

Transcript for IUN Celebrating the Class of 2019: Alexis and Victoria Morales

(Alexis speaking): In the fall of 2015 we were trying to get an idea of how we would get all of the donations to actually start this food pantry. So they had a "Kan Jam" tournament in the fall of 2015, um... which we were terrible at but it's basically a game that you throw a frisbee in and anybody who wanted to play on a team had to bring in a donation of like a couple of cans, so that's how we got a huge, um, starting of our supply.

Victoria speaking): So it kind of varies who comes to visit the pantry, but there are some people in particular who kind of stick out, to us, and will come back and say, like, thank you for helping me, you know, during this time. It's not always someone you might think that is struggling, you know, long term. It might just be for a few weeks. Maybe their car breaks down. Maybe they had an unknown medical expense or something like that, um, come up.

But there was a student who ... it kind of ... it kind of hits you hard when it's someone who's in one of your classrooms with you, and you don't realize who's struggling. You don't know if it's the person next to you or someone, you know, you see in the hallway, you walk past in the hallway or, um, you know, you just never really know.

But there was one student who I had been in class with and actually had become, you know, somewhat of friends with, and he had stopped by the pantry one day, um, and was so embarrassed, like, "Victoria, I'm so sorry I have to stop by, but um, I've just really kind of been struggling right now." So I stopped him you know, like, you don't need to share anything. You don't need to have a reason why you're coming. You don't need to provide any ... You know, there's no reason not to come to the pantry. So if you think you need it, then you need it. Um, so he came and he had said he had missed, I think, a few days worth of meals. He hadn't eaten that those few days prior. Um, and that just, that really hits home because he's sitting there in class with me and hear I am talking to him every day, talking about homework, or you know, upcoming assignments. And I really had no idea that he was going through that, and then to see the embarrassment on his face when he walked in to the pantry just broke my heart. So I'm, you know. I think that's more the reason why we continue to do it. And there ... there have been difficult times to keep up with little things as they come along like, oh advertising or oh this, and restocking shelves. But it makes it all so much more worth it when you, you know, see little things like that and hear someone say like, thank you that really helped, you now, helped me during that time.

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