught up I plan to donate to your cause. You don't know how much this means to me as I have had sleepless nights worrying how I would be able to come up with the money to pay my rent... God bless you and your organization. Together, we provided this family with not only a hand-up... we brought peace of mind and Hope in the Good Life.*





Food Market Services

This quarter, **77.6 TONS** (yes, **TONS!**) of food was distributed to southern Nebraska, including our Hastings Food Recovery program.

Households served through our Lincoln Food Market

Tons of food by CSS office location

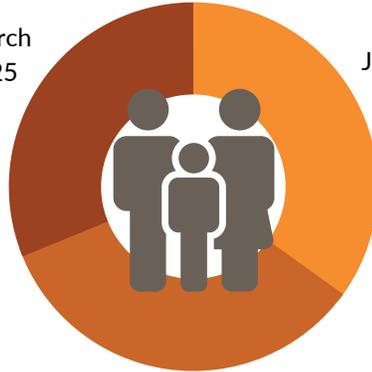
Lincoln
18.8 tons

Auburn
2.8 tons



Hastings
56 tons

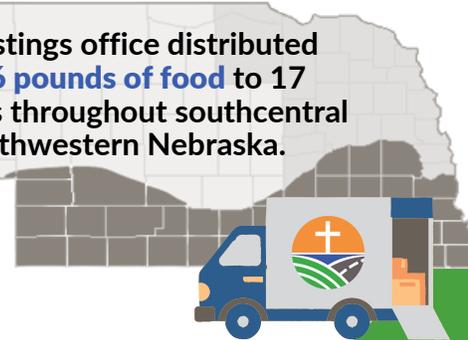
March
125



February
136

January
140

Our Hastings office distributed **107,926 pounds of food** to 17 pantries throughout southcentral and southwestern Nebraska.



This quarter, the **Lincoln Food Market** began a few new projects focusing on nutritional education. In January, Lincoln Food Market Coordinator Doris Schueth shared a "5 Can Soup" recipe and ingredients with our Food Market clients. At the same time, we launched the new Hope in the Good Life Recipe blog on our agency website (csshope.org/recipes). We celebrated March as National Nutrition Month through a series of social media posts each Friday, marketed and tagged as #FoodMarketFriday. The content highlighted nutrition tips and encouraged readers to donate healthy items most needed by our clients. We continue to educate our supporters on the need for healthy food choices for our clients and encourage donors to use our updated list of healthy food market needs at csshope.org/foodmarketneeds.

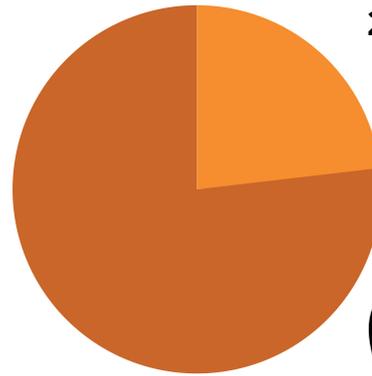




Meal Services

This quarter, we served a total of **9,759 clients** a healthy, delicious lunch.

Currently, we serve breakfast (in Lincoln) and lunch (in Hastings & Lincoln) as "to go" meals. We're looking forward to reopening our Lincoln doors for clients to enjoy their lunches inside during the warm summer months. **We know that daily encounters with our clients will allow us to meet them, get to know them, and learn their needs more completely.**



Lincoln
2259 lunches

Hastings
7500 lunches



In collaboration with Open Table, our Hastings outreach office provides sack lunches to anyone in need. The sack lunches are made and distributed by volunteers.

This quarter, we presented our agency's Heart of Christ award (given to an individual or group for their superior gift of service to the poor and vulnerable) to the "sandwich-making knights" from **Msgr. Maurice Helmann Council 11280, St. John The Apostle Parish, Lincoln**. They continue to help us address food insecurity while providing the foundation for our wraparound services (when a single agency is able to meet the various needs of a household, such as food, clothing, shelter, employment, and counseling, we call these wraparound services). Their camaraderie and keen sense of service to the poor have inspired the staff at CSS. As one of the Knights recently put it, "The sandwich program is really a perfect service opportunity. CSS provides the location where those in need can be served while also supplying substance (meat/peanut butter/jelly) for the sandwiches. And it keeps a bunch of old guys who prepare the sandwiches out of trouble for a while." What these generous knights bring to the table at Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska is much more than lunch. It's **Hope in the Good Life!**





Immigration Legal Services



This quarter, our Immigration Legal Services team helped **122 clients** in the following areas:

- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)
- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Victims of Qualifying Crimes (who are cooperating with police in an investigation they were a witness to or victim of)
- Green Card applications for refugees, Afghan parolees, and spouses/children abroad
- 28 citizenship applications
- Work permit card applications and renewals which keep individuals lawfully employed in Lincoln and surrounding areas
- Special Immigrant Status applications for Afghans serving alongside US forces as interpreters/contractors

The **Tyson Immigrant Partnership** is a unique approach to serving the legal immigration needs of the refugees and immigrants that work tirelessly to help keep food on America's table. Catholic Social Services' Legal Immigration Program was selected from a national pool of applicants to provide services to two of the 25 plants in this partnership during the 2022 calendar year. This partnership allows CSS Legal Immigration practitioners to go directly to the meatpacking plant and provide free consultations and legal representation on-site during the team member's shift. Out of the gates in the first quarter, CSS filed 12 applications for benefits such as Employment Authorization Documents, Green Cards, Citizenship, and renewals of documents. This pushed CSS over the 50% mark of completion of the grant in just the first quarter, and places CSS in the top 20% of all grant recipients.



