
FOOD INSECURITY AMONG STUDENTS AT HENNEPIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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Introduction

Food insecurity in colleges is a prevalent issue. In early 2019, the Hope Center reported that up to 45% of today's higher education students face food insecurity. According to Feeding America, food insecurity is defined as "a federal measure of a household's ability to provide enough food for every person in the household to have an active, healthy life."

Food insecurity does not happen in isolation. Students must sometimes make the tough decision between paying rent or paying tuition, as they do not have enough money for both. Food insecurity among college students has been associated with poorer health and academic performance, and increased mental health symptoms, such as depression and anxiety, making it important for public health and staff of higher education institutions to understand and address the causes.^{1 2 3 4}

The 2018 College Student Health Survey from Boynton Health (University of Minnesota), showed that approximately 45% of Hennepin Technical College (HTC) students are food insecure, and 32% reported that during the past 12 months food insecurity affected their academic performance. A subsequent study, the 2018 Real College Survey from The Hope Center, reconfirmed higher numbers of food insecure students at HTC, with 40% of respondents reporting being food insecure in the prior 30 days and 44% saying they could not afford to eat balanced meals.

The 2018 Real College Survey also showed that certain students at HTC are at higher risk to be food insecure and adversely affected by other factors that can influence food insecurity. Black students experience higher percentages of food insecurity (58% Black vs. 34% White), housing insecurity (78% vs 50%) and homelessness (31% vs 17%) when compared to White students. In

FOOD INSECURITY DEFINED

According to the USDA: a household-level economic and social condition of **limited or uncertain access to adequate food**

Low food security: reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake

Very low food security: multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake

¹ Freudenberg, Nicholas, Luis Manzo, Hollie Jones, Amy Kwan, Emma Tsui, and Monica Gagnon. 2011. Food Insecurity at CUNY: Results from a Survey of CUNY Undergraduate Students. New York: Campaign for a Healthy CUNY.

² Goldrick-Rab, Sara, Katherine Broton, and Daniel Eisenberg. 2015. Hungry to Learn: Addressing Food and Housing Insecurity among Undergraduates. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Hope Lab.

³ Knol, Linda L., Cliff A. Robb, Erin M. McKinley, and Mary Wood. 2017. "Food Insecurity, Self-Rated Health, and Obesity among College Students." American Journal of Health Education 48 (4): 248–55.

⁴ Patton-López, Megan M., Daniel F. López-Cevallos, Doris I. Cancel-Tirado, and Leticia Vazquez. 2014. "Prevalence and Correlates of Food Insecurity among Students Attending a Midsize Rural University in Oregon." Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior 46 (3): 209–14.

addition, women, students enrolled full time, students living independently from their parents, students with kids and those living with chronic mental or physical conditions or identifying as bisexual are at higher risk for food insecurity and housing insecurity.

This research project between Hennepin Technical College and Hennepin County Public Health aims to increase the understanding of factors related to food insecurity among HTC students and suggest solutions. The final goal is to increase students' academic success and well-being by addressing food insecurity.

Methodology

The first step in this project was to interview HTC staff to discuss the plan for the project, including the purpose or motivation as well as potential areas of concern and questions. A key topic of this discussion was how to ensure that the project served the best interests of HTC students, faculty, and staff. Hennepin County Public Health then submitted a research proposal to HTC, which was accepted in August 2019.

To inform the best approaches to addressing student food insecurity, Hennepin County:

- 1) consulted with the Student Senate on both campuses.
- 2) conducted one-on-one interviews (key informant interviews - KKI) with students, staff, and faculty at HTC and representatives from community-based organizations and colleges addressing food access and affordability barriers. See Appendix A for a list of key informant interviewees.
- 3) conducted two focus groups with HTC staff and faculty.

Key Informant Interviews with Students

Methodology

One student per campus assisted in the recruitment of interviewees that were on site on a specific date that Hennepin County staff was also on site to perform interviews. That student received a \$20 Target gift card per hour of their assistance (up to 5 hours). Ten students at each campus, 20 students total, were interviewed. Interviews took approximately 30 minutes. Each student interviewed was given a \$20 gift card (GC) to Target for their participation. The conversations aimed to learn:

- Current assets and barriers to accessing food and other factors that contribute to a person's health.

- Perceived reasons that lead to food insecurity.
- Level of understanding to existing resources available to support student well-being.
- An assessment of needs that are not being met and strategy suggestions to better meet student needs.

