



*Warmest
Holiday Wishes*

@elnet
CAMPUS COMMERCE

Wishing you and yours a season
of laughter, good food, and
memories that will last a lifetime.



This year, we offer a gift that goes beyond the holiday season. Throughout the year, enjoy homemade recipes hand-picked from the kitchens of your Nelnet Account Management Team. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for being our partner.

Have a wonderful holiday season, and a very happy new year.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Winter

Cheryl Davis, Mom's Pull-Apart Caramel Rolls	4
Cody Valentine, Easy Crock-Pot Chili	5
Aurora Rojas, Champurrado	6
Jody Buhr, Runza Casserole	7
Rhonda Plooster, Slow Cooker Beef Stew	8
Jenni Friesen, Easy Crock-Pot Potato Soup	9

Spring

Melisa Lisak, Strawberry Cinnamon Rolls	11
Rachel Pascua, Hawaiian Furikake Wasabi Salmon	12
Braden Bomberger, Lemon Bars	13
Matt Spethman, Spring Shrimp Pasta	14
Easton Edmond, Deviled Eggs	15

Summer

Matt Meyer, Hashbrown Casserole	17
Monica Geng, Chicken Tacos with Avocado Salsa and Ranch Taco Sauce	18
Reese Beninghaus, Bacon-Wrapped Jalapeño Pepper Poppers	19
Andy Nealon, Smoked Chicken Wings	20
Jeff Weerts, Dairy-Free Texas Sheet Cake	21
Britt Bierman, Sour Cream Cucumbers	22

Fall

Amy Graham, Easy Porcupine Skillet	24
Audrey Nichelson, Pumpkin Lasagna	25
Laura Anderson, Stovetop Italian Pasta	26
Matthew Valentine, Cheesy Brat Casserole	27
Joel Mueller, Bacon-Wrapped Lil' Smokies	28
Derek Odell, Pan-Seared Steak	29

MOM'S PULL-APART CARAMEL ROLLS

PREP TIME: 3 HOURS

COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Allow bread dough to thaw, but not rise. Break 1 loaf of dough into small, bite-size pieces and place into a 9 x 13 pan. Melt butter, brown sugar, pudding, milk, and cinnamon in small sauce pan. Pour ½ of mixture over bread dough.

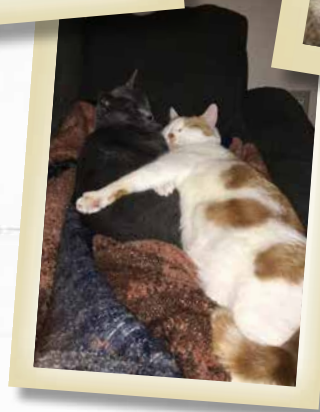
Break second loaf of dough into small, bite-size pieces and place them on top of the first layer. Pour remaining mixture over the dough. Let it rise for 2-3 hours, then bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Immediately after removing from oven, turn over onto foil-covered cookie sheet and let cool for 10 minutes before serving.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 loaves frozen bread dough
- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 small package of cook and serve vanilla pudding
- 2 tablespoons milk
- Cinnamon (to taste)

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Cheryl Davis*, ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce/FACTS for 16 years, working in several departments from data entry to account manager. I like to call my coworkers my second family. In the pictures provided you can see my first family. I'm the youngest of five (I'm the one in green on the left). My fur babies keep me happy. Tippy and Seamus (the ones smooching) are 13 and 8. Blue is my baby and Atticus comes to stay with us when my niece is out of school (and sometimes when she's not). Aren't they adorable?!



EASY CROCK-POT CHILI

PREP TIME: 3 HOURS

COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Fry the hamburger with the diced onion and put the crushed tomatoes, kidney beans, brown sugar, chili powder, pepper, and salt in the Crock-Pot. After the hamburger is done, drain the grease and add the meat to the Crock-Pot. Mix everything together and wait!

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Cody Valentine*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I lived in Hastings, Nebraska for 20 years of my life before moving to Lincoln, Nebraska. I've been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for five years. I recently joined the higher ed team in August. I enjoy going to movies, watching Netflix, playing video games, and hanging out with friends. I'm recently engaged and a new homeowner. A lot of my time is spent working on renovating the house. Oliver is our 3-year-old Pembroke Welsh Corgi who is more than a handful. He enjoys cuddling on the couch, belly rubs, and getting into trouble.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 28-ounce cans of crushed tomatoes
- 2 pounds of hamburger
- ½ a yellow onion
- 1 can of kidney beans
- 1 cup of brown sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons of chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon of pepper
- 1 tablespoon of salt



CHAMPURRADO

PREP TIME: NONE

COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Boil 5 quarts water with cinnamon and sugar. Add another cup of water with Maseca until dissolved (about 15 minutes). Add 1 bar of Chocolate Abuelita and 2 cups of milk. Let sit for about 10 minutes, stir a little, and it is ready!

