Food and Housing Security Task Force Report
Penn State University
February 2021

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Prepared for: Dr. Eric J. Barron

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In February of 2020, President Barron charged a task force to examine food and housing insecurity among students at Penn State. The group was asked to evaluate challenges, identify existing initiatives, identify gaps, and develop innovative approaches. This effort is part of the University's imperatives related to access and affordability for students, acknowledging that the cost of a degree is more than tuition. The task force was charged with providing any insights we have on the magnitude of the problem, summarizing what we are doing now and what we have in place, and providing recommendations of creative ways to address food and housing insecurities among students. (Members of the task force and its subcommittees are listed in Appendix A.)

The task force generated considerable interest across the University, and therefore we invited others into the group to provide expertise or to add to the work of our subcommittees. In addition, the efforts of the task force connect with several other key institutional initiatives such as Achieve Penn State, One Penn State 2025, and Transforming Education.

Despite a pause when we moved to remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, the group resumed work later in the spring semester and formed subcommittees that worked to answer the original charge of the task force. This report provides a framework and initial recommendations to advance support for students who experience food and housing insecurities. The task force acknowledges the need for additional planning to implement many of these recommendations, which will fall to the steering committee and numerous working groups.

2.0 WHAT WE KNOW

Both nationally and at Penn State, food and housing security is an increasing challenge for many college students. A brief overview of the data suggests that both food and housing insecurity are issues among our students. It is important to note that these data were collected prior to COVID-19.

2.1 The National Context: #RealCollege Survey – Fall 2019

Created and conducted by the Hope Center, the #RealCollege Survey is the nation's largest annual assessment of basic needs security among college students. The survey evaluates students' access to affordable food and housing. The most recent #RealCollege survey was administered in fall 2019 at 227 two- and four-year institutions across the United States. 2019_RealCollege_Survey_Report.pdf (hope4college.com)

The national #RealCollege Survey assessed students' experiences with food and housing security. Food security questions asked students about the last 30 days prior to the survey; questions about housing security asked students to reflect on the past 12 months.

Food insecurity among 4-year college students is described below.

- 33% experienced some food insecurity (14% low security, 19% very low security).
- 36% worried that food would run out before finding money for more.
- 38% could not afford to buy balanced meals.
- 27% said food did not last and they did not have money for more.
- 28% cut the size of meals or skipped meals due to lack of money for food.
- 26% ate less than they should because there was not enough money for food.
- 21% were hungry but did not eat due to lack of money for food.

- 12% lost weight due to a lack of money for food.
- 6% did not eat for a whole day due to a lack of money for food.

Housing insecurity among 4-year college students is described below.

35% of students indicated that they experienced at least one of the following:

- 15% experienced a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay.
- 12% did not pay the full amount for their rent or mortgage.
- 9% did not pay the full amount for their utilities.
- 11% moved in with others due to financial problems.
- 7% lived with others beyond the expected capacity for the housing.
- 7% experienced an account go into default or go into collections.
- 6% left a household because it felt unsafe.
- 4% moved three or more times.
- 1% received a summons to appear in housing court.

Homelessness among 4-year college students:

- 2% self-identified as homeless.
- 16% responded affirmatively to any of nine items researchers consider indicators of homelessness including: temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing; temporarily staying at hotels/motels; staying in spaces not meant for habitation; staying outdoors; utilizing transitional housing; staying in a camper or RV; staying at a shelter; staying in a treatment center; or staying in a group home as part of a mental health or substance abuse program.

In the five years that the Hope Center has conducted the #RealCollege Survey, the percentage of students experiencing food or housing insecurity has varied. Still, during any year of their study, the percentage of 4-year college students experiencing food insecurity never dropped below 33% while the lowest recorded percentage for housing insecurity was 35%.

2.2 The Penn State Context

The following section discusses data collection efforts to better understand food and housing insecurity at Penn State. Specifically, relevant findings are highlighted from the 2019 Project Cahir Survey, the 2019 CORE Survey, and the 2019 Homelessness Report.

2.2.1 Project Cahir Survey – Spring 2019

Project Cahir is a student group at Penn State's University Park campus that has focused on eradicating student poverty through programs and initiatives including scholarships, civic and community engagement, and advocacy for those without voices since 2012. Project Cahir partnered with Student Affairs Research and Assessment (SARA) to develop and administer a survey about food and housing insecurity in spring 2019. Several findings from that survey are summarized below. More information on the Cahir project can be found on the SARA website.

