Addressing Student Homelessness and Financial Distress at UCF

[WEBINAR]
Tuesday, February 26, 2019 \ 9:45 – 11:00AM EST
HOUSEKEEPING

HAVE A QUESTION?
This webinar is for you. Enter your questions in the questions pane and click ‘Send’.

RECORDING & HANDOUTS
An archive of this webinar and all materials will be posted here.

If you’ve signed up for this webinar, you will receive a link to the recording in an email after the webinar is over.
HELLO!

I am Jillian Sitjar
Program Manager, Higher Education
jillian@schoolhouseconnection.org
SchoolHouse Connection works to **overcome homelessness through education**. We provide strategic advocacy and technical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

- **Website**
- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Learn how the University of Central Florida identifies and supports homeless college students on their campus
- Identify campus resources to prevent student homelessness, including emergency aid
- Implement new and innovative strategies such as dining scholarships and partnering with AmeriCorps Vista
WHY HIGHER EDUCATION

Jobs
Over 95% of jobs created since 2010 have gone to college-educated workers.

Beyond High School
By 2020, 65% of all jobs will require education beyond high school.

Afford Housing
Postsecondary education is necessary for a job that pays enough to afford housing and avoid homelessness.

Cost
The cost of attending college has skyrocketed over the last several decades with federal pell grants not keeping pace.

Health & Well-Being
High school and college graduation are linked to other important indicators of health and well-being.
Every year, more than 3 million students drop out of college due to a relatively small expense (usually under $1,500) that must be paid immediately.
Emergency loans are the leading type of aid

82% of campuses have offered an emergency aid program for over 3 years
Assisting Student Homelessness and Financial Distress at UCF

Angela Newland Williams, Care Manager, Student Care Services
Jeannie Kiriwas, Associate Director, Student Union
Intended Learning Objectives

- University of Central Florida (UCF) overview
- Student Care Services and Knights Pantry roles
- Homeless Student Identification
- Resources and Services offered
- Partnerships utilized in supporting students
- Emergency Intervention and Aid Resources
- Best Practices
University of Central Florida

- 67,500 Students
- 50% Students Graduate Debt-free
- 316 National Merit Scholars
- 20% Undergraduates are First-generation Students

*Projected Fall 2019
Poll Question

What does emergency aid student support look like at your institution?

- None at the moment
- Food pantry
- Emergency Aid
- Scholarship support
- Housing support
- Other________
Retention and Persistence

- Of the food insecure students in the study 32 percent believed that hunger or housing problems had an impact on their education
  - 55% reported that these problems caused them to not buy a required textbook
  - 54% reported missing a study session
  - 53% reported missing a class
  - 25% reported dropping a class
  - 81% reported not performing as well in your academics as you otherwise could have

Credit – Hunger on Campus report 2016
Knights Helping Knights Pantry

- Started as a closet in Student Union in 2009
- Student led vision
- Mission
Our Staff

• Naseeka Dixon – Pantry Manager

• Elias Valentin – Assistant Pantry Manager

• Caroline Urgiles – Marketing Specialist

• Wintrice Stewart – Distribution Specialist

• Erika Tumar – Procurement Specialist

• Demond Washington – Resource Specialist
Pantry Stats

- Over 68,000 students at UCF
- 35,000+ student visits 2018 alone
- Almost 70,000 pounds of food distributed in 2018
- 5000+ items of clothes
- Nearly 200 students volunteered 6000 hours in the last year
- 1876 square foot space (including storage and office)
# Knights Pantry Statistics

## Monthly Visitor Totals

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<th>Month</th>
<th># of Customers</th>
<th>Pounds of Food Provided</th>
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## Monthly Visitor Totals

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How Does It Work?

• Partnership dependence
• Strategic growth
• Budget structure
About KHK

• Fall/Spring:
  Monday-Friday from 10am-6pm
  Saturday from 12pm-5pm

• Summer:
  Monday-Friday from 10am-5pm

• Currently enrolled UCF student.

• Check in & out at front desk, weigh limited items at scale.
Pantry Offerings

- Shelf stable foods
- Cold foods
- Fresh produce
- Toiletries
- Home goods
- Study materials
- Casual clothes
- Business clothes
- Blazer rentals system
- Referral/emergency services
Regional Campuses

• UCF Daytona
• UCF Cocoa
• Sanford/Lake Mary
• College of Medicine
• Scale and support
Redefining Events

• Tivoli apartment complex fire – 2015
  • 28 students displaced
  • $33,000 dollars raised
  • Pantry become part of emergency response plan

• Hurricane Irma/Maria – 2017
  • Timing left food depleted
  • $85,000 dollars raised
  • Need more than doubled overnight
Telling the Pantry’s Story

• Storytelling with data
• Say yes strategically
• Engage established partners
• Show partners how it benefits them
Off Campus Partners

- Local food pantries
- Regional food bank
- Consulting with other university pantries and faculty members

Second Harvest
FOOD BANK
OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Open Your Heart To
HOPE
...preventing homelessness since 2007 through
HOUSING • OUTREACH • PREVENTION • EDUCATION
www.hopehelps.org
Student Union

- Location and storage
- Facility support and pest control
- Contact with UCF Foundation
- Paperwork for Second Harvest Food Bank
- Assisting with work-study
- Electronic tracking system
General Campus Support

• Campus drop boxes
  • 18 donation locations

• Fundraising from Foundation
  • Solicitation from donors
  • Parent Council
  • Grant assistance

