

HUGE NEED: St. Louis Urban League Distributes Food to Hundreds in Vehicles, COVID-19 Shutdown Has Grave Impact

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
April 24 2020 12:05 PM

VIDEO OF ST. LOUIS URBAN LEAGUE FOOD DISTRIBUTION:







SEE PHOTO GALLERY:

ALTON - The St. Louis Urban League free drive-through meal giveaway exploded into hundreds of cars lined up Friday morning for the noon to 3 p.m. giveaway. Vehicles were backed all the way to the Great River Road before the food was distributed and filled the Henry Street Parking Lot.

Vehicles started arriving at the scene around 7:45 a.m., Alton Police said. The event was held at the Henry Street Parking Lot off Landmarks Boulevard in Alton, across from the KFC and Old Bakery Beer business. Each family member in vehicles received one meal per individual present. Meals include groceries, fruit and bread.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals had to stay in their vehicles because it was a drive-through delivery. Many in line appeared out of work because of the statewide coronavirus shutdown of businesses. The massive amount of vehicles and individuals showed the grave economic impact of the shutdown in the Alton area.

A man named Jeff from Alton, who didn't want to release his last name, said: "I got laid off from my job and money is tight right now. My wife is also laid off and unemployment has not come in yet. I got here at 9:30 in the morning. I want to get the food to help my family."

Aengela from Wood River, said she was in line because she too was laid off and "money is tight right now."

"I have a little bit of income coming from unemployment, but I have three kids and my mom is living with me," she said. "It is a very difficult time."

The Alton Jimmy John's arrived around noon with sandwiches for the workers.

The Alton Fire Department members brought a fire truck down with Chief Jesse Jemison and also had several firefighters passing out food. Alton Police Chief Jason Simmons directed the massive amount of traffic with a host of other department members. Alton Mayor Brant Walker and Rep. Monica Bristow were also on hand assisting.

SEE PHOTO GALLERY:

[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)