Health and Well-being

Student decision-making – food versus lifestyle/education:

- 20% cut the size of (or skipped) a meal in the last 7 days due to lack of funds.
- 22% could not afford to eat balanced meals "sometimes" or "often" in the last month.
- 61% bought the cheapest food available while knowing it wasn't the healthiest option.
- 25% described their general health as "bad" or "fair."

Overall Inaccessibility to Fresh Food

- 22% "strongly disagree" or "somewhat disagree" that it is easy to buy fresh fruits and vegetables.
- 38% indicated that fresh fruits and vegetables are not affordable for them.
- On average, undergraduate and domestic students of color and international students reported higher levels of food insecurity than their counterparts.

2.2.2 The CORE (College Relationships & Experiences) Survey

The CORE study, administered in the fall of 2019, drew on the multidisciplinary expertise of Penn State faculty to survey first- and second-year students about a variety of emotional, environmental, and social factors related to college student life. The research included a focus on food and housing needs as described in a report on food security at Penn State University. Over 33,000 emails were sent to all undergraduate students at selected Commonwealth campuses and to all first-year and second-year students at University Park; 4,351 students completed the survey. As shown in the figure below, 35% of student respondents report food insecurity.

Overall Food Security

- Food Secure: 63%
- Food Insecure: 35%
- Prefer Not to Answer: 2%
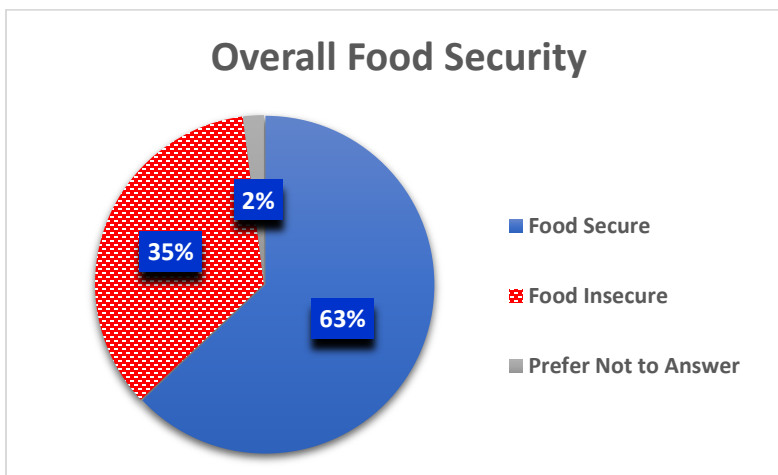
2.2.2.1 Overview of Findings

The following characteristics correlated with reports of food insecurity (highest reporting rates in parentheses):

- *Campus location* (Abington and Altoona campuses)
- *Gender* ("women" and "genderqueer/gender nonconforming," "transgender," "different [gender] identity")
- *Race/Ethnicity* (Black, Hispanic, or multiple races)
- *Student generation* (first-generation students)

- *Experiencing any form of bias* (higher frequencies)
- *Greek life* (participants in Greek organizations)
- *Student honors status* (not a Schreyer Honors College student)
- *Living status* (living in an apartment or house off-campus)
- *Employment status* (working full-time or part-time, respectively)

The survey revealed a strong association between food insecurity and health/mental health, though the survey design could not establish a causal directionality.

Students were most likely to report food insecurity when they:

- Received assistance from any health service in the 30 days prior to completing the survey
- Had a moderate or elevated risk of anxiety
- Had a higher risk of depression

Campus Location

- Food insecurity varied widely by campus location with over 40% of students at the Abington and Altoona campuses reporting food insecurity.
- Just over 30% of University Park respondents reported food insecurity.

Demographic Predictors

- Women (39%) were more likely to report food insecurity than men (31%).
- Those who reported they were "genderqueer/gender nonconforming," "transgender," or a "different identity" had the highest rates of food insecurity (53%). While this group of students comprised less than 1% of respondents overall, the findings for this group were consistent with other research on food security.
- Black, Hispanic, or multiple races individuals were the most likely to report food insecurity; White students reported the lowest rate.
- First-generation students (42%) were more likely than students who are not first-generation (33%) to report food insecurity.

Food Security by Living Status

- Students living in a parent's or relative's home were least likely to report food insecurity (26%), while those living in an apartment or house were most likely to indicate food insecurity (47%).
- Thirty-five percent (35%) of students living in residence halls fit the criteria for food insecurity.

Food Security and Employment Status

- Perhaps paradoxically, employed students were more likely than those not working to report food insecurity.
- Nearly half of those working full-time report being food insecure.

