

## The Person I Am Today

By: Evan Suddarth 3/9/2023

An experience that has greatly impacted my life is volunteering in my local community. In 2018 I started to serve at One Good Meal on a weekly basis. In 2020 during the pandemic, I served three to five days a week the whole summer. One Good Meal is a non-profit that gives meals to senior citizens in need all around the Lees Summit and Greenwood. It was my mother that first got me into serving a One Good Meal. At first, I did not want to do it at all, but eventually I allowed myself to open up and have loved it ever since.

I was surprised by the relationships I have developed with the people I deliver to. They have passed down to me wisdom as I listen to their stories about their life, the good, the bad, and everything in between. I used to take my family for granted until I noticed that most of these people were very lonely. Visiting with the seniors has helped me to appreciate my family a lot more. There was an old lady named Edna, who was 96 years old! Every week we would deliver to her, and she would always ask for a hug saying that it would get her through the weekend. I never thought of it being anything more. After years of delivering to Edna she moved away to be closer to her family. I realized how much I missed

those hugs from her. Edna's unconditional love made me realize how important it is to be nice and loving to everyone.

A lot of the people that One Good Meal delivers to are very poor and spend most of their time in their house alone. I might be the only person they will see that day. Because of this I try to be as nice as I can by talking with them and giving them that bit of interaction. I have always considered myself a good person but serving in the community has really taught me to be kind, caring, patient, and talkative. One Good Meal has been a big inspiration in my life, helping me become the person I am today.