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Aurora Rojas*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I have been with Nelnet for almost four years and recently new to the higher ed team. I have a 5-year-old son named Jahziel who is soon to be six. I have been married to my wonderful husband, Daniel, going on three years next year. We spend most our time with family and our Sundays are filled with soccer games, from mine to my son's. We also love to go to Colorado during the summer with family, enjoying the outdoors as much as we can.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 ¼ quarts water
- 2 cups milk
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons Maseca (corn flour)
- 1 bar Chocolate Abuelita
- 5 tablespoons sugar



RUNZA CASSEROLE

PREP TIME: NONE

COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread one tube of crescent rolls into the bottom of a 9 x 13 pan and bake for 7 minutes or until brown. While this is in the oven, brown the hamburger and onion in a skillet, then drain.

Add the cabbage to the hamburger/onion mixture. Let it steam for a few minutes.

Add the salt and pepper. Spread the hamburger/onion/cabbage mixture into the pan of the baked crescent dough. Sprinkle the cheese on top of the meat mixture. Spread the second tube of crescent rolls over the top of the cheese.

Bake for 35-40 minutes, covering with foil the last 10 minutes to soften the crust.

INGREDIENTS:

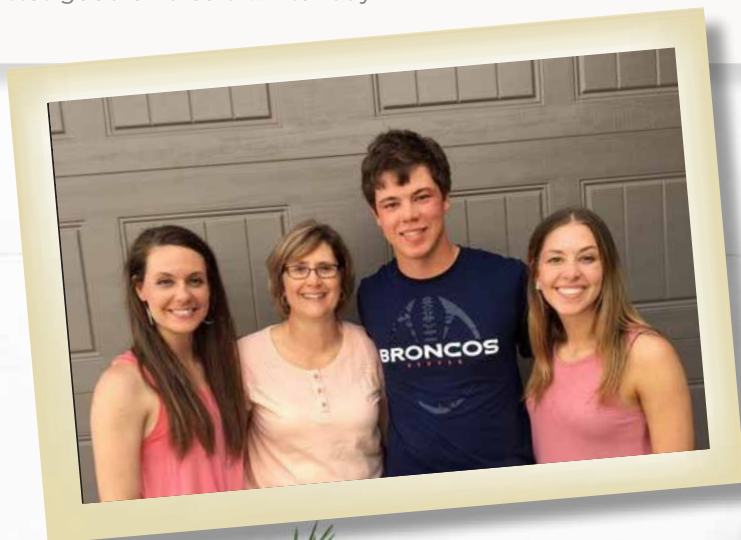
- 2 pounds hamburger
- 2 cups finely chopped onions
- 4 cups fresh chopped cabbage
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- 2 packages of refrigerated crescent rolls
- 1 pound shredded mozzarella cheese

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Jody Buhr*, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

I've been with Nelnet for 12 years and a senior account manager since January 2016. My life outside Nelnet involves my husband, three kids, one son in law, one grandson, one future son in law, and our beagle. I spend my time enjoying my grandson (who will be two in January) and planning a wedding for my daughter Courtney, who is getting married in May. We live on a farm and love the peaceful evenings and wide-open spaces. My son works on the farm with my husband, and my daughters both work in Lincoln, Nebraska.

My husband and I enjoy going to the lake and we were able to take a couple of quick fishing trips. I'm pretty sure I caught the biggest fish this year!

I included a recipe for Runza casserole, which is a family favorite. It is easy to make and tastes good on a cold winter day.



SLOW COOKER BEEF STEW

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 7-8 HOURS

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Layer potatoes on the bottom of your slow cooker. Next, layer carrots on top of potatoes. Place meat on top of carrots. Sprinkle meat with soy sauce, salt, paprika, pepper, and flour.

Layer chopped onions evenly on top of sauce/seasonings. Combine beef broth & tomato sauce and pour over everything in the slow cooker.

Cover. Cook on low for 7-8 hours (high 4- 5 hours if pressed for time).

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Rhonda Blooster*, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

I joined Nelnet Campus Commerce in February 2001. My husband Stacy and I have two daughters: Cassidy, 18, and Taylor, 15. In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family and friends.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds stew beef
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 4 large carrots, peeled & sliced in ½-inch pieces
- 3 large potatoes, peeled & chopped into chunks
- 1 cup condensed beef broth
- 1 ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup soy sauce
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 can tomato sauce (8 ounces)



EASY CROCK-POT POTATO SOUP

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 7-8 HOURS

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Combine shredded hash browns, chicken broth, cream of chicken soup, onion, and pepper in a Crock-Pot.

Cook for 7 hours on low heat. About 1 hour before serving, add cream cheese, and keep heated until thoroughly melted.

Serve with cheese, sour cream, bacon bits, green onions, or whatever else you think would be good!

