



February Volunteer of the Month Celebrated



L to R: Sandra VanderLugt, BBP Board Member & First Bank & Trust Sponsor; Erika Saunders, Seija Saunders, Elizabeth Saunders, Volunteers of the Month; Cathy Ching, BBP Executive Director; RaeAnn Thompson, BBP Volunteer and Food Coordinator

The Helpline Center congratulates Erika, Seija, Elizabeth, and Jacob Saunders on being named the February 2021 Volunteers of the Month, an area-wide award program sponsored by the Helpline Center and First Bank & Trust.

Erika has assisted The Brookings Backpack Project by packing bags every week during the school year for several years. She also assists in supervising the packing when there is no staff available to do so. For at least five years now, Erika has been a strong and consistent volunteer for the Backpack Project.

During this past year, the Brookings Backpack Project has limited their volunteers at the packing site. Erika not only assists them weekly, but she brings her family along to help when they are shorthanded. Cathy Ching of BBP stated, "She shows up with a smile (although we can't see it now because it's hidden under that mask) and pitches in wherever needed."

Staff and fellow packers are so thankful that Erika and her family have been social distancing and are always masked when they show up to pack. The assistance that they get from the Saunders family most weeks to make sure the bags are packed and ready to go on Thursday morning is invaluable to the success of the program.

Congratulations, Erika and family, on being our much-deserved February Volunteers of the Month!

For information on volunteer opportunities or the Volunteer of the Month program, please contact Allison Schmitt at bkvol@helplinecenter.org or call 211 for more information.