



Kiowa Tribe

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Public Relations

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KIOWA TRIBAL VOLUNTEERS GIVEAWAY FOOD BOXES AMIDST FREEZING TEMPS

CARNEGIE, Okla. – Under sub-degree weather conditions, whipping wind on the open plains of the Kiowa Dance and Activity grounds, more than twenty Kiowa Tribe employees volunteered and braved the bitter circumstances to hand out food boxes to anyone who showed up on Friday, February 12, 2021.

Nearly 45-thousand pounds of food was handed out on this cold day and it didn't deter folks from showing up. Glenn Powell, a non-native was the first car in line. The only problem, the truck delivering the boxes was out of Tulsa where the wicked weather driving conditions already set in. It was delayed more than two hours. Powell waited in line for four hours to get his food. He said Covid-19 is no joke, "real bad bind. I lost my job and everything, needing money and food and everything." Powell was so grateful that he was able to put something on his table.

Ahnawake Toyekoyah stood in the front lines directing the two-lane traffic. She volunteered to help make this day happen rain, sleet, or snow. "Honestly, I wasn't cold at all. I used to live in Pennsylvania so this was nothing to me." Toyekoyah never took a break to warm up as the cars backed up for miles lined up to grab a box or two.

The food box giveaway contained dairy, protein, veggies, and fruit. It's part of a Farmers to Family and USDA grant Lahoma Zotigh applied for the tribe. A community grant that serves anyone, not just tribal members. She braved the cold and never stepped indoors to get a break and get warm, "even though it was cold and a lot of sacrifices, to see the people's joy on their faces. It was worth it all." Zotigh talked about a gentleman and his young son who drove up and his car was barely running and kept dying. Once she put the food in his possession, he lit up. "His gratitude, makes me want to cry," Zotigh said.

The cars were lined up for approximately four miles, around 1,350 boxes were given. Benny Gray from Carnegie said he waited in line three hours. "The covid kept us in for a long time. It's not good. So, this is a lot of help."

Darin Zotigh the Administration on Aging Director for the tribe was another volunteer. He had icicles on his eyebrows because it was so frigid. "Even though it was cold outside, I had a warm feeling in my heart. It was good to see everyone deny themselves and their comfort and get out there and work together," said Zotigh.

The tribe was closed on President's Day and the rest of the week looks grim because of the winter storm. "We are monitoring the storm and doing the best we can to get help to those most in need," said Chairman Matthew Komalty. "We are clearing driveways to those in rural areas with extreme emergency needs to get in and out." The Kiowa Tribe is also offering firewood to tribal members who need it most, households with elders are a priority.