Food Security and Health

- Students who received assistance from any health service in the 30 days prior to the survey (40%) were more likely to report food insecurity than those who did not (33%).
- Students at a moderate (42%) or elevated (53%) risk of anxiety were much more likely to report food insecurity than those who are at low risk (26%).
- Students at a higher risk of depression (48%) were more likely to be food insecure than those with a lower risk (26%). It is not clear if the strong relationship between mental health and food

insecurity is a causal one. Further, if the relationship is causal, the data do not establish whether food insecurity causes anxiety and/or depression, or if mental health can lead to feelings of food insecurity.

2.3 Summary and Implications

National data suggest that up to 42% of four-year college students experience some level of food insecurity and 48% experience some level of housing insecurity. In addition, while 2% self-identify as homeless, up to 14% of students fit the homelessness criteria.

At Penn State, efforts to assess levels of food and housing insecurity suggest that up to 35% of students experience some level of food insecurity. However, efforts to assess housing insecurity have been less successful and verified levels of homelessness are limited to several dozen individuals (through Student Aid data not presented in this report). Anecdotally, Greater Allegheny has housed four students during break periods because they did not have a safe place to go.

The differences between national data and Penn State-specific data in the prevalence of food and housing insecurity and homelessness suggest that better data collection methods are necessary to understand the true impact of these challenges among Penn State students. It is critical to further explore with new and better methods of assessing need across all campuses.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Infrastructure

3.1.1 Assessment

Foundational Recommendation: *Participate in the Starfish #RealCollege Survey*

Starfish has partnered with *The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice* to develop Starfish tools that help higher education institutions assess and address food and housing insecurity among students. Penn State's existing license for the Starfish Enterprise Success Platform includes the ability to assess student food and housing insecurity at scale and to target outreach that is specific to each college and campus.

To help assess the true scope of food and housing insecurity, the task force recommends that Penn State participate in this survey (see Appendix B for survey content). It would allow us to administer a nationally standardized survey to assess food and housing insecurity among Penn State students from all campuses and colleges, to target outreach to students in need at a pace and scale that makes sense for us, and to join a community of higher education institutions who are seeking to make a difference.

Participation in the survey will be at no additional cost to Penn State, and the data collected from the Starfish survey are owned by the University following the same contractual agreements in our current Starfish license agreement. We retain direct control over decisions about which students are asked to complete the survey and when, who can view the survey results, and what actions we might take within Starfish to target outreach to students in need. Starfish allows us flexibility in how we start and how we roll out. We do not need to make every decision all at once. Rather, we can take a step at a time, assess our next options, then implement in an iterative manner. A community of users exists that allows us to seek guidance for survey campaigns and outreach strategies. We have access to this community through our existing relationship with Starfish.

Currently, students are only able to submit the survey once. A request has been made to expand this functionality to allow institutions to re-deploy the survey on a periodic basis that institutions control locally. If this is a priority for Penn State, we could invest some development funds with Starfish to accelerate their development of this functionality.

Although no additional costs would be incurred for the survey, dedicated staff time would be required to manage the project and construct a campaign to encourage student participation. Furthermore, the cross-university Starfish Administration team, led by the Division of Undergraduate Studies, with members from the Graduate School, World Campus, and Undergraduate Education, would be responsible for Starfish configurations for the campaign and for configurations for enabling targeted outreach. Case managers, the food pantry coordinator, and others will need to further actualize the use of the data.

3.1.2 Food and Housing Security Steering Committee

Foundational Recommendation: *Develop a University-wide steering committee*

Because the efforts of addressing student food and housing insecurity cross numerous administrative units and require a systematic approach, a standing University-wide steering committee is needed to oversee the implementation of these recommendations, to coordinate various initiatives, to evaluate and assess our efforts, and to recommend new strategies. Committee membership should include representatives from Housing and Food Services, Student Affairs, Commonwealth campuses, Undergraduate Education, Development, student leadership, Strategic Communications, the Graduate School, and faculty. Included in the charge for the steering committee should be to provide oversight for the recommendations included in this report, to create visibility for these coordinated efforts (similar to Invent Penn State and Achieve Penn State), to develop common definitions of food and housing insecurity, and to contribute to the national conversation and research of student food and housing insecurity. Communication efforts would include providing a website presence, developing social media, and coordinating campaigns to work against stigma. The committee would also shepherd the data from the #RealCollege survey to inform our intervention strategies. This group will need access to resources to support communications and marketing efforts and other initiatives (estimated $20,000).

