

Chaffee's Got Heart Community Spotlight: Salida Community Center

The Chaffee's Got Heart Committee is extremely proud of local businesses and individuals that have gone above and beyond by doing extraordinary things during these uncertain times.

From innovating ways to thrive despite trying circumstances to showering struggling members of our community with generosity to prioritizing the health and safety of our most vulnerable, these businesses and individuals, who have been nominated for this honor by fellow community members, have shown what it really means when we say: **Chaffee's Got HEART.**

Today, we sat down with **Elaine Allemang, Director of the Salida Community Center**, to find out how the pandemic changed operations at this organization driven by a mission to nourish the people of Chaffee County by providing food programs and activities, and by promoting a safe and sanitary community environment for all ages and cultures.

How did COVID cause you to innovate or change the way you do business?

The Salida Community Center has always had the needs of the citizens at heart. We started the food program several years ago when we realized there are people in this county that are in need of food. We always helped around 200 to 300 people, but when the pandemic hit, we immediately saw an increase and as of now we serve over 800 people.



Why did you decide to go above & beyond to contribute to our community?

We knew how many people were affected by Covid-19 and we wanted to step up and help as many as we could. We joined forces with several non-profits to help the people of Chaffee County not only with food but necessities such as shampoo, soaps, toilet paper, dog food and other needs that might have. Our Community Center always relied on rental of the facility in order to bring in funds to keep our doors open however since our water pipe broke, we have now had to rely on the help of donations from the citizens of the area.

Where do you see examples of the idea that 'Chaffee's Got Heart'?

The residents of Chaffee County have proven they "Got Heart". There are so many caring and selfless people here in the area. We have so many volunteers that step up to help. They donate time and money in order to help our neighbors in this area.

What's your biggest takeaway from 2020?

The most valuable thing that I have learned from this pandemic is the huge number of selfless and caring people that reside in this area. When caring people come together, we can accomplish anything.

Cool Tidbits:

The Salida Community Center has provided food/meals to over 800 families every month this year!

Want to get involved? Visit: <https://www.salidacommunitycenter.com/take-action>. Here you can either donate or enter your email to get notified of volunteer opportunities.

To stay up-to-date on events and volunteer opportunities, follow the Salida Community Center on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SalidaCommunityCenter>.

Stories of Chaffee County individuals and businesses rising to the challenge abound.

We will be shining a light on those doing extraordinary things for the community throughout the upcoming months. Visit our websites ([Chaffee's Got Heart](#) or [CCPH](#)) or follow us on [Facebook \(@COVID19ChaffeeCounty\)](#) to see more.

Know a potential candidate, or are you one yourself? Send nomination ideas to: health@chaffeecounty.org.