



Fall, 2025

Native Hope News

Why We Do What We Do

Life can be hard on the Navajo Reservation. Many families live in small, substandard homes with no electricity, running water or insulation. They rely on woodburning stoves for cooking and heating. Many live in isolated areas with no transportation and few means of support.

Mark Your Calendar

Our next food drive will be on Saturday, November 15, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm in the Summit Church parking lot. We need healthy, non-perishable food. No snacks or sugary items, no large sizes and nothing that requires refrigeration or baking. There is a list of most needed foods at summitdurango.org/ministries/nativehope.

The donations of food and supplies will be packed into “care packages” and then transported to our storage facility in Twin Lakes, NM. As our employees make their rounds on the reservation, they hand out the boxes to hungry people they encounter.

At our August food drive volunteers packed 61 care packages. About a third of those have already been distributed to individuals and families, and the rest will be transported this month and next. Let’s increase the number we can prepare in November so we have plenty to distribute during the winter and early spring.

Busier Than Ever

Firewood is a major emphasis right now, for a variety of reasons. We want to get it to as many homes as possible before cold weather sets in. Our employee, Melton, spends many hours each week picking up wood from donors, transporting it to our base near Twin Lakes, NM, supervising a team to split and stack the wood, and then delivering it to homes across the reservation. He does all that in addition to his full time job in Durango during the warm months of the year.

Native Hope has been blessed with increasing offers of local wood—so much that we are having to ask donors to wait a few months. Right now we have as much as we can handle.



However, we’ve just taken a big step to increase our efficiency. Our new dump trailer makes it much easier to load and unload, especially if the donor has equipment to assist with the loading as in this picture.

Tohaali Community School News

Each month one of our volunteer teams transports your donations of food and other items to Tohaali School either for school use or to meet the needs of students, their families and members of the community. In August we delivered 44 boxes and an ironing board.

The biggest need is always for weekend food for the students. Currently the school is packing 72 bags **each week**. We only send healthy food. Note: we just learned this about beans. Most families want only green beans or pinto beans (canned or dry)—no other kind.

The school principal tells us that these are also needed:

Clothing for children under age four

Car seats

Changing tables

Shoes for children and adults

Beds

Mattresses

Furniture—remember that native homes are usually quite small.

Sanostee Day School

Tohaali School is able to share our donations of food and other items with the students at a small school in Sanostee, NM. With just 13 students in kindergarten through third grade, the school does its best to help families in the area. After third grade the children usually transfer to Tohaali School to continue their education. We're glad that we can help those families.

Looking toward Halloween

David Wilson, the United Methodist Church's first Native bishop (elected in 2022) shares, "Our regalia and dances have sacred and spiritual meaning. Our dances should not be mimicked for comedy, nor should our ceremonial clothing (e.g. feathered headdresses) be worn as costumes for Halloween or sampled as fashion. The regalia is sacred, and much prayer, time, and work go into creating each piece. Often they are passed down from generation to generation. Please be aware that wearing indigenous regalia as costumes contributes to the oppression indigenous people face daily."

Who We Are

Native Hope is a small grassroots organization based in Durango, Colorado, that works to assist needy families on the Navajo Reservation. Thanks to a number of donors, we are able to provide food, firewood, clean water, solar lighting, clothing, blankets and home repairs. Our funds are managed through Summit Church, with 100% of donations going to the work of Native Hope.

Contact us with questions or to volunteer: info.nativehopedurango@gmail.com

Donations to Native Hope can be made through www.summitdurango.org or by check made out to Summit Church and sent to 2917 Aspen Drive, Durango, CO 81301. Be sure to designate it for "Native Hope."

Donations of food or other items can be arranged by contacting us.