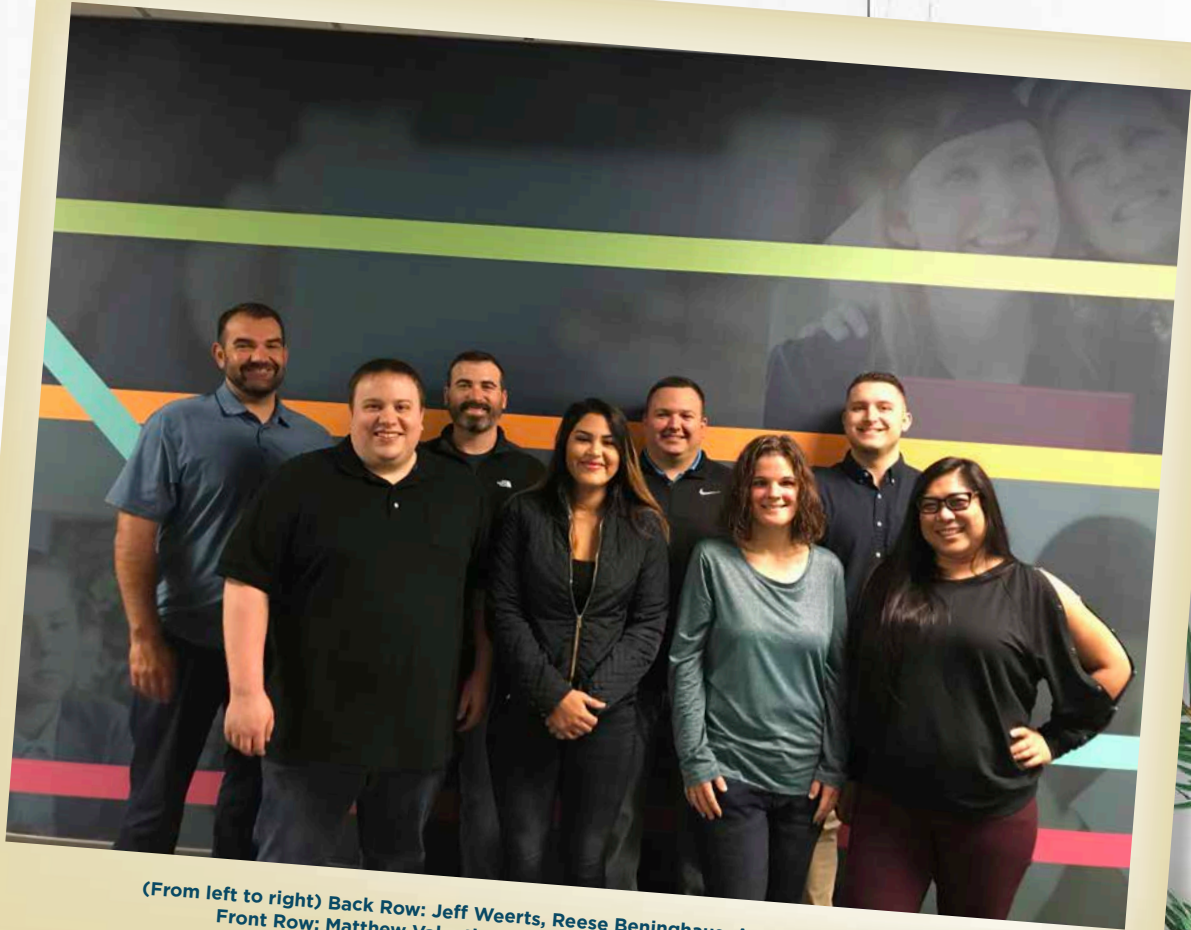
FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Jenni Friesen*, TEAM LEADER

I will be celebrating 12 years with Nelnet in February 2019. My husband Casey and I have two daughters: Emerson, 6, and Sienna, 3. We love spending time outdoors and when the weather cooperates, you can usually find us in the pool or at the lake.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 30-ounce bag of frozen shredded hash browns (I use Ore-Ida)
- 3 14-ounce cans of chicken broth
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 package cream cheese (don't use fat-free, it will not melt)





**(From left to right) Back Row: Jeff Weerts, Reese Beninghaus, Andy Nealon, Curtis Pester
Front Row: Matthew Valentine, Aurora Rojas, Amy Graham, Rachel Pascua**



STRAWBERRY CINNAMON ROLLS

PREP TIME: 30 MIN

COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 8

DIRECTIONS:

Heat the milk in a small saucepan until warm. Mix in the butter until melted. Let cool to lukewarm. In a large bowl combine 2 ¼ cups flour with yeast, sugar, and salt. Mix well. Stir in egg and ¼ cup of water. Mix well. Now, stir in the milk mixture until dough forms. Stir in another cup of flour. When the dough comes together, flip it onto a lightly-floured surface and knead until smooth. Return the dough ball to the bowl, cover with a damp towel, and let rest for 10 minutes. Roll out dough into a 15 x 10 inch rectangle. Spread the strawberry jam all over the dough. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Then evenly cover with the chopped strawberries.