3.1.3 Case Management

Foundational Recommendation: *Create a staff of case managers to address students' needs*

As a foundational effort, the task force recommends expanding support for students through dedicated staff who are specialists in public assistance programs (e.g., Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP and energy assistance programs), community resources, and University support. The task force recommends three positions – one focusing on University Park and providing central oversight and two regional positions (eastern and western campuses). These staff would augment existing resources and aid in educating and advocating for students in need. It seems logical that these positions be embedded into the existing Student Care and Advocacy organization. We also recommend that the student health insurance advocate be moved from University Health Services (UHS) to this operation and for her responsibilities to expand, as they did during the pandemic, to assist students more broadly with assistance programs. She is positioned to provide oversight for the case managers. Furthermore, there should be a more formal connection between these case managers and the case managers in UHS and Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

The cost estimate for this recommendation is $260,000 for salary and fringe benefits for the case managers, $53,000 for staff support for the office, $20,000 for operating expenses, and $25,000 for start-up costs. In addition, we will need to identify office space for these staff. The total estimated costs are $333,000 with an additional $25,000 for start-up expenses.

3.2 Food Insecurity Prevention and Response Programs

3.2.1 Swipe Out Hunger

Engage with [Swipe Out Hunger](#), a national nonprofit committed to ending college student hunger

Advising campuses on a range of innovative, equitable, and inclusive anti-hunger programs, Swipe Out Hunger promotes and prioritizes programs that are sustainable, student-centric, innovative, and destigmatizing. Their flagship program "enables students with extra meal points . . . to donate them to their peers." With advisement from this organization, Housing and Food Services and Student Care and Advocacy could launch and sustain an emergency meal swipe program for students with acute needs and a more systematic meal assistance program for students experiencing chronic food insecurity. This would build on Penn State's Turn the Tables, a similar initiative piloted in spring of 2019.

Furthermore, Swipe Out Hunger also supports advocacy on a state and federal level to end student hunger and trains and empowers students to be champions of food security efforts. Partnership with Swipe Out Hunger will enhance collaborations that are already occurring with student leaders (UPUA, GPSA, CCSG, etc.) on student need-based initiatives and with family members so they are informed about food and housing resources to share with their students when assistance is needed.

3.2.2 Food Pantry Initiatives

Expand food pantry initiatives across the campuses by implementing the following strategies

3.2.2.1 Coordinator

Foundational Recommendation: *Create a staff position to provide oversight of the Lion's Pantry and to provide guidance and support for the campus pantries*

This position will assist in creating sustainable models of providing students with access to a food distribution center, while maintaining and promoting student engagement experiences with the pantries including, but not limited to, student organization membership and leadership, credit-bearing internships, paid internships, volunteering opportunities, and academic/research support such as Erickson Discovery Grants and capstone projects. This staff person will be necessary to coordinate and expand the pantries as suggested in the additional recommendations articulated below. In addition, the coordinator will assist with the Swipe Out Hunger program and explore new models for food pantries calling upon the distinct resources at Penn State. This person would also coordinate meetings among the Commonwealth campus staff responsible for food pantries to create a community of practice – to discuss challenges, best practices, and ways to collaborate.

The estimated cost for the creation of this position is $65,000 for salary and fringe benefits plus $10,000 for an operating budget and $5,000 in start-up costs. Office space will also need to be identified. The total estimated costs are $75,000 with an additional $5,000 for start-up expenses.

3.2.2.2 Bulk Purchasing Program

Expand the Housing and Food Services Bulk Purchasing Program

Housing and Food Services (HFS) is willing to partner with all campuses to enable wholesale purchasing through the HFS Purchasing Department. The Lion's Pantry at University Park started to use this service in April 2020. The HFS Purchasing Department can leverage its total purchasing power to ensure better prices than purchasing food items retail. In most circumstances, product would be delivered to the campuses, reducing labor needs and increasing efficiency. The department can also connect pantry managers with food vendors who are willing to donate product, to channel donations directly from vendors to the pantries.

3.2.2.3 Perishable and Refrigerated Items

Consider offering perishable and refrigerated items

Distribution of perishable and refrigerated items should be explored and implemented when possible. Some campuses may be able to manage perishable items but not refrigeration and vice versa. The process includes identifying campus interest, campus need, and an implementation plan that is campus-specific, understanding that campus interest may not be sufficient to ensure that perishable items will be readily available to distribute. Implementation should be done based on each campus's needs and capacities. Offering such items greatly increases the risks and expectations of pantries and requires additional space, funding, and staffing.

3.2.2.4 Sustainable Funding Model

Stabilize funding models for food pantries across the Commonwealth

Campus food pantry efforts are funded in a variety of ways (See Appendix C). For example, three campuses have endowments, two receive grants, and others receive support through a combination of financial and food donations. Some campuses reported that they sometimes run out of goods and must "put out a call for donations." Others reported that the money received from the Tackle Hunger Giving Challenge (Penn State-Ohio State 2019) came just in time to sustain operations. While campuses are generally successful in receiving the support needed, a consistent funding source is needed to enhance services and assist with long-term planning for their operations. (See 4.0 Funding and Other Resources for additional information.)

