Food For Thought: Ideas to Action
Starting a Campus Pantry

Dr. Felipe Henao, NYIT

Sharon Kompalla-Porter, RIT

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: IDEAS TO ACTION

A VIRTUAL SERIES FOR CAMPUSES IN NEW YORK
Hosted by the HEI Food Security Initiatives Network

February 15th | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Starting a Campus Pantry

March 17th | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Funding Your Campus Pantry

April 13th | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Staffing & Volunteer Engagement

Session Agenda

- Introductions
- National Context
- Institutional Type and Philosophy
- Importance of Data
- Lessons Learned
- Q & A

Introductions

Dr. Felipe Henao, NYIT
Dean of Students

Sharon Kompalla-Porter, RIT
Assistant Dean - College of Art and
Design

What is College Food Insecurity?

Food Insecurity: the lack of reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious food

Food Security

- **High food security** (old label=Food security): no reported indications of food-access problems or limitations.
- **Marginal food security** (old label=Food security): one or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake.
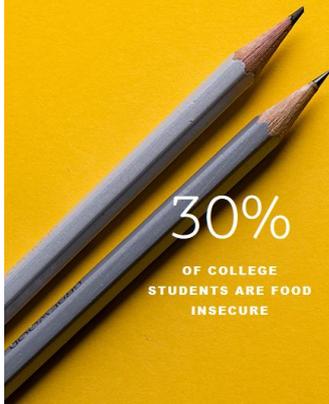
Food Insecurity

- **Low food security** (old label=Food insecurity without hunger): reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.
- **Very low food security** (old label=Food insecurity with hunger): reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

National Context

TRUTH IN NUMBERS

For many students, college isn't just endless meal plans, late-night study sessions, and avocado toast:

30% OF COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE FOOD INSECURE

56% OF FOOD INSECURE STUDENTS ARE WORKING

75% OF FOOD INSECURE STUDENTS RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID

43% OF FOOD INSECURE STUDENTS HAVE A MEAL PLAN

All stats here taken from the *2018 GAO Report* & *2018 Hunger on Campus Report*

Food Insecurity in College-aged Students

46.5 million people seek help for food insecurity from Feeding America

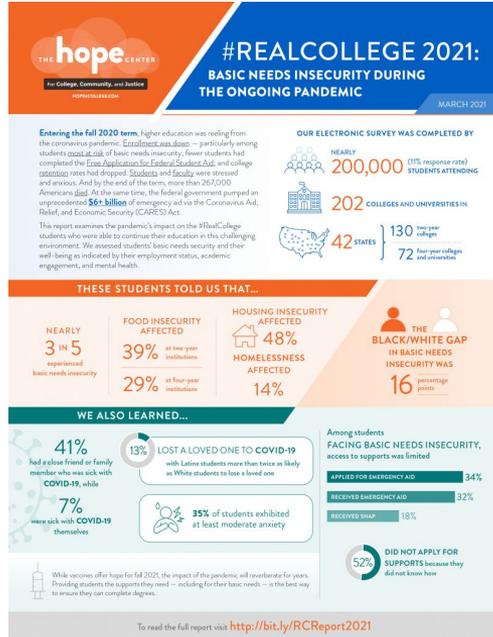10% are students (4.65 million)

2 million are full time students

31% (1.4 million) choose between paying for food and education

*Data collected from feedingamerica.org

National Context

#RealCollege 2021: Basic Needs Insecurity During the Ongoing Pandemic

#RealCollege 2020: Five Years of Evidence on Basic Needs Insecurity

College and University Basic Needs Insecurity: A National #RealCollege Survey Report - 2019

College and University Basic Needs Insecurity: A National #RealCollege Survey Report - 2018

Still Hungry and Homeless in College - 2017

Hungry and Homeless in College - 2016

RESOURCES

National Context

College and University Food Bank Alliance –

Hunger on Campus (October 2016)

- 3,800 students
- 34 institutions, 12 states
- 48% of respondents reported food insecurity in the previous 30 days

Serving the Nation's Students
College & University
FOOD BANK
Alliance

National Context

FOOD SECURITY QUESTIONS
- The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more. (Often True/Sometimes True/Never True)
- I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals. (Often True/Sometimes True/Never True)
- In the last 30 days, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes, almost every day/Yes, some days, but not every day/Only 1 or 2 days/No)
- In the last 30 days, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
- In the last 30 days, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?(Yes/No)

Institutional Type and Philosophy

New York Institute of Technology

- New York Tech surveyed students in Fall 2019
- New York Tech opened Oct 2020
- New York Tech received a $10K donation from Stop & Shop
- New York Tech partnered with Invisible Hands in Fall 2021

Mercy College

- MC convened faculty, students, staff, HR and Legal in Nov 2016
- MC opened the first pantry at the Bronx Campus in Sept 2017
- MC hired an AmeriCorp Vista in July 2018
- MC conducted the survey of Basic Needs Security Survey in Feb 2019
- MC opened the second pantry in Sept 2019
- MC opened the third pantry in Jan 2020
- MC transition to gift cards, deliveries to local food banks, and student pick ups

RIT

- RIT FoodShare facebook group created in Dec 2014
- RIT FoodShare pantry opened April 2015
- FoodShare Fund created in Spring 2015
- FoodShare Garden launched Summer 2015
- Attendance tracking moves to Collegiate Link platform (student IDs scanned); Volunteer Corps established Fall 2016
- First corporate sponsor - Spring 2017
- Bern's Closet opens - Spring 2018
- First grant received - Fall 2018
- 1st crowdfunding campaign - Spring 2019
- Pantry transitions to online grocery back request model (COVID) - Spring 2020
- Transition back to walk-in pantry - Fall 2021

The Importance of Data

- Can demonstrate need (rationale for creation)
- Can substantiate your existence (continuation of operation)
- Tells your story
- Inspires/motivates others into action
- Be impetus for change or other initiatives/policy decisions

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned
recognize mistakes
observe what works
document them
share them

- Start small - "walk before you run"
- Do your research
- Connect with local non-profit organizations
- Connect with other colleges in the area
- Identify and cultivate allies at your institution
- Develop a support network in and outside of your institution - build buy-in
- Think beyond the initial few months - how will you sustain it?
- Training, procedures and guidelines are important - more structure than less - food safety is ***CRITICALLY IMPORTANT***

Join Us on March 17th -11am Funding Your Campus Pantry

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