

who needs it. For example, in early April 2020, at New Creation Lutheran Church, 235 families received groceries. Of those families, 75 were Latino, 10 were Somali and 150 were white. Other local groups and companies, such as the Scott, Carver and Dakota County Community Action Partnership, Heart Ministries, New Creation Lutheran Church and several other local agencies have donated money, volunteers or space for the cause.

In the last two weeks, families like Garcia's received essentials such as milk, bread, meat, spaghetti, cereal and toilet paper to last her and her teenage son the next seven days.

Shakopee City Council Member Angelica Contreras, who also serves on the board of the Shakopee Diversity Alliance, said the goal of the food distribution is to allow people to save money on groceries so they can pay their bills.

In Shakopee, about 8% of the people are Latino. Many Latinos work in hotels and restaurants. A high



percentage of those people don't have insurance or might not qualify for unemployment benefits if they are undocumented. "The cleaning industry is dominated by the Latino population. Cleaners are putting themselves at risk during COVID-19 here.

The impact of COVID-19 has caused millions of people like Garcia to lose work. "It's scary because you don't have money for insurance or the doctor," said Garcia, whose son has health insurance but who isn't covered herself,.



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Theresa Garcia*

(Not her real name)

In Shakopee since 1999

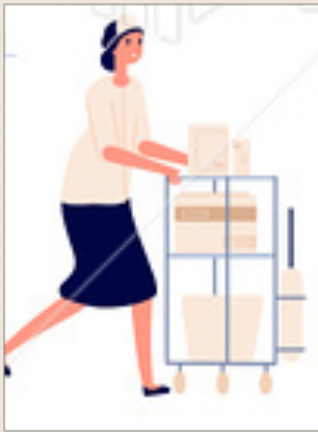
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Mexicans and Mexican Americans first began migrating to Minnesota in the late 1800s as seasonal field laborers. As the sugar-beet industry expanded in state so too did the need for more labor. In 1927, a sugar-beet company representative estimated the total Minnesota Mexican migrant population to be at 5,000 and increasing in 1928 to 7,000, according to <https://xroads.coplacdigital.org/morris/mnmigration/mexicansinminnesota/>. Gradually, seasonal laborers began to settle in Minnesota.

The first Mexican settlements in Minnesota are reported to have resided principally in the state's capital of St. Paul. At that time, many of the states railroad headquarters were centered in St. Paul and employed a great number of the earliest Mexican residents. By 1930 there were a reported 3,636 permanent residents of Mexican descent living in Minnesota, 70% of whom resided in St. Paul or adjacent Ramsey County, according to an article *Toward a Better Land: Migration on the Minnesota Prairie*.

In Scott County and in Shakopee, Mexicans arrived here for seasonal farm



Many people in Shakopee live paycheck by paycheck. Many work in jobs, such as in the hospitality area. While the work is hard, the pay is usually not enough to feed, cloth, and live in Shakopee without help. When COVID happened, many in the hospitality industry lost their jobs. The person in this brochure had that happen, but the help of others here in Shakopee, people are surviving.



work, and for work in places like Gedney Pickle Factory in Chaska.

Compared to other Midwestern states, whose migrants were mainly single men, Minnesota had a high concentration of women and child migrants due to the lack of enforced labor laws early in the state's history. This changed the social fabric of the state. Mexican women contributed to the economy by working outside of the home and becoming positive role models for their children.

In the ***Shakopee Valley News*** on April 10, 2020, author Maddie DeBilzan talked to a woman who lives in Shakopee in an article *Residents of Scott County are out of work, and it's leaving some groups in the margins*.

Theresa Garcia is a single mother from Puebla, Mexico who spoke across a crackling phone in broken English, wondering aloud when she'd finally be able to report back to work as a housekeeper at a local hotel.

Garcia is undocumented, and Maddie DeBilzan changed her name for this article for fear of being identified. She has been out of a job for a month, with the rent bill coming up soon. With a 17-year-old son to feed and

a sister in Jordan, also a single mother, who has three little girls to feed, Garcia is scared.

Her cleaning shifts at the hotel barely able to make ends meet. With an \$825 check she received every two weeks, she had to find a way to pay her \$600 rent bill, plus food, car insurance and a cell phone plan.

Now, those expenses still demand her money, but she doesn't have a paycheck to fall back on.

Garcia, who has lived in Shakopee for 21 years, cannot qualify for the unemployment benefits or the stimulus checks others in her position will receive for being furloughed or laid off, according to the article in the ***Shakopee Valley News***. Ana Vergara, the president of Shakopee Diversity Alliance, is advocating to raise money for others in the community like Garcia, who cannot receive government assistance but still need the help.

"Right now isn't the time to exclude those people," Vergara said.

A local group called *Esperanza*, of *hope* in Spanish, has made a point to cover at least the food portion of the bill for any family