Serving Students Who Are Experiencing Homelessness, Food Insecurity, and Financial Crisis

Presented by Cal Poly

February 8, 2018
How prepared is your campus to meet basic needs of students?
Overview of Programs & Services at Cal Poly

- Basic Needs Working Group
- CalFresh Outreach
- Emergency Grants
  - [http://www.studentaffairs.calpoly.edu/priorities/care-program](http://www.studentaffairs.calpoly.edu/priorities/care-program)
- Emergency Housing
- Hunger Program
  - Meal vouchers
  - Food pantry
  - Meal Sharing
BACKGROUND & NATIONAL RESEARCH

474,000+ CSU STUDENTS

21%

1 IN 5 STUDENTS ARE FOOD INSECURE

8%

1 IN 12 STUDENTS ARE HOUSING DISPLACED

DISPLACED & FOOD INSECURE STUDENTS IN THE CSU

5 BARRIERS TO HELPING MORE STUDENTS

- Potential stigma of needing help
- Lack of awareness of services
- Lack of access to financial aid
- Not enough affordable housing
- Too little funding for resources
Basic needs

Proper housing & food are necessary for success
These problems are often hidden, masked, shameful
What have we seen at Cal Poly?
How do we take action?
Basic Needs Working Group: Members

- President’s Chief of Staff
- ASI President
- Vice-President Student Affairs
- Dean of Students
- CalFresh Outreach
- Campus Health & Well Being
- Athletics
- Campus Dining
- Cross Cultural Centers
- Housing
Emergency Grants: Cal Poly Cares

- Tuition
- Academic Supplies
- Housing & Meals
- Medical
- Professional Clothing
- Emergency
Cal Poly Cares Process

• Step one: Student applies online
• Step two: Assistant Dean of Students forwards application to Financial Aid and schedules an appointment
• Step three: Financial Aid sends financial background on the student – Pell eligible, AB540 status, loans, SAP, etc.
• Step four: Assistant Dean of Students meets with the student applicant
• Step five: Assistant Dean of Students notifies Financial Aid of recommendation to approve grant. Financial Aid responds if there are any concerns.
• Step six: Financial aid disburses the funds. Assistant Dean of Students notifies the student.
Cal Poly Cares Criteria

- Maximize all available financial aid, including student and parent loans, before being awarded
- Obtain an on-campus job to help fund educational expenses if possible
- Maintain satisfactory progress towards degree
- Demonstrate connection with local social services (where applicable)
- Document need for emergency, health related situations
- Apply for the California DREAM Act (AB540), if undocumented student
- Live in university housing if homeless (with exceptions)
- Provide documentation verifying their emergency situation
Emergency Housing

On campus emergency housing is available for students at risk of becoming homeless.
Meal Vouchers

Free all you care to eat meal at 19 Metro

or

When 19 Metro is closed:
Food purchase up to $7 at one of the following locations

- Campus Market
- Sandwich Factory
- Einstein Bros. Bagels
- Tacos To-Go Express
- The Avenue

13951

One coupon per customer. Not valid with other offers.
No cash value. Expires 06/16/17.

www.calpolydining.com  Cashier: Use “Meal Voucher” Button
Food Pantry

Established in 2014
Hunger Program
Housed in Cal Poly’s Campus Health & Wellbeing's Health Education Office
Food Pantry

The Food Pantry ensures that all students have access to nutritious meals every day in order to stay focused on their success at Cal Poly.
Food Pantry Growth

163% increase in total encounters from Academic Year (AY) 2015-2016 to AY 2016-2017.

25% increase in unique students from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017.
Food Pantry Data: Fall Quarter 2017

598
Number of total encounters of the food pantry for Fall 2017.

5x
Average number of visits to the food pantry per one student for Fall 2017.

56.19%
Percentage of students who accessed the food pantry that are female.
Food Pantry Demographics

Food Pantry Demographics - Fall Quarter 2017
Partnerships
Food Pantry

Food Pantry: Items are from the SLO County Food Bank. SLO County's Food Bank offers a variety of shelf stable food items.
The CalFresh Outreach project

Funded to CSU Chico by CA Dept. of Social Services
11 CSU subcontracting campuses
Goal: Enroll eligible CSU students
What is SNAP?

• Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ($80b, 2017)
  – SNAP Benefits 45m Americans (>50% below poverty, 72% w/kids)
    – CalFresh: $8b to 4.5m Californians
• Economic impact: $1 SNAP = $1.73 real GDP generation
• CA has low enrollment (67%)
CalFresh Outreach activities

• Current funding cycle: 2016-2018

• Goal: Get students signed up for free food money! ($150/m)
  – Normalize, destigmatize, increase awareness & visibility

• Efforts: Outreach, drop-in hours, private appts, social media, in-person presentations, word-of-mouth, outreach, outreach
CalFresh Outreach partners

- Cal Poly Basic Needs Working Group, ASI, Athletics, Corporation, Dining, Health/Wellness, Financial Aid, Housing, President’s Office, Student Affairs

- Community: SLO County Dept. of Social Services, Farmers’ Market, Food Bank, Regional CalFresh Alliance
Impact on students in need

• Increase academic success and graduation
  – Social capital, professional trajectories, poverty reduction (...and lofty CSUGI 2025 goals)
  – Hungry students can't learn, regardless of 'academic support' mechanisms
  – Physical, mental, social health improvements come with improved access to food
Economic impact

• Economic benefits estimates
  – Cal Poly food insecure 27% = 6000 students
  – Avg. allotment $150/m = $900,000 federal money drawn to local economy
  – $1.73 multiplier = $1.6m in economic benefit to SLO region
Impact on student staff

- Phenomenal professional experience in socially-relevant issue
  - $80k (over 2y) to 15 student outreach staff, grad students, interns
  - Interdisciplinary team: Nutrition, social sciences, business, marketing, graphic arts
  - Some drawn from previous outreach efforts, some shocked that issue exists
  - Building professionalism, networking, empathy, diversity in teamwork, skills, expertise
CalFresh considerations

• The good
  – Sustainable, 'free', stimulates CA/local economy (the money is there!), promotes cultural shift, usually easy to get people on board (at least morally), LIFE-CHANGING to those in need, improves academic success (???)

• The bad
  – Complex to outreach to large population, need a concerted (funded) effort, requires cheerleader, uphill battle to increase awareness / visibility / acceptability, bureaucratic hurdles

• The ugly
  – Stigma of 'food stamps' / charity, shame of poverty, fear of judgement, haters
Best Practices

- Share resources
  - College and University Food Bank Alliance (http://www.cufba.org)
- Document need
  - Survey students
  - Focus groups
  - Gather institutional data
- Partner with local agencies
  - Faith-based organizations
  - Food Bank
  - Local non-profits
  - Department of Social Services
- Identify engaged faculty
  - Work with grants development
  - Outreach to various majors
- Create a working group
Other Resources

• CSU Basic Needs website
  – https://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/foodsecurity.shtml
• Hunger on Campus– The Challenge of Food Insecurity for College Students
  – https://studentsagainsthunger.org/hunger-on-campus/
• Landscape Analysis of Emergency Aid Programs, NASPA
• Students Shouldn’t Have to Choose Between Books and Food, Chronicle of Higher Education, February 28, 2016
• University of California, Global Food Initiative, Student Food Access and Security Study
• Wisconsin Hope Lab study,