3.2.2.5 Other Improvements for Penn State's Food Pantries

Pursue improved inventory tracking and improved data collection to understand the demographics of student use, improved marketing efforts, and improved use of technology (e.g., Amazon Wishlist for donations and something similar to Amazon Lockers that would improve distribution of food to students)

3.2.3 Food Notification App

Support and expand the use of a Food Notification App at smaller campuses and smaller student communities

Campuses often have surplus food available in the form of leftovers after a catered meeting or event on campus. We recommend campuses make that food available to students, thereby addressing not only student food insecurity, but also reducing food waste. The use of an app, which could be integrated into the Penn State Go App suite, is an effective way to notify students when food is available. The Share Meals App was developed to target college student hunger and seems to be a widely used resource by universities to combat food insecurity in a meaningful yet convenient manner. The app allows both students and University officials to notify others when food is available and the location of the food. Greater Allegheny currently uses Share Meals, and it is recommended that Penn State consider implementing the usage of this app at other small campuses.

3.3 Student Emergency Fund

3.3.1 Centralized Process

Centralize the application and disbursement process of student emergency funds

Emergency fund operations across the University vary by campus with some campuses having no student emergency fund at all, some having a fund wholly supported by one-time cash donations, and others benefitting from endowments and corporate support. (See Appendix C for a summary.) These funds assist students who encounter unexpected hardship and help to cover personal or educational expenses but typically exclude assisting with tuition. We recommend developing an efficient, student-focused process for delivering support from application through distribution of funds/services.

In the wake of COVID-19, Student Care and Advocacy has implemented several steps to improve the dissemination of University-wide student emergency fund awards. These include creating a one-stop point of contact with a single, online application process that engages key stakeholders according to the student's demographics as well as identifying and training staff at each campus on how to work with student applicants efficiently and effectively while applying an ethic of care. Other improvements are equipping students with the tangible and intangible resources necessary to address immediate threats to their food and housing security while reducing the likelihood of avoidable patterns recurring. An example is connecting students with the Sokolov-Miller Family Financial Literacy Center for ongoing coaching and support.

3.3.2 Sustainable Funding Model

Increase and stabilize the funding supporting the University-wide emergency fund

Since March 2020, over 1,300 students applied and met the criteria for and were granted an award from the Student Emergency Fund, totaling 1 million dollars. Emergent food and housing needs were addressed through these one-time gifts, averaging $750, but the need exceeds these gifts. With a little over ten thousand dollars remaining and with the pandemic continuing to take a toll on our students and their families, the Student Emergency Fund needs a steadier stream of funding support outside of infrequent yet generous donations. (See 4.0 Funding and Other Resources for additional information.)

3.4 Housing

3.4.1 Housing Scholarships

Explore the creation of housing scholarships

Because access to affordable housing can be pivotal to a student's success, we recommend housing scholarships be made available for students who meet predetermined eligibility requirements with the help of Student Aid and other entities that are aware of student need. An opportunity exists to partner with Housing and Food Services to provide scholarships particularly at our residential campuses when we are not at full occupancy. Additional consideration is needed to develop a financial model for the provision of these scholarships.

3.4.2 Emergency Vouchers for Room and Board

Create mechanisms to support students with emergency housing options when tragic events occur

Tragic events can impact any student, no matter their level of need when they first come to us. Natural disasters, sexual assaults, dating violence and stalking, to name a few, could leave a student suddenly and unexpectedly housing insecure. We recommend the University set aside emergency spaces within on-campus housing and provide meal vouchers, free of charge to students, to provide short-term arrangements while longer-term options are explored. Simultaneously, we will continue to pursue partnerships with local shelters, hotlines, food banks, and other agencies that provide support to students and negotiate discounts with local hotels and property managers for students in crisis. These community arrangements are needed at all campuses and particularly at our non-residential campuses.

3.4.3 Break Housing

Create a systematic plan to assist students in need of housing during holiday and semester breaks

Too often, Penn State students do not have safe and stable homes to return to during break periods when on-campus residence halls and dining facilities close. Some students report feeling anxious that they may experience food and/or housing insecurity during these routine periods. We recommend providing consolidated spaces on campus for these students to safely sleep and eat at minimal additional cost. Consideration will need to be given to staffing needs during these times.

