

The increase in inflation is causing problems for a family in Logan

By Cassidy Mikesell

Samaria Dimaano is making noodles for her family of five again. Eating out was a luxury that her and her family haven't been able to enjoy in months.

Her eleven year old son, Alan Dimaano, walks into the small kitchen of their townhome.

"What are we having for dinner today? Are you making noodles again," he asks.

When she tells him, she can't help but to feel fortunate that her son has never been a picky eater and hasn't complained about the multiple meals consisting of either noodles or sandwiches.

The luck runs out with her second born, Faith Dimaano. At three years old she was recently diagnosed with Rhet syndrome, a neurological disorder that leads to severe impairment and affects nearly every aspect of life. Her disorder means she needs to be kept to a strict diet. Something that became a worry for Samaria Dimaano when the special milk her daughter needed was no longer being shipped to Utah because of shipping costs.

"I had to call her doctor and try to figure out what to do so that my daughter was fed," Samaria Dimaano said.

The doctor gave them a different milk option, one that was more expensive than the previous, but for their daughter, she would have to make it work.

Samaria Dimaano's youngest, Oliver Dimaano, would luckily eat anything that was put in front of him.

The 9% inflation increase in Utah over the course of the last year is causing this Logan family to struggle and make cutbacks from what they used to consider their regular lifestyle.

A few weeks prior, Samaria Dimaano's husband, Charles Dimaano, was being escorted out of his workplace by security.

They were letting him and a handful of his coworkers go. The company gave no prior notice and Charles Dimaano was informed the day that cutbacks were being made that the company could no longer afford to employ the weekend shift.

"I was led out of the job that was supporting my family and couldn't do anything about it," he said.

A couple weeks after Charles Dimaano lost his job, Samaria Dimaano found herself in a very similar situation.

It was her day off and she was at home with her kids and husband when the phone rang. The caller ID let her know that it was her employer calling. Thinking that they were calling to ask her to take on an extra shift, she accepted the call.

Her heart began racing as she listened. She numbly took the phone away from her ear and hung up. She had just been let go from her job at a clinic. She began to cry as she processed that now both her and her husband were unemployed with three kids to feed and care for as well as rent to pay.

She later found out that the majority of her coworkers had been let go as well. “When they called me, it was just an automated voice and I didn’t find out why until a coworker that was let go while at work contacted me,” she said.

Alexa Ferguson, a close coworker who was let go while on shift, called and told her what had happened.

“They told us that they weren’t able to keep us on with the rising cost of employment. They needed to make department cuts,” she said.

According to a report released by The United States Congress Joint Economic Committee, inflation is costing Utah families over \$500 more per household every month this year than it was last year.

Samaria and Charles Dimaano are now grocery shopping using the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP is a service provided by Utah with the intention of supplying low-income families with nutritious foods.

SNAP is allowing them to continue to feed their family even without employment, but the Dimaanos hope to be able to provide more food and the occasional restaurant meal to their kids again.