Refugee Resettlement Services



Afghan arrivals wrapped up during this quarter. Currently, our agency has stopped accepting new cases in order to best serve the needs of our current clients. We are currently providing case management services for **167 refugee clients**.

After reading the local paper, it became obvious that housing would be needed soon to provide the Afghan refugees a safe and comfortable place to live, as they acclimate to their new society. Very few of us who were born and raised in this community have ever experienced what they have. We can only guess as to their trauma. It just turned out that my family had an empty home that we could provide for a while...and so our hope is that they will find our community welcoming and understanding of their plight. -DARRYL HUNTER

Our Refugee Resettlement team worked hard to find housing for our Afghan arrivals while also facing a housing crisis in Lincoln. At times, we placed our Afghan friends in a hotel until we find permanent housing. Darryl Hunter reached out to us after a recent news story because he had an empty house... and a great idea to fill it. Darryl plans on selling his home but is not in a rush, so he asked if we could use it for our refugee program. Yes! We took Darryl up on his offer and used his house as a transitional home where single men lived until we were able to find them permanent housing. This method worked well for us and helped us save on costly hotel stays- freeing up funds to use in other areas.



St. Gianna Women's Homes (SGWH)



There are currently **51 residents** in our SGWH program.

This quarter, **2 families** transitioned out of our program and into permanent housing.

6 children and 4 adults celebrated their birthdays with a cake & gift card thanks to our generous SGWH supporters.



SGWH Manager Veronica Hotovy sent this email update to one of our SGWH volunteers who provides birthday cakes for our residents: *She and her 5-year-old son were SO excited about the cake and said, "This is the kind of cake that you share!". I pulled out paper plates and plastic forks while her son ran around gathering chairs for everyone. Two other residents and our three Marian sisters joined us. She thanked us for coming so many times! She was bursting with joy as we sang 'Happy Birthday.'* She took pictures with us all, excited to be having a birthday party. Most residents share their cakes with family or friends outside of SGWH, but there are a few that don't have anyone else to celebrate with. It's amazing to be able to offer them such a beautiful and special moment - especially seeing how SGWH can become so much more than a safe place to live. It means so much to us as staff to see them receiving the love that they deserve through something as simple, but incredibly special as a birthday cake. Thank you so much for being a part of our mission. Thank you for helping us celebrate important events as we bring Hope in the Good Life one birthday cake at a time.

Partner with us!

We are grateful to our donors. Your support of our work allowed us to make a **POWERFUL IMPACT** this quarter. Thank you for your partnership!

Here are a few ways to support our work and bring **HOPE IN THE GOOD LIFE** to southern Nebraska.



CONNECT: csshope.org/connect

Stay in the know.

We'd love to have you join our Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska virtual community! Sign up for our email communications and we'll send you updates packed with information, inspiration... and hope.



Social is our middle name.

We have a vibrant online presence and we'd love for you to be a part of it. Follow/Friend us and be a part of **Hope in the Good Life** by learning about our work, sharing our stories, and helping us write the next chapter.

Will you be our pen pal?

For some of our supporters, the mail is best when it's on paper and delivered to your home. We mail out monthly and quarterly newsletters and updates for just this reason.

DONATE: csshope.org/donate

- **Monetary gifts** can easily be made online with your credit card.
- **Donate items** are used in our thrift stores, given directly to clients, or recycled/sold and the profits used to help the poor.
- **ACH (scheduled giving)** allows both you and CSS to budget effectively.
- **Endowed Funds & Legacy Gifts** (through The Catholic Foundation of Southern Nebraska) serve as a way to leave an ongoing legacy.
- **Gift of Grain** are an attractive gift choice for many farmers.
- **Securities:** CSS welcomes gifts of appreciated stocks, bonds, and mutual funds as a great way to support the poor in southern Nebraska.
- **Individual Retirement Account (IRA):** At age 72, a traditional IRA holder (unlike a Roth IRA holder) must begin taking a taxable Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from their IRA. Instead of taking the RMD amount as income and paying income tax, the IRA holder may donate the entire RMD or portion of it directly to a 501(c)(3) charity like Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska and avoid paying tax on the amount up to \$100,000 per year or \$200,000 as a couple.
- **Matching Gifts** from your place of employment double your gift. In some cases, your gift is tripled!



VOLUNTEER: csshope.org/volunteer



CSS offers many opportunities for individuals, families, and parish communities to serve those in need. Volunteers **feed the hungry and give drink** to the thirsty through our CSS Food Market & Meal Services. Volunteers **shelter the homeless** by helping our St. Gianna Women's Homes families. Volunteers **welcome the stranger** by assisting with our Refugee Resettlement Services and Immigration Legal Services. Volunteers **clothe the naked** by assisting at our CSS Gift & Thrift Stores. All 4 CSS offices offer an opportunity to serve others and join in our work. **Ultimately, we are about service to one another: the disabled, the aged, the newcomer, and the poor among us.**