

A Story of Compassion

USDA Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

Simple House Family Assistance Center

Wichita, Kansas

For the past two months now, Sam Cash has benefited from the food assistance provided by Simple House Family Assistance Center. He first learned about the program from a Simple House volunteer at his church. He was recently injured on the job and has been having a hard time making ends meet. Thus, learning about the program has been a great blessing.

Sam says “The care packages provided are full of quality foods with lots of variety, and they usually last me two or three weeks. I appreciate all those who donate to Simple House, including USDA.”

How the Initiative is Helping

In July 2004, The Wichita Eagle ran a newspaper article about how the Central Church of Christ would soon be opening a new food and clothing ministry site to help the needy. The new site would be known as the Simple House Family Assistance Center. Simple House has had two former locations, both of which it outgrew. After the article appeared, an employee from the Wichita field office of USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service forwarded it to the regional community/faith liaison. The regional office then contacted Ms. Anderson and began discussing how USDA donated foods could help extend her efforts with the Church’s food ministry.

Staff from the Kansas Department of Social Rehabilitation Services, one of

USDA’s state partners, were then involved in signing up Simple House to participate in TEFAP. These efforts are an extension of the ongoing campaign coordinated by Food and Nutrition Service’s Mountain Plains Region to reach potential new partners by helping faith-based and community organizations become aware of opportunities to participate with federal nutrition assistance programs. Bulk mailings, email messages, site visits, regular conference calls and meetings with state and local staff are all part of the effort to support and bring attention to the Faith-Based and Community Initiative.

About the Organization

Simple House is a faith-based organization that provides food, clothing and household items to individuals and families in need. The organization also works in times of natural disasters with the Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, based in Nashville, Tennessee. These efforts consist of providing training for Church of Christ members in or near a disaster on intake and need-assessment procedures, which then lead to providing food, cleaning supplies, baby products, furniture, and appliances to those affected. Ms. Anderson advises which “Simple House is a hand-up to people in need.” She was lead to start the organization soon after working disaster relief efforts due to the May 3, 1999 tornado that struck Haysville and south Wichita, Kansas. “I enjoyed the work that I did and was prompted to answer God’s calling to continue a similar form of assistance by starting Simple House,” Ms. Anderson reports. Also, she notes which



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“TEFAP has helped our clients by providing additional foods to round out and make their meals more nutritious and well-balanced.”