Food Environment

Both campuses have a cafeteria, coffee shop, bookstore, and vending machines for students to access food. The Brooklyn Park campus has a culinary program and an on-site restaurant for students, staff, and faculty to access during their hours of operation. The 'key informant interviews with students' were designed to learn more about the student experience in accessing affordable, healthy food on and around campus. Students at both campuses reported the following sources and perceptions:

Cafeteria	Coffee Shop	Vending Machines	Bookstore
Not healthy	Some healthy options but expensive	Food is often expired	More variety and healthier options
Expensive	Inconvenient hours of operation	Snacks, "junk" options only	Expensive
Lacks variety; not enough options for students with dietary restrictions (gluten free, vegetarian, etc.)		Expensive	\$2 minimum credit card purchase is a barrier
Caters to an American diet			
Inconvenient hours of operation			

Students at both campuses reported that there is nowhere nearby to get food unless you have a car. Many at the Brooklyn Park campus reported that they do not have a car, and all agreed that there is rarely enough time to leave campus and get food between classes.

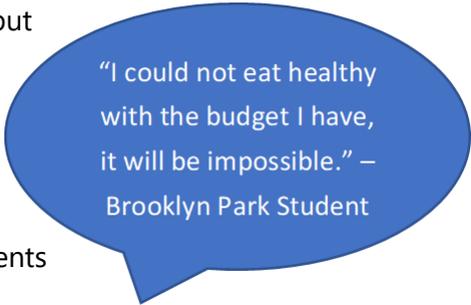
A few high school students attend the college as "gateway" students. They receive free meals while attending HTC. However, they reported that the food is often spoiled and/or unhealthy.

Brooklyn Park-specific Feedback:

Students spoke highly of the food served through the culinary program, but the hours of the restaurant are limited.

Students reported that campus food caters to an American diet. They seek more culturally appropriate options.

Students utilize and appreciate the free coffee and leftover foods from events that are available in the Student Life Center and Free Popcorn Tuesdays.



“I could not eat healthy with the budget I have, it will be impossible.” – Brooklyn Park Student

Eden Prairie-specific Feedback:

Many students reported eating at home and/or bringing food from home to get them through the day.

There is an opportunity to implement student informed strategies to improve food access on campus:

Recommendations
1. Employ a second vendor in the cafeteria to ensure more variety, culturally appropriate and foods that meet dietary restrictions.
2. Implement longer hours of operation for both campus cafeterias and Brooklyn Park restaurant.
3. Provide grants or scholarships that will subsidize food costs for students in need.
4. Host an onsite food pantry.
5. Work with a local nonprofit, big box store and/or community of faith for free food partnership.
6. Encourage staff and faculty to donate healthy snacks.
7. Increase access to affordable fresh food items; examples include sandwiches and fruit in the vending machine, a salad bar in the cafeteria, hot soup in bookstore.
8. Have a student led, on-site garden for fresh produce to be given away and/or used in the culinary program to reduce costs.
9. Develop a relationship with a farmer(s) for a farm fresh produce box program.
10. Offer onsite, free cooking classes that teach students how to cook healthy on a budget.
11. For Eden Prairie: offer a culinary program and ask companies nearby to pay the students to prepare food for their employees. This way, students can get more practice in their culinary field, and get a budget to provide food at a lower price for HTC students.

“These are great recommendations. Thank you for taking the time in adding these many points of views.”

- Student Reviewer

Access to Food Off Campus

Most students from both campuses reported that they can access food either in the community they live in or have easy access to food sources outside of their community.

Assets
Aldi, Cub, HyVee, Dragon Star, Sun Foods, and Target
Knowing how to shop on a budget
Living with parents
Having a car

Barriers
Food options in Maple Grove and Wayzata are expensive and require students to shop outside of that community
Not having a car; Uber for groceries is expensive
Having to shop on a budget
Poor public transportation options

Familiarity with & Perceptions of Food Emergency Resources

Most of the Eden Prairie students who were interviewed are aware of available resources but report they do not use or need them. In contrast, most of the Brooklyn Park students who were interviewed were either not aware of local resources or had questions regarding their eligibility and/or site operations. Not knowing these details is a barrier to utilizing these resources, despite the need.

Most students from both campuses reported that their perception of emergency food resources is positive and that they provide a needed resource. Most report that they personally do not use the resources but know others that do or perceive these as helpful for those in need.

Students at both campuses raised concerns about the quality of the food being offered. The need for privacy and positive messaging was emphasized.

There is an opportunity for an increase in awareness of local resources and a campaign to destigmatize the use of emergency food resources.

Recommendations
1. Conduct an education and awareness campaign for food emergency resources that will highly benefit students.
2. Ensure that faculty /staff have access to food emergency information and share readily. This can be done through e-mail, D2L, and/or the PULSE App.
3. Conduct a faculty /staff training on available food emergency resources, warning signs of students that may need food assistance, and discussion points for talking with students.
4. Ensure food emergency information is provided at the Financial Aid Office.

Familiarity with & Perceptions of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) program provides nutrition benefits to supplement food budgets so that needed food can be purchased. There are qualifications that need to be met as well as exemptions that apply to students in order to receive SNAP benefits. This resource is underutilized and not understood among college students, yet highly needed.

