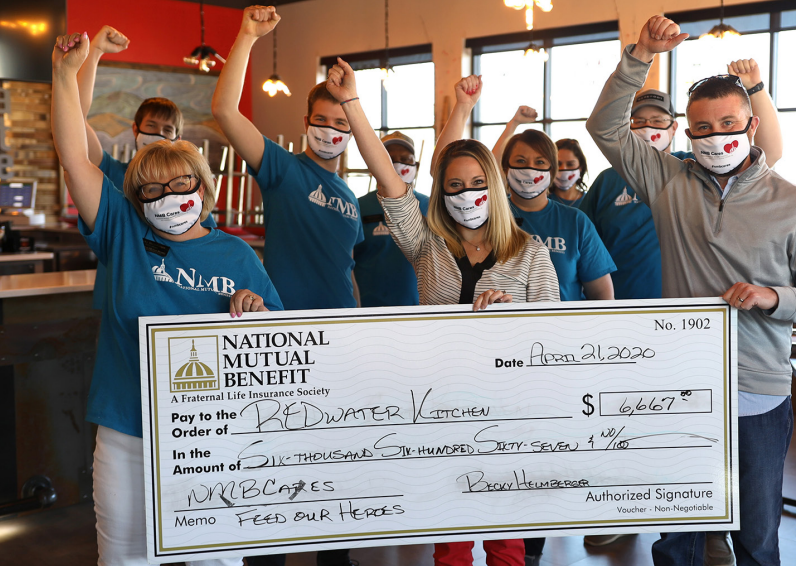




..... NMB CARES People Helping People In Time of Need

by Kelly Holck

When 2020 began, a lot of us had grand plans for starting a new decade, but none of us anticipated the arrival of COVID-19. As a result of the current worldwide pandemic, we stayed home to stay safe, and many businesses shut down for several months straight. Our front line workers, from childcare workers to paramedics, became our true heroes, working overtime and putting their lives at risk to keep us all safe.

National Mutual Benefit has a long and proud history of helping people in need, and we decided to do something *big* that would make a real impact on people's lives. On April 21st, we launched a relief initiative called NMB Cares to support our members and their communities during the COVID-19 crisis. Through NMB Cares, we donated \$100,000 to support four brand new fraternal programs: *Hunger Stops Here*, *Members Take Action*, *Feed Our Heroes*, and *Thank Our Heroes*.

HUNGER STOPS HERE: \$60,000 in Donations

Through *Hunger Stops Here*, NMB donated \$20,000 each to three local food banks. Additionally, we set up a GoFundMe page to encourage community members to support these non-profit organizations.

We Supported these 3 Foodbanks:

Peyton's Promise in Wausau, Wisconsin, works with 30 food pantries and three school districts, all located in Central Wisconsin, to purchase food for their pantry shelves. Bryan Bloemers, President of Peyton's Promise, shared, "So many of our friends and neighbors in need will benefit from this donation . . . Having businesses, charities, schools, grocery stores, and students work together to fight hunger during this frightening time brings hope to many! We are lucky to live and work in such a generous, caring community."

Fresh Meals on Wheels in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin, serves over 300 individuals, a majority of them elderly, every week. Kelly Anderson, CEO of Fresh Meals on Wheels, explains, "We believe ALL people should be able to eat. We reach EVERY community in our

county and have the maps to prove it. Because volunteers seem to like pinned maps, we keep large local maps on our walls, and every single neighborhood has been pinned."

Due to COVID-19, **Spearfish Community Food Pantry** in Spearfish, South Dakota, has projected a 30% increase to the 250 families already requiring assistance. George Vansco, Board President, says, "With this increase comes additional financial burden for the pantry . . . What perfect timing to receive a financial boost during these critical times when families are unemployed and struggling to make ends meet."

MEMBERS TAKE ACTION: \$20,000 in Donations

In our *Members Take Action* program, NMB members were able to apply for grants up to \$200 to support their communities through an activity or donation of their choosing.

NMB's \$20,000 donation funded more than 100 projects in 40+ communities! In less than two weeks, we awarded the entire \$20,000 to members who applied for Members Take Action Grants. The grants went toward a wide variety of projects to help with COVID-19 relief, including food bank donations, care packages and gift baskets, home-sewn face masks, gift cards for essential workers, donations to local small businesses, and so many more incredible projects!

FEED OUR HEROES: \$20,000 in Donations

As a way of saying "thank you," NMB partnered with three local restaurant owners to *Feed Our Heroes*. We provided free meals, called Hero Boxes, to first responders, including police officers, firefighters, healthcare workers, and their families. We also set up a GoFundMe page to allow for community members to donate towards a *Feed Our Heroes Round Two*!

In Wausau, Wisconsin, we worked with **El Tequila Salsa** to provide around 870 meals to front line workers and their families. Roy Romano, owner of the locally owned authentic Mexican restaurant,

said he had been looking for a way to give back during this crisis, so he was thrilled when we asked him to partner with us. After just two days and tons of thank you cards, the Hero Boxes in Wausau sold out!

In Sheboygan, Wisconsin, three locally owned **Jimmy John's** restaurants helped us provide over 660 meals to local heroes and their families. Scott Cieszynski, owner of all three restaurants, exclaimed that he couldn't believe the amazing turnout in Sheboygan. Phones were ringing off the hook all day, and the restaurants ran out of Hero Boxes within five hours!

In Spearfish, South Dakota, we partnered with **REDwater Kitchen** to provide over 660 meals to our first responders and their families. Jason and Lindsey Richards, owners of the modern American-style kitchen, were able to give several employees extra hours because of the program. By the end of the third day of providing Hero Boxes, the boxes were completely gone!

THANK OUR HEROES: 1,500 Cards Requested

Sometimes, the power of "Thank You" goes a long way. That's why we invited all NMB members, branches, employees, and their communities to order thank you cards with pre-paid postage. The thank you cards were sent to local front lines workers. We believe that all types of front line workers deserve recognition for their service to our communities. From grocery store workers to waste management professionals to ER nurses, we give our thanks!

Without you, our members, we wouldn't be able to create any of these incredible programs. So, THANK YOU for your continued support and for helping us make a difference in our communities through NMB Cares! ♦

YOU can get involved and make a difference too! Go to nmblife.org/nmb-cares to order FREE thank you cards to send to your local heroes. You can also reach out to us on Facebook and/or Instagram to learn about getting connected to your local NMB branch.



NMB CARES IMPACT



HUNGER STOPS HERE

\$60,000 in donations



MEMBERS TAKE ACTION

101 grants in 40 communities



FEED OUR HEROES

2,190 meals ordered



THANK OUR HEROES

1,500 cards requested

NMB Cares

National Mutual Benefit supports
our communities during COVID-19.