3.5 Policy Advocacy

3.5.1 University Policy Advocacy

Review and revise University policies to support food and housing security

In addition to new programmatic efforts, several areas of policy support within the University would enhance support for students with food and housing insecurities.

3.5.1.1 Amend University Policy FN09 to enable nimble central emergency fund dissemination for students in crisis.

3.5.1.2 Explore the ability for students to use Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)/ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) cards on campus.

3.5.1.3 Insert a "basic needs" statement into syllabi:

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact [campus contact] for support. Furthermore,

please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

3.5.2 Federal/State/Local Policy Advocacy

Partner with Governmental Relations to advocate at the state and federal level

The Hope Center identifies policy advocacy as one of the key strategies for addressing student need, along with connecting eligible students to aid and other community resources. Hence, the task force recommends that Penn State becomes a leader in its advocacy at the federal and state levels to support students with their food and housing security needs.

3.5.2.1 Advocate for SNAP benefits for college students be continued beyond the pandemic, which will be dependent upon the next reauthorization of the Farm Bill (2023) and University legislative priorities.

3.5.2.2 Advocate for expanded eligibility for Pell grants with the goal of serving more students.

3.5.2.3 Develop community advocacy and coalitions to advocate for affordable student housing in communities near campuses.

4.0 FUNDING AND OTHER RESOURCES

4.1 University Funding

Identify institutional resources to support these recommendations

The task force requests University funding to create the three case manager positions and the coordinator position for food pantries – estimated to be $408,000 plus $30,000 in start-up costs – and funding for the steering committee's work, estimated to be $20,000. Office space will also need to be identified along with other infrastructure support (such as IT, HR, and FO). Furthermore, staff time is needed for the assessment efforts with the #RealCollege survey and for the steering committee. Additional institutional resources are needed to support housing scholarships, vouchers, break housing costs, and food pantry operations. Additional work is needed to develop financial plans for these initiatives.

4.2 Development Opportunities

Create a robust fundraising campaign to augment institutional resources

Evidence suggests these programs appeal to donors as demonstrated with the Open Doors Scholarships and the Student Emergency Fund and food pantry annual giving campaigns. Coupled with donor matching opportunities, the task force believes there would be success in advancing key strategies and socializing appeals with key donor groups and through case statements. These opportunities include endowing campus food pantries, housing support (scholarships, vouchers, break housing) and the Student Emergency Fund. In addition, the task force recommends continuing annual giving campaigns to support these initiatives. The hope is to roll out a development campaign in the fall.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

Launch the foundational recommendations and further develop and prioritize others

The task force identifies four foundational recommendations as priorities and as essential initial elements to advancing food and housing security support for students. These recommendations are the

assessment efforts of administering the #RealCollege survey and utilizing the data to inform our work, the formation of the steering committee, the development of the case management positions, and the creation of the food pantry coordinator position. The steering committee will then serve to champion and prioritize the other recommendations. As articulated above, the estimated cost for these foundational recommendations is $428,000 with an additional $30,000 for start-up expenses. As noted, some of the recommendations need further exploration before any implementation begins; this is particularly the case for the housing recommendations. In the meantime, efforts continue to support students through emergency funds, food pantries, and advocacy, along with raising funds through development efforts.

APPENDIX A: TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

Andrea Dowhower (co-chair) – Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
John Papazoglou (co-chair) – Associate Vice President for Auxiliary and Business Services
Kelly Austin – Associate Vice President for Administration, Commonwealth Campuses
Anna Barone – Director, Student Care and Advocacy
Sayre Bradley – President, Lion's Pantry – replaced by Spencer Wallace 2020-21
Barry Bram – Senior Director, Student Engagement Programs
Bryan Culler – Student Trustee
Jackie Edmondson – Chancellor, Penn State Greater Allegheny
Kenneth Gatten – CCSG President 2019-20 – replaced by Hibah Akbar 2020-21
R. Jake Griggs – UPUA Vice President 2019-20 – replaced by Lexy Pathickal 2020-21
Melissa Kunes – Executive Director, Student Aid
Geoff Mamerow – Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment, OPAIR
Laura McKinney – UPUA President 2019-20 – replaced by Zachary McKay 2020-21
Kris Meyer – Executive Director, Donor Relations
Denise Poole – Director, Student Success Initiatives
Stephanie Danette Preston – Associate Dean, Graduate Educational Equity
Tim Robicheaux – Faculty Senate Chair of Student Life
Karen Schall – Administrative Assistant, Student Affairs
Mariam Taleb – Graduate student
Terry Torres Cruz – Graduate student
Heather Witherow – SGA President, Penn State DuBois
Charima Young – Director, Local Government & Community Relations