• Faculty Service volunteers
  • Classroom drives
  • LEAD class

• Campus App push channel
  • Launched in 2019
Campus Partners

• Student Government Association
  • Manager payroll
  • Knightro’s Closet
  • Blazer rental program
    • Implemented in 2016
    • 50-60 blazers available

• Career Services and Experiential Learning
  • Faculty/staff professional clothing drive
  • Provide blazers for headshots
  • Career expo advertisement

• Office of Student Involvement
  • Volunteer UCF
  • RSO food drives
  • Approximately 15 drives a year
FreshU

- **Wellness and Health Promotion**
  - Cooking classes using pantry foods
  - SNAP assistance
  - Wellness Coaching for students
  - Bridge to Arboretum

- **Arboretum**
  - 82 acre green space
  - Fresh fruit and vegetables
  - Delivered throughout week
  - Compost reducing waste
Student Care Services

• Umbrella referral organization for services
• Emergency referrals
• Holiday closure bags
• Students with additional pantry needs
• National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week
Student Care Services

- Functions under Dean of Students, Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities
- Case Management created a post Virginia-Tech call to action to reduce threat on college campuses and now broadened
- Create a system that prevents students from “falling through the cracks”
- Receive referrals or walk-in students
- What we do:
  - Gather information
  - Assess information and resources to determine response
  - Meet with student and create a plan of action
  - Refer to resources
  - Monitor - In order to prevent crises and connect to services
Common Concerns

- Homelessness
- Mental Health/Baker Act
- Suicidal thoughts
- Eviction
- Food insecurity
- Adjustment issues
- Academic support
- Financial distress
Collegiate Homelessness

- 58,000 indicated homelessness on FAFSA nationwide (2013)
Florida State Statute

A student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or whose primary nighttime residence is a public or private shelter designed to provide temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings ((s. 1009.25(1)(f), F.S.))

- Examples include temporary shelter, living in a car, couch surfing
Homeless Student Committee

The Homeless Student Committee began May 2013 (Student Care Services & Student Account Services)

Currently on the committee:

• Student Care Services (chair)

• Student Financial Assistance

• Student Account Services (manages waiver)

• Housing and Residence Life as needed
Committee Process

1. Case Management referral received/Initial assessment
2. Waiver applications
3. Committee meetings scheduled as needed throughout semester
4. Case Management follow up with student
Poll Question

• Do you have emergency aid available at your institution?
  • No
  • Emergency Grants/Funds
  • Emergency Loans
  • Emergency Scholarship support
  • Other __________
Knights Emergency Fund

• Planning process began in 2015 researching existing emergency funds through our AmeriCorps VISTA partnership

• Funding came from Parent and Family Funds 2016, now is replenished by an employee giving program

• Students do not have to have a FAFSA completed to get funds

• Must be enrolled, and demonstrate an emergency vs. poor planning

• Majority goes to one time emergency where there is a plan in place to re-stabilize

• Students must exhaust other types of aid, and must have room available in Cost of Attendance budget for the year
Knights Emergency Fund

• Emergency situations include:
  • Rental Assistance
  • Assistance with Books (funds are exhausted)
  • Utilities (where community assistance is not available)
  • Transportation (car repair-unexpected expense)
  • Death in the Family (travel)
Knights Emergency Fund
Student Support Initiatives/Programming

• Student Care Services Case Management
  • Dining Scholarships
  • Laptop rentals
  • Campus-wide Awareness & Programming
  • Connecting to campus and community resources
  • Employment Connection
  • Wraparound services
  • Efforts to bring Swipe Out Hunger

• National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week

• Poverty Simulation

• Training across campus and high school liaisons

• Intentional Advertising
Resources

• Emergency funding
• Housing support
• Employment/scholarships review
• Referral to on/off campus mental health resources
• Class absence notices
• Medical withdrawal
• Knights Pantry
• Financial Literacy Modules
Partnerships

• Multicultural Academic Support Services
  • First Generation program
  • Foster Care Alumni support
  • Mentorship

• Counseling on and off campus

• Student Financial Assistance, Student Account Services

• Student Legal Services

• Health Services-case management, referrals, specific procedures, waiving fees, signing up for health insurance, etc.

• HOPE Team, Shelters, 211, drop in, other community agencies

• Wellness and Health Promotion Services: SNAP application support, couponing classes

• Library partnership (finding low cost textbooks, laptop, I-Clicker rental)

• Foundation partnership
Student ARC
Advancing Retention in College with Emergency Aid
Student ARC is a collection of tools, reports, news and insights into the myriad ways institutions across the nation support students with timely, small amounts of money or other resources. Student ARC aims to be the ultimate resource for news and knowledge on emergency aid. Emergency aid is a useful lever to retain college students who face unexpected financial crises.

LEARN MORE
Best Practice Recommendations

- Educate students about financial aid and how to plan for overall educational expenses
- Establish strong partnerships (Financial Aid, First Gen programs, Housing, etc.)
- Provide low cost textbook support
- Set up emergency aid programs
  - Food insecurity
  - Emergency Funds
- Integrate financial and social services
  - SNAP, etc.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: MAKING COLLEGE AFFORDBABLE. (2017) JACK KENT COOKE FOUNDATION
References


Question and Answer
Thank you!

Angela.Williams2@ucf.edu
407.823.5607

Jeannie.Kirivas@ucf.edu
407.823.3677

University of Central Florida
Orlando, FL
RESOURCES

- Webinars
- Tip Sheets
- State Laws
- Analysis of FAFSA & FAFSA Tips
- Youth-facing Guides
- Pathways to Partnerships
- NASPA Student Arc