

FEATURED

Feeding Broncos seek crucial funding through “President’s Challenge”

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Feeding Broncos, a free dinner for college students at WMU, hosted a meet-and-greet with the university’s new president, Russ Kavalhuna. Austin Vetur, Staff Photographer (he/him)

At the beginning of the academic year, Feeding Broncos launched their “President’s Challenge,” after receiving support from President Kavalhuna for their initiative to provide students with sufficient and nutritious meals on campus.

Although the organization has a significant impact for the students at WMU and neighboring college campuses, it is struggling to maintain enough funding due to the cost it requires to sustain meals.

Pastor William Stein, advisor and co-founder of Feeding Broncos, discussed the start of the organization and the impact it has created for the community.

“It only took about a week to launch, and we served our first meal on February 3. Feeding Broncos has served over 3,000 meals and we are honored that we are able to serve that many meals,” Stein said.

Aden DeWees, president of Feeding Broncos, discussed the concern with funding as well as the amount of financial assistance they are seeking to obtain.

“Our meals cost \$500-\$600 on average, and we serve twice a week. There are 15 weeks in a semester, so even using the lower amount of \$500, that is \$15,000 a semester, \$30,000 a year and \$60,000 for 2 years,” DeWees said.

He continued: “The goal of the fundraiser is \$50,000. This is roughly how much it would cost us to serve meals for almost 2 years.”

DeWees also mentioned the people that rely on the organization, and the issues that could result from not having enough financial assistance.

“Food insecurity is a big problem on many campuses,” DeWees said. “Many international students don’t have the funds to pay for meal plans or grocery shop as often as they need to.”

He continued: “There is one major consequence that comes with a lack of funding, which was seen last Thursday when we had to cancel our meal for this very reason. Although this is the major consequence, it also brings along a consequence to each student who relies on our program to get through the week and them not being able to have us as a resource.”

DeWees explained how the public could assist with the “President’s Challenge,” and the need for additional members in the organization.

“The WMU community can help by donating if your wallet has the capability, however, as someone who has been a college student and struggled financially over the last few years, we completely understand if this is not an option,” DeWees said.

He continued: "The more students we can get to join and be able to help run our organization, the less responsibility there will be on everyone and the smoother our operation can run. There is a dues system that is made of tiers that a student can choose from, including \$15 (student receives a Feeding Broncos coffee mug), \$25 (student receives a Feeding Broncos sweatshirt) and then by far the most popular option is \$30, which comes with a Feeding Broncos hoodie."

Additional information on Feeding Broncos and the "President's Challenge," can be found on the ExperienceWMU webpage.