Roll up the dough and pinch the seam to seal. Cut into 12 equal rolls. Place rolls cut side up in a greased 11 x 13 baking dish. Cover and let rise until doubled (30 minutes). While waiting, preheat oven to 375 degrees. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Icing

Mix the powdered sugar and cinnamon with 1 tablespoon of milk. Stir until glaze forms. You may need to add up to another tablespoon of milk for desired consistency. Drizzle glaze over finished rolls. Dairy-free alternatives: Substitute almond milk, coconut milk, etc., and a dairy-free margarine.

INGREDIENTS:

- ¾ cup milk
- ½ cup margarine or butter softened
- 3 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons instant yeast
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup water

Filling

- 1 cup strawberry jam
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups sliced strawberries

Icing

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1-2 tablespoons milk

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Melisa Lisak*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

My name is Melisa and this is a picture of my adorable puppy, Kova. My little “smoosh” is the absolute best. My spring recipe is a cinnamon roll recipe. But not just any cinnamon rolls...strawberry cinnamon rolls. It’s the perfect thing to bake as the bitter winter cold tries to linger in March and April. Also great if you’re just sick of normal cinnamon rolls and would love to try something new! Try it out and let Kova and I know if you loved it as much as we do.



HAWAIIAN FURIKAKE WASABI SALMON

SPRING

PREP TIME: OVERNIGHT

COOK TIME: 20 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 8-10

DIRECTIONS:

Marinate the salmon in Mr. Yoshida's sauce in a Ziploc bag overnight. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Discard sauce, and place in a 9 x 13 pan or cookie sheet lined with foil.

Mix the mayonnaise, avocado, and wasabi paste until combined. Spread over the salmon. Save the remaining in small Ziploc bag. Sprinkle furikake seasoning over the mayonnaise. Bake for 20 minutes.

Cut a small hole in the corner of the Ziploc bag to make a piping bag. Squeeze the remaining mayo on top of the salmon. You can also do this with the teriyaki sauce as well. Serve with rice and your choice of vegetable. Enjoy!

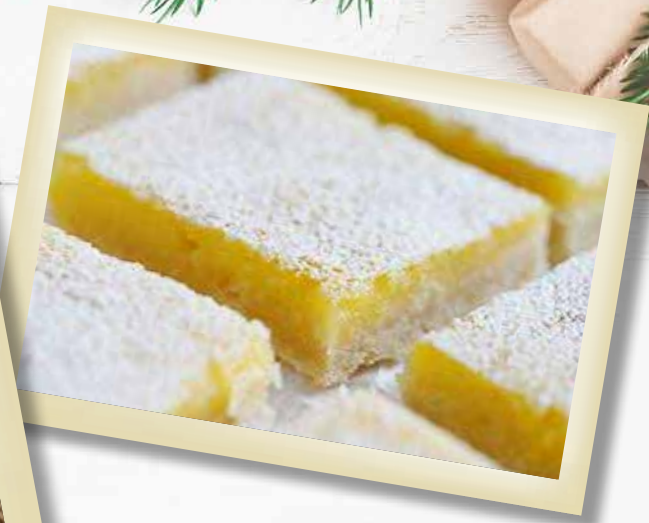
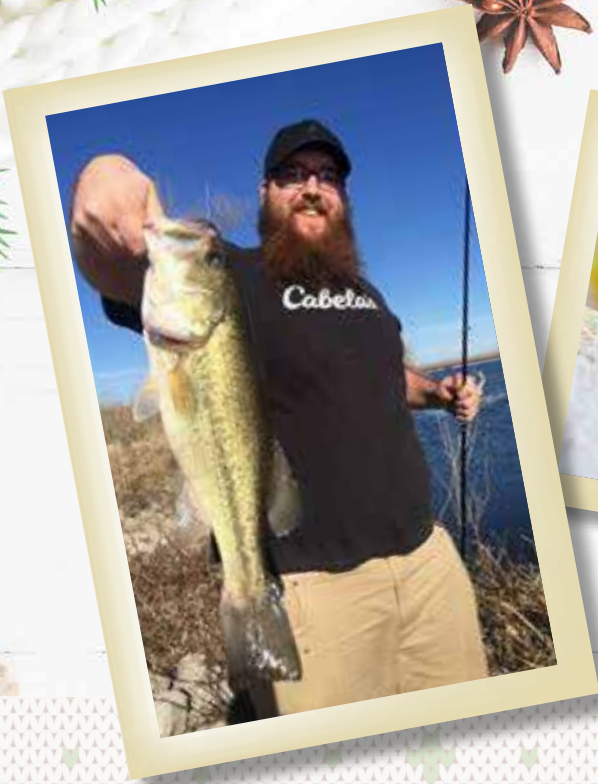
FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Rachel Pasena*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I have been with Nelnet for three and a half years. I was born and raised in Sacramento, California and moved to Lincoln, Nebraska in 2011. I have two of the sweetest fur babies in the world. Kobe is a Yorkshire terrier and Mr. Meowy is a massive tabby cat. When I'm not at work, I'm cooking, eating, or thinking about cooking and eating because food is life. My favorite vacation spots are Disneyland and Hawaii. Aloha!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2-3 pounds center-cut salmon
- 1 cup Mr. Yoshida's Original Marinade & Cooking Sauce (teriyaki works as a good substitute- Kikkoman Teriyaki or Kikkoman Teriyaki Pineapple Baste & Glaze)
- ½ cup Nori Komi furikake rice seasoning (more or less based on your preference)
- ⅔ cup mayonnaise
- ½ large avocado
- 2 teaspoons wasabi paste (add more or less based on your preference)