Second Harvest Heartland offers SNAP outreach support. Students can visit <https://www.2harvest.org/who--how-we-help/services-and-programs/programs/snap-outreach.html> to learn more and connect with staff to see if they qualify.

Most Brooklyn Park students interviewed are aware of SNAP and a few have been or are currently enrolled. Approximately half of the Eden Prairie students reported that they are not aware of the program and the remaining students reported that they are aware, but do not use it.

Some Brooklyn Park students shared that they question their eligibility even though they are aware of the program.

International students shared that they are aware of the program but know that they do not qualify. They would utilize the program if they could.

A few shared that the required reapplication every six months is a barrier to using the program.

CONSEQUENCES TO NOT HAVING A HEALTHY DIET

Students reported the following:

- Weight gain
- Enroll in less classes
- Low energy, motivation
- Lack of attention
- Increased feelings of anger & irritability
- Diabetes
- Body aches & pain
- Sleepy
- Malnourishment
- Stress
- Heart disease
- Low performance in studies
- Feeling imbalanced
- Increased absenteeism

Students shared perceptions of the systemic barriers that exist for utilizing SNAP:

- Don't have the information they need and assume they are not eligible
- Unfamiliar with the application process and waiting time
- Fear of submitting personal information and/or showing ID

While most students agreed that SNAP is a good and useful program for those who need it, they also agreed that there is negative stigma attached to the program:

- People think you are lazy if you take something from the government
- Society does not approve of it

Students also shared perceptions of why individuals may not utilize SNAP:

- Too prideful
- People feel embarrassed and don't want to ask for help or take a "handout" from the government
- General lack of knowledge

There is an opportunity to increase awareness of SNAP and eligibility requirements; especially to students on the Brooklyn Park campus.

Recommendations
1. Conduct an education and awareness campaign on SNAP that will highly benefit students.
2. Ensure that faculty /staff are aware of and have access to SNAP information and share readily.
3. Conduct faculty /staff training on SNAP, how to identify when a student may need food assistance, and discussion points for talking with students.
4. Ensure SNAP information is provided at the Financial Aid Office.
5. Partner with Second Harvest to link students to their SNAP eligibility and enrollment process.

"I think SNAP is great. I used two times in my life. It was one thing less to worry about. I didn't have to send my son to my mom's house so he can eat. It will be great if more people knew." - Brooklyn Park Student

"It was helpful to be in SNAP [He thinks he is not eligible anymore]; I could save some money to pay for college. It was one less think to worry about. Now, I worry a lot." – Brooklyn Park Student

Social Determinants of Health & Food Insecurity

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines the 'social determinants of health' as, "conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of life-risks and outcomes."⁵ Examples of *social determinants* include:⁶

- Availability of resources to meet daily needs (e.g., safe housing and local food markets)
- Access to educational, economic, and job opportunities
- Access to health care services
- Quality of education and job training
- Availability of community-based resources in support of community living and opportunities for recreational and leisure-time activities
- Transportation options
- Public safety
- Social support
- Social norms and attitudes (e.g., discrimination, racism, and distrust of government)
- Exposure to crime, violence, and social disorder (e.g., presence of trash and lack of cooperation in a community)
- Socioeconomic conditions (e.g., concentrated poverty and the stressful conditions that accompany it)
- Residential segregation
- Language/literacy
- Access to mass media and emerging technologies (e.g., cell phones, the Internet, and social media)
- Culture

It is important to examine student food insecurity through this lens. It is known that food insecurity does not exist alone; it is most likely a symptom of a student experiencing problems with one or more of the 'social determinants of health'. For example, financial instability may be occurring because class load does not allow the student to earn enough money to meet all needed expenses. Consequently, food may need to be a lower priority than housing costs. Or, if a student does not have a car or a grocery store within walking distance, they may rely on a local gas station or corner store that has less quality, variety, and affordability of food. When talking with HTC students we asked questions that gauged the impact of certain social determinants of health. The following will share what we heard.

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/>

⁶ <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>

Social Determinants of Health

Economic Stability	Neighborhood and Physical Environment	Education	Food	Community and Social Context	Health Care System
Employment	Housing	Literacy	Hunger	Social integration	Health coverage
Income	Transportation	Language	Access to healthy options	Support systems	Provider availability
Expenses	Safety	Early childhood education		Community engagement	Provider
Debt	Parks	Vocational training		Discrimination	linguistic and cultural competency
Medical bills	Playgrounds	Higher education		Stress	Quality of care
Support	Walkability				
	Zip code/ geography				

Health Outcomes
Mortality, Morbidity, Life Expectancy, Health Care Expenditures, Health Status, Functional Limitations

Source: Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

Neighborhood & Physical Environment: Transportation

Most Brooklyn Park students reported that lack of transportation, both limited public options and not having a personal car, is the main reason they can't regularly maintain a healthy diet while on campus.