Food Security (Pantry) Subcommittee Membership
Tim Balliett – Director, Center for Character, Conscience, and Public Purpose
Barry Bram – Senior Director, Student Engagement Programs
Gina D'Amato-Kaufman – Director of Student Affairs, Penn State Abington
Lexy Pathickal – Vice President, University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA)
Leslie Pillen – Associate Director, Farm and Food Systems, Sustainability Institute
Anna Sostarecz – Sustainability Coordinator, Auxiliary and Food Services
Spencer Wallace – President, Lion's Pantry (University Park)

Data Subcommittee Membership
Deborah Lee – Student Affairs Research & Assessment
Geoff Mamerow – Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment, OPAIR
Tim Robicheaux – Faculty Senate Chair of Student Life
Janet Schulenberg – Associate Director for Curriculum and Technology, Division of Undergraduate Studies

Policy Issues and Assistance Programs Subcommittee Membership
Natahsha Baumgartner – Student Insurance Advocate
Bryan Culler – Student Trustee
Jackie Edmondson – Chancellor, Penn State Greater Allegheny
Zachary McKay – UPUA President
Mariam Taleb – Graduate student
Heather Witherow – SGA President, Penn State DuBois
Charima Young – Director, Local Government & Community Relations

Housing and Scholarship/Emergency Funds Subcommittee Membership
Kelly Austin – Associate Vice President for Administration, Commonwealth Campuses
Anna Barone – Director, Student Care and Advocacy
Conal Carr – Director Housing Facilities
Karen Kreger – Senior Director, Housing & Food Services, Commonwealth Campuses
Kris Meyer – Executive Director, Donor Relations
Denise Poole – Director, Student Success Initiatives
Stephanie Danette Preston – Associate Dean, Graduate Educational Equity
Terry Torres Cruz – Graduate student

APPENDIX B: MEASURES FOR ASSESSING FOOD AND HOUSING SECURITY

The research described above, including The Hope Center's #RealCollege survey, Penn State's Project Cahir survey, and Penn State's CORE survey all employed measures of food and housing security as part of their surveys.

Likewise, the #RealCollege survey embedded in Starfish's needs assessment module draws upon questions used in the National #RealCollege survey. Information on the measures used by each survey is included below.

The Hope Center also publishes a guide to assessing basic needs security in higher education that includes both guidance on items to use in specific contexts but also methodological considerations.

Food Insecurity
The CORE Survey

The CORE survey utilized a 2-item screen for food insecurity:

1.   Within the past month…
   a.*…I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.*
   b.*…the food I bought just did not last and I did not have money to get more.*

Scale: *often true*, *sometimes true*, *never true*, or *prefer not to answer*.
Individuals selecting "often true" or "sometimes true" for either was labeled as "food insecure."

The #RealCollege Survey

The #RealCollege Survey utilizes an 18-item Household Food Security Survey Module developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Food security module
Adult Stage 1
   1. "In the last 30 days, I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more." (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)
   2. "In the last 30 days, the food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more." (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)
   3. "In the last 30 days, I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)

If the respondent answers "often true" or "sometimes true" to any of the three questions in Adult Stage 1, then proceed to Adult Stage 2.

Adult Stage 2
   4. "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/No)
   5. [If yes to question 4, ask] "In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?" (Once, Twice, Three times, Four times, Five times, More than five times)
   6. "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)

7. "In the last 30 days, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?" (Yes/No)
8. "In the last 30 days, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?" (Yes/No)
9. If the respondent answers "yes" to any of the questions in Adult Stage 2, then proceed to Adult Stage 3.

Adult Stage 3
10. "In the last 30 days, did you ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?" (Yes/No)
11. [If yes to question 9, ask] "In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?" (Once, Twice, Three times, Four times, Five times, More than five times)

If the respondent has indicated that children under 18 are present in the household, then proceed to Child Stage 1 (Child module found in the #RealCollege survey report).

Housing Insecurity
To assess housing insecurity, we used a series of survey questions adapted from the national Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) Adult Well-Being Module to measure students' access to and ability to pay for safe and reliable housing.11 In 2018, we asked students the following questions:

Housing security module
1. "In the past 12 months, was there a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay?" (Yes/No)
2. "In the past 12 months, have you been unable to pay or underpaid your rent or mortgage?" (Yes/No)
3. "In the past 12 months, have you received a summons to appear in housing court?" (Yes/ No)
4. "In the past 12 months, have you not paid the full amount of a gas, oil, or electricity bill?" (Yes/No)
5. "In the past 12 months, did you have an account default or go into collections?" (Yes/No)
6. "In the past 12 months, have you moved in with other people, even for a little while, because of financial problems?" (Yes/No)
7. "In the past 12 months, have you lived with others beyond the expected capacity of the house or apartment?" (Yes/No)
8. "In the past 12 months, did you leave your household because you felt unsafe?" (Yes/No)
9. "In the past 12 months, how many times have you moved?" (None, Once, Twice, 3 times, 4 times, 5 times, 6 times, 7 times, 8 times, 9 times, 10 or more times)
In 2018, students were considered housing insecure if they answered "yes" to any of the first eight questions or said they moved at least *three* times (question #9).