SPRING

LEMON BARS

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 20-25 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 16

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Grease a 9 x 13 inch baking pan. Combine the flour, $\frac{2}{3}$ cup powdered sugar, and butter. Pat dough into prepared pan.

Bake for 20 minutes in the preheated oven, until slightly golden. While the crust is baking, whisk together eggs, white sugar, flour, and lemon juice until frothy. Pour this lemon mixture over the hot crust.

Return to the preheated oven for an additional 20 to 25 minutes, or until light golden brown. Cool on a wire rack. Dust the top with powdered sugar. Cut into squares.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup powdered sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter or margarine, softened
- 3 eggs
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup powdered sugar for decoration

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Braden Bomberger*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I graduated from University of Nebraska Lincoln in May of 2016 with a bachelor's degree in Applied Science. After graduating college I started at Nelnet servicing student loans. After nine months I moved to Nelnet Campus Commerce and recently accepted a job as an Account Manager. In my free time I enjoy doing outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, and golfing as well as helping out with farming projects when needed.



SPRING

SPRING SHRIMP PASTA

PREP TIME: 25 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 8

DIRECTIONS:

In a large sauté pan on medium high heat, heat the olive oil in the pan. Sear the shrimp on both sides for 2-3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.

In a separate large sauté pan, heat 2 tablespoons olive oil on medium high heat and begin to cook the pearl onions and grape tomatoes until cooked and translucent, about 5-7 minutes. Add the peas and garlic and cook for another 2 minutes. Add 2 tablespoons of butter. Once melted, add 1 cup of white wine and allow to simmer for another 2-3 minutes until slightly reduced. Add the cream and parmesan cheese and stir so the cheese blends in with the sauce and veggies.

Finally, drain the pasta and toss in with the sauce along with the shrimp with tongs. Season with salt and pepper. Squeeze a half lemon among the dish and toss once more. Allow to simmer for about 5 minutes and serve.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Matt Spethman*, DIRECTOR OF CLIENT EXPERIENCE

I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for 19 years. I oversee the client implementation and account management teams. The best thing about working at Nelnet are the people I get to work with each day. I know that each of them will come to work with a great attitude and provide best-in-class experiences to our clients. I am truly blessed to be part of the client experience team.

My wife Michelle is a middle school English teacher and we have been married for 18 years. We have three sons: Sam, a junior in high school, Henry, who is in eighth grade, and Charlie, who is in third grade.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound cooked and peeled extra-large shrimp
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 12 ounces pappardelle pasta, cooked al dente
- 1 ½ cups pearl onions
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 ¼ cups sweet peas
- 1 pint grape tomatoes, cut in half
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup white wine
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 ½ cups parmesan cheese
- ½ lemon
- Salt and pepper (to taste)





SPRING

DEVILED EGGS

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES

COOK TIME: NONE

SERVINGS: 6

DIRECTIONS:

Cut each egg in half and remove yolks, placing them in a large bowl. Using a fork, mash the yolks until they are small, uniform, and granular. Then add the remaining ingredients. Stir to combine, and scoop or pipe with a piping bag back in to egg halves.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Easton Edmond*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I am a graduate of the University of Nebraska at Kearney with a bachelor's degree in management. While at UNK I also played on the baseball team. After starting with Nelnet in March of 2018, I have recently joined the account manager team. My free time is typically spent with my family, Husker football games, and watching the Los Angeles Lakers.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 large hard-boiled eggs
- 3 tablespoons fat free mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dill pickle, chopped fine
- 1 teaspoon pickle juice
- 1 tablespoon celery, chopped fine
- 1 tablespoon parsley, chopped

making Educational Dreams Possible
through Service and Technology



(From left to right) Back Row: Cody Valentine, Audrey Nichelson, Jody Buhr, Rhonda Plooster, Joel Mueller
Front Row: Matt Meyer, Melisa Lisak, Cheryl Davis, Jenni Friesen, Laura Anderson



SUMMER

HASHBROWN CASSEROLE

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 35-45 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Spray a 9 x 13 casserole dish with cooking spray. Mix ingredients in casserole dish, and cover dish with aluminum foil. Preheat oven to 350 degrees, and bake until browned for roughly 35-45 minutes.

