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Group key to getting single mom back on road

BY SARAH BULTEMA
Loveland Reporter-Herald

GREELEY - When Elsa Gallegos' car stopped working, her life began to break down, too.

The Greeley resident, who commuted each day to her job in Boulder, couldn't get to work without her vehicle. And with bills to pay from a recent surgery, as well as the responsibility and costs of raising three sons, the single mother couldn't afford to get it fixed.

"I had no means of getting to work," she said. "I was so scared."

However, a local nonprofit gave Gallegos the jump-start she needed.

The Faith Community Service Fund - a collaboration of church volunteers aimed at helping people in need - was able to donate a used car to Gallegos so she could get herself to work again.

"I was able to keep my job," Gallegos said. "It was a blessing."

The Greeley organization formed a few years ago when local church members discussed their concerns about the rising number of families in need.

Together, these 30-plus churches began coordinating an emergency service system and the Faith Community Service Fund was born. Aiming to help others help themselves, the collaboration assists the faith community in providing residents assistance with rent, utility bills and other short-term needs.

This year, the Faith Community Service Fund was added to the list of nonprofits to benefit from the Empty Stocking Fund drive.

The El Pomar Foundation, a charitable organization that spearheads the drive, will match \$1 for every \$3 donated by community members.

The total collection will be divided among nine Northern Colorado human service agencies.

Gallegos, who was able to keep her job because of the Faith Community Service Fund, is grateful for the assistance the nonprofit and others like it are able to provide.

"I think it's a wonderful organization. It helps people out," she said.

"I'll say 'thank you' again and again."

Additional Facts

A chance to give to neighbors in need

Throughout the holiday season, the Coloradoan, the Windsor Beacon, Loveland Connection and other regional media have joined together with the Northern Colorado Empty Stocking Fund to raise money for seven human service agencies in Weld and Larimer counties. Stories on the agencies appear each Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Contributions will be partially matched by El Pomar Foundation. Secure credit card contributions may be made at www.nocoemptystocking.org or by calling 211. Checks can be mailed to Northern Colorado Empty Stocking Fund, P.O. Box 466, Fort Collins, CO 80522.



GALLEGOS