Homelessness
To measure homelessness, we asked a series of survey questions that align with the definition of homelessness dictated by the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Please refer to pp. 31–32 in Crutchfield and Maguire (2017)[4] for further discussion of this measure. In 2018, students were considered homeless if they answered affirmatively to question #1 OR any part of question #2 (parts e through m) in the Homelessness Module (below).

Homelessness module

1. "In the past 12 months, have you ever been homeless?"
2. "In the past 12 months, have you slept in any of the following places? Please check all that apply."
3. Campus or University housing
4. Sorority/fraternity house
5. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment (alone or with roommates or friends)
6. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment with my family (parent, guardian, or relative)
7. At a shelter
8. In a camper
9. Temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing until I find other housing
10. Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to (not on vacation or business travel)
11. In transitional housing or independent living program
12. At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance a buse
13. At a treatment center (such as detox, hospital, etc.)
14. Outdoor location (such as street, sidewalk, or alley; bus or train stop; campground or woods, park, beach, or riverbed; under bridge or overpass; or other)
15. In a closed area/space with a roof not meant for human habitation (such as abandoned building; car, truck, van, RV, or camper; encampment or tent; unconverted garage, attic, or basement; etc.)

APPENDIX C: SUMMARY OF CAMPUS FOOD PANTRIES AND EMERGENCY FUNDS

<u>Summary of Campus Efforts to Address Food Insecurity</u>

The following data comes from three informal surveys of University staff involved in combating food insecurity.

General Overview

- All campuses support students who struggle to access food, through a pantry, emergency funds, gift cards, or referrals to local agencies.
- 19 campuses have food pantries.

Funding/Donations

- Most campus pantries accept both food and monetary donations.
- Three campuses have endowments that support their pantries' operations.
- Two campuses receive grants that help with staffing or purchases of goods.

Staffing

- Fifteen campuses staff their pantries with full-time staff.
- Seven campuses incorporate students, volunteer or paid, into their staffing models.

Pantry Location

- Seven pantries are in Student Affairs suites.
- Five pantries are in cupboards, cabinets, or bins and offer Grab 'n Go items.
- Three pantries are in Health & Wellness buildings/offices.
- Three pantries are in other administrative offices.
- One pantry has a building of its own.

Operation

- Ten pantries operate year-round.
- Six pantries operate during the fall/spring semesters only.
- Two campuses accept online orders only and arrange to distribute orders individually.

Inventory/Stock

- Nine campuses report that inventory is never/rarely a problem.
- Eight campuses report that they run out of inventory, although several of these indicated that their stock is easily replenished by calling for donations.
- The two campuses that offer perishable items report that those items fly off the "shelves."

<u>Summary of Campus Student Emergency Funds</u>

General Overview

- Seventeen campuses report that they have a campus-specific student emergency fund.
- Four campuses report that they do not have a campus-specific student emergency fund.

Funding/Donations

- Seventeen campuses report that they use one-time cash donations to support the emergency fund.
- Two campuses report that they use endowment funds to support the emergency fund.
- Two campuses report that they use corporate support to finance the emergency fund.
- Eight campuses report that they use other resources to support the emergency fund.

Annual Available Funds

- Three campuses report that they have annual available funds of less than $1,500.
- Four campuses report that they have annual available funds of $2,000–$10,000.
- Six campuses report that they have annual available funds of $15,000–$40,000.

Use of Emergency Funds

- Nine campuses report that they use emergency funds to assist with books, computers, clothing, vehicle repairs, living expenses, and transportation such as bus passes and emergency bus/train/plane tickets.
- Six campuses report that they use emergency funds to assist with food security.
- Five campuses report that they use emergency funds to assist with housing due to emergencies or housing insecurity.
- Four campuses report that they use emergency funds to assist with tuition shortfalls.
- Four campuses report that they use emergency funds to assist with medical or health insurance expenses because of a sudden illness or emergency.
- Two campuses report that they use emergency funds to assist with needs caused by a family crisis such as a terminally ill parent or spouse, a family member's job loss, a family member's death, or a family tragedy such as a house fire.