Optional:

Garnish the top with extra cheese, paprika, and chopped chives

Add ½ cup of cream cheese (roughly half a block)

Add ½ cup bacon or chopped ham

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 bags of hash browns (or 2 pounds)
- ½ cup melted butter
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- ½ cup chopped yellow or white onion
- 1 can of cream of chicken soup
- 2 cups of shredded cheddar or colby jack cheese

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Matt Meyer*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I began working with Nelnet July 23, 2012 with the student loan department and transitioned over to Nelnet Business Solutions in early 2017. Outside of work, I perform folksy-type tunes that I write at local coffee shops and take many country drives to small towns or whatever else I stumble upon. I also enjoy long road trips. I have driven to Monterey, California; Newport, Oregon; and frequent trips to my hometown of Prescott, Arizona. Some of my favorite stops to hike/camp are Rocky Mountain National Park, Moab, Utah, and Arches National Park.



SUMMER

CHICKEN TACOS WITH AVOCADO SALSA AND RANCH TACO SAUCE

PREP TIME: 20 MIN

COOK TIME: NONE

SERVINGS: 4

DIRECTIONS:

Avocado Salsa:

Remove the husks from the tomatillos. Wash and chop the tomatillos; place in a medium bowl. Add avocado, jicama, cilantro and lime juice. Toss to combine; set aside.

Ranch Taco Sauce:

In a small bowl, combine dressing, taco sauce, and chili pepper; set aside.

Tacos:

Remove the meat from the chicken, discarding the skin and bones. Coarsely shred the chicken. To assemble, divide chicken among tortillas. Spoon avocado salsa over chicken. Drizzle with ranch taco sauce. If desired, garnish with additional cilantro and serve with lime wedges.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 medium fresh tomatillos
- 1 medium avocado, chopped
- ¼ cup snipped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- ½ cup bottled ranch salad dressing
- 3 tablespoons bottled taco sauce
- ½ teaspoon ground ancho chili pepper or chili powder
- 1 jicama, julienned
- 1 deli-roasted chicken
- 8 6-inch corn tortillas, warmed
- Fresh cilantro (optional)
- Lime wedges (optional)

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Monica Geng*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

Season's greetings to you and yours. I have been with Nelnet for over two years now. I have three brothers, three nieces, and a lot of nephews. I love reading and writing. My goal in life is to be a published author one day, but for now, I just write for myself. In this picture is my lovely mother and me. She is my best friend.



BACON-WRAPPED JALAPEÑO PEPPER POPPERS

SUMMER

PREP TIME: 20 MIN

COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 6

DIRECTIONS:

Cut stems off of peppers and cut them all in half, long ways. Remove the seeds and membranes from peppers.

Mix cheddar cheese with cream cheese. Fill each pepper with the cream cheese mixture. Wrap a half slice of bacon around each pepper half. Place on a foiled, lined baking sheet. Place in a 450 degree oven for 10-15 minutes or until bacon is fully cooked.

Remove and serve when cool enough to safely eat.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Reese Beringhaus*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I have been an account manager with Nelnet for two years. I really enjoy golfing and watching the Green Bay Packers win when it's that time of year. My girlfriend Dani and I like taking road trips to new places and trying different foods.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 ounces cheddar cheese, shredded
- 4 ounces cream cheese
- 6 medium slices bacon, cut in half
- 6 jalapeños



SMOKED CHICKEN WINGS

SUMMER

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 1.5 HOURS

SERVINGS: 6

DIRECTIONS:

Make the dry rub in a bowl. Place the chicken wings in a bowl, and dump dry rub over them. Mix the rub thoroughly over all of the wings. Place them on the smoker at 250 degrees for approximately 1.5 hours.

Once thoroughly cooked, enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound chicken wings and drumettes
- 1 tablespoon paprika (hot/mild/smoked)
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon sage
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- ½ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Andy Nealon*, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

I have been with Nelnet for over five years. I have a black lab named Otis that loves to go to the lake. He goes everywhere with me and has to have the car window down at all times, no matter the weather. In my free time, I like to go golfing, fishing, and hunting.



SUMMER

DAIRY-FREE TEXAS SHEET CAKE

PREP TIME: 25 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Grease 15 x 10 baking pan and set aside. In a separate bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda, and salt, then set aside.

In a medium saucepan, combine butter, cocoa powder, and 1 cup water. Bring mixture to boiling, and stir constantly. Remove from heat. Add the chocolate mixture to dry mixture and beat with electric mixer on medium to high speed until thoroughly combined. Add eggs and vanilla to soy milk mixture, then add to the rest of the cake ingredients. Beat for 1 minute (batter will be thin). Pour batter into the prepared pan. Bake in a 350 degree oven for about 25 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean when inserted into the center of the cake.

Directions for Frosting:

In a medium saucepan combine I Can't Believe It's Not Butter, cocoa powder, and soy milk. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Add sifted powdered sugar and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Pour warm frosting over the warm cake, spreading it evenly. If desired, top with $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of coarsely chopped pecans.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Jeff Weerts*, TEAM LEADER

I have two beautiful and fun daughters, Elle, 6, and Collins, 2. I have been with Nelnet for over 11 years now in many different capacities. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends.

INGREDIENTS:

Cake Ingredients:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup soy milk (can also use any unsweetened milk substitute such as almond milk or coconut milk)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon lemon juice
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup I Can't Believe It's Not Butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 eggs
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla

Frosting Ingredients:

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup I Can't Believe It's Not Butter
- 3 tablespoons soy milk
- 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups powdered sugar, sifted
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla



SUMMER

SOUR CREAM CUCUMBERS

PREP TIME: 25 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

In a large bowl, whisk sour cream, vinegar, sugar, and pepper until blended. Add cucumbers and onion; toss to coat. Refrigerate, covered at least 4 hours.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Britt Bierman*, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

My husband Joe and I have one daughter, Brynlee, 7, and two miniature schnauzers named Rudy and Ralphie. In my spare time I enjoy spending time in my sewing room and hanging out with family and friends.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup sour cream
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- Pepper to taste
- 4 medium cucumbers, peeled if desired and thinly sliced
- 1 small sweet onion, thinly sliced and separated into rings



EASY PORCUPINE SKILLET

PREP TIME: 5 MIN

COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 4-6

DIRECTIONS:

Brown the ground beef and drain off excess grease. Stir in onion soup mix, water, uncooked rice, and tomatoes with juice. Cover and cook on low for 25 minutes or until rice is tender, while stirring occasionally. Once done, add cheese and cover for a minute or two or until the cheese melts.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Amy Graham*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for almost 10 years. My husband Phil and I are very busy raising two wonderful toddlers. Zoie is our 3-year-old daughter and Bryck is our 2-year-old son. As you can imagine, our household is very busy. On my downtime, I like to try new recipes — especially baked goods. I also like spending time with my family and friends.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 package dry onion soup mix
- 1 ½ cup hot water
- ¾ cup uncooked minute rice
- 16 ounces diced tomatoes with juice
- Sliced green pepper (optional)
- Shredded cheese



PUMPKIN LASAGNA

PREP TIME: 45 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 35 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 12

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Mix sage, salt, black pepper, ½ teaspoon nutmeg, and ½ teaspoon cloves together in a small bowl to make a spice blend.

Place olive oil in skillet and place over medium heat. Add mushrooms, onion, garlic, and ½ of the spice blend; cook and stir until mushrooms are tender and moisture has evaporated.

Combine 2 cups pumpkin, ¾ cups heavy cream, ½ cup Parmesan, and remaining spice blend in a bowl.

Spray 9 x 13-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Place 4 noodles evenly on bottom. Apply ½ of pumpkin mixture and ½ of mushroom mixture. Dollop ½ cup ricotta and sprinkle ½ cup mozzarella cheese on top. Repeat layers once more. Place remaining 4 noodles on top.

Combine remaining 1 cup pumpkin, remaining ¾ cup cream, nutmeg, and cloves. Spread on top of noodles. Sprinkle remaining 1 cup Parmesan cheese on top. Place cut butter on top somewhat evenly. Cover with aluminum foil. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 minutes. Uncover and bake until bubbly, about 15 minutes more.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Andrey Nicholson*, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER/TRAINER

My husband Scott and I have two dogs. Sienna is a 12-year-old miniature Aussie and Larry is a 1-year-old Yorkie. We like spending time at home, but do try to sneak away to a tropical location for a bit when the snow starts to blow here in Nebraska.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon minced sage
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 ½ pounds sliced mushrooms
- 1 large diced onion
- 2 minced garlic cloves
- 3 cups pumpkin (puree)
- 1 ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 ½ cup Parmesan cheese shredded
- Cooking spray
- 12 lasagna noodles
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese shredded
- Pinch ground nutmeg
- Pinch ground cloves
- 2 tablespoons butter, diced into small pieces



STOVETOP ITALIAN PASTA

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 45 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 8

DIRECTIONS:

Pour can of diced tomatoes (with juices) into a 1-quart liquid measuring cup. Add water until the mixture measures 4 cups. Stir in tomato sauce and sugar; set aside.

Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add olive oil; tilt pan to coat. Add garlic and red pepper flakes and stir for 30 seconds, or until fragrant. Add ground beef and cook until done. Drain grease, season meat with garlic salt and pepper, to taste, and stir in 3 tablespoons of fresh chopped herbs.

Scatter pasta over meat and pour tomato mixture over pasta without stirring. Cover and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue to simmer, covered, stirring every 5 minutes. Cook until pasta is tender (about 20 to 25 minutes).

Remove skillet from heat and stir in mozzarella and ½ cup Parmesan. Taste and adjust seasonings, adding more garlic salt, pepper, and/or sugar, if necessary. Remove from heat and dollop heaping tablespoons of ricotta all over surface of pasta mixture. Cover and allow to rest for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining fresh herbs and Parmesan.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Laura Anderson*, QUALITY ASSURANCE ANALYST

I've been with the higher ed team for over 10 years. I've spent the last few months on crutches, but hope to get back to taking walks soon! I also enjoy cycling and experimenting in the kitchen.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 28-ounce can petite diced tomatoes
- Water
- 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 pound ground beef
- Garlic salt and freshly-ground black pepper
- 5 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian herbs (such as basil, oregano, thyme, parsley), divided
- 8 ounces bow-tie pasta (farfalle)
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- ½ cup and 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup ricotta cheese



CHEESY BRAT CASSEROLE

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 45 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 8

DIRECTIONS:

In a 3-quart casserole, stir together the sausage, potatoes, green beans, soup, cheddar cheese, and onion. Bake, covered, in a 350 degree oven for about 45 minutes or until heated through.

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Matthew Valentine*, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

I grew up in Hastings, Nebraska and attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, receiving a bachelor's degree in business administration. I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for five and a half years. I am a die-hard Denver Broncos and Nebraska Cornhuskers fan. When I'm not working, I enjoy going to concerts and hanging out with friends and family.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 fully cooked Polish sausage or bratwurst cut into ½-inch pieces
- 4 medium potatoes, cooked, peeled, and cubed (1 ¼ pounds)
- 1 16-ounce package frozen cut green beans thawed and drained
- 1 10 and ¾-ounce can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- ½ cup chopped onion



BACON-WRAPPED LIL' SMOKIES

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 45 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 48 SMOKIES

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil.

Using kitchen scissors or a knife, cut your bacon into thirds. There's no need to cut each individual piece; cut the whole slab at one time.

Wrap $\frac{1}{3}$ of each bacon slice around a smokie and secure it with a toothpick. After you have wrapped all of the smokies, place them on the baking sheet and sprinkle brown sugar on top of each smokie.

Bake sausages for 40-45 minutes or until the bacon is crispy and the brown sugar has melted. Serve immediately or keep warm in a crockpot. Makes around 48 smokies.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound of bacon
- 1 (14-ounce) package of lil' smokie sausages
- 1 cup brown sugar
- Toothpicks

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Joel Mueller*, SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER

I have been with Nelnet Campus Commerce for almost eight years. My wife and I enjoy the outdoors: camping, fishing, boating, and four-wheeling. I also enjoy hunting and target shooting. I am a big fan of NASCAR, dirt track racing, and football.



PAN-SEARED STEAK

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 8-12 MINUTES

SERVINGS: 1-2

DIRECTIONS:

Remove thawed meat from refrigerator 20 minutes before cooking, then add a thick layer of Himalayan pink salt and pepper to each side of the steak. Add oil to a pan (cast iron will give you the best flavor, but any pan will do). Heat the pan on high until the oil just starts to smoke, then lay the steak away from you, preventing any oil from splashing back. Add butter and cracked garlic cloves (you can do this simply by removing the clove from bulb and using your palm to lightly crush it against the counter). For best results, add half of the butter and garlic to each side of the steak. After two minutes, use a pair of tongs to flip the steak, then rub a garlic clove into the top of the steak.

After the first rotation, add thyme and spoon melted garlic butter from around the steak onto the top. After another two minutes, tilt the pan to one side, collecting the butter in a corner, and rest the fat side of the steak in the butter to absorb flavor. Hold the steak here for about 30 seconds to a minute to cook the steak rare. Repeat this process for one additional minute on each side for medium-rare, medium, medium-well, or well-done steaks.

After the steak has been cooked to the preferred level, take it from the pan and wrap in aluminum foil to cool for about a minute. (Optional): Sauté asparagus in the leftover garlic butter while steak cools for an easy side dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 16-ounce New York strip (Or your favorite cut of steak)
- 1 fresh bulb of garlic
- 2 tablespoons butter
- Olive oil
- Himalayan pink salt
- Pepper
- Thyme

FROM THE KITCHEN OF: *Derek Odell*, ACCOUNT MANAGER

I was born and raised in Alliance, Nebraska, then left as soon as I graduated. I moved to Lincoln and received a bachelor's degree in finance with an emphasis in economics. My three-year fast track quickly became a five-year fun track for college, because sometimes it's better to enjoy the moment than rush through life. I enjoy my adrenaline, and love finding my newest fix in rock climbing (which sometimes gets too close to contradicting not rushing through life). Either way, life is too short — make sure you're making the most of it!