Students at both campuses reported constrained budgets as a barrier to regularly maintaining a healthy diet.

"Provide transportation for students. You may have a class in am and then another in pm. You are stranded in the school with not food, not possibilities to go to work."
- Brooklyn Park Student

Economic Stability: Employment

Students reported the following assets and barriers to seeking employment opportunities and/or advise on how/where to go for employment opportunities:

ASSETS
Jobs listed on HTC website
The work study program
Resources at the student life center
HTC onsite career fairs
HTC onsite job boards
HTC counselors
HTC faculty/staff send opportunities via email
State Vocational Rehabilitating Services
HTC Financial Aid Office

BARRIERS
International students are confined to work study (due to student visa requirements and financial aid restrictions), even if they have experience and/or certifications in their field; work study has limitations because they can only hire so many students.
Work study does not offer benefits.
There is a lack of time to work and take classes.
Career fairs are held during hours that may not be convenient to every student (especially evening students).
Job boards are messy and not helpful.
There are not enough counselors and/or hours and long wait times to see the counselor result in this resource not being helpful/fully utilized.
Email notifications of jobs often go to the "other" email box and opportunities get missed.
General unawareness of where to find help / job postings.

Regarding the barrier of email going to "other" mailboxes, a student reviewer stated, "I asked IT about it, and so far, they have no answer or know how to fix this. I believe it is the D2L MN system that needs to fix this issue. And yes, it is very frustrating to know that important information goes to the OTHER folder."

Economic Stability & Education:

Financial Assistance

Students at both campuses were familiar with the following financial assistance opportunities and shared their perceived barriers:

ASSETS
FAFSA
Scholarships
Work-study program
Information on HTC website
Financial Aid Office
Student Life Development Center
Daycare grant
Crisis grants
Scholarships offered through the foundation

“Students don’t worry about food; they worry about more education. We cannot afford it. After I use the money for school from my scholarship, there is not much left.”

– Brooklyn Park Student

BARRIERS
General unawareness
Being withheld access to financial aid and scholarships as an international student
Long waiting lists to talk to counselors
Grants and scholarships need to be advertised and shared
Fear and judgement

A Brooklyn Park student shared that culturally it is not appropriate or comfortable to share personal stories and needs; there’s a worry about being judged. An interviewee shared, “a lot of us feel that judgement.” *There is an opportunity to elevate awareness and/or provide employment and financial assistance opportunities on campus.*

Student Recommendations*
1. Ensure that faculty are informed about, and sharing, resources while in session. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students report that they have more connection to faculty than other college offices so learning about resources from them will be more likely.
2. Increase the level of promotion and ensure that information is shared early/months before the start of the new semester. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students reported that they often hear about opportunities that are last minute or even too late.
3. Offer scholarships with less restraints and have more available and/or shared. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students who are aware of scholarships feel they have too many restrictions and are not easy to obtain. Many are not even aware of scholarship opportunities.
4. Increase the number of counselors and/or an increase in hours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students reported that there are long wait times to see a counselor, which is a barrier to getting the help they need.
5. Provide more one-to-one consultation opportunities at orientation.
6. Provide info sessions on existing opportunities.
7. Provide a finance and budgeting class.

- | |
|--|
| <p>8. Allow “real” income, that includes deductions such as health care expenses, to be placed on financial aid forms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Students expressed that the income guidelines do not reflect their true need. |
|--|

* There were more students on the BP campus that contributed to this question than the EP campus.

Other Institutional Supports & Resources Needed

Student Recommendations - Brooklyn Park
1. Offer more 1:1 help with homework, resumes, and more.
2. TRIO and Student Life Center need more staff to avoid long wait times.
3. Develop and offer a workshop or handbook that shares current resources and supports.
4. Provide access to a mental health counselor(s).
5. Provide childcare on campus.
6. Reduce textbook costs and/or provide more copies in the library for checkout.
7. Work with the city and/or MNDOT to make transportation improvements.
8. Staff would benefit from cultural competency trainings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>One student shared that staff need to be more flexible with life situations. “Coming to America for a “second chance,” I had to start all over, but I have been to University before and I am educated, but I am not treated with understanding.”</i>

Student Recommendations – Eden Prairie
1. Evening students would like the college to be more active and provide programming and services during the hours that they are on campus.
2. Increase visibility and sharing of current resources.
3. Increase awareness of the Learning Resource Center and tutoring services.
4. Increase awareness of veteran resources.
5. Instructors would benefit from continual learning in technology.
6. Encourage staff to take more time to talk to students and seek understanding of students needs and stories.
7. Better utilize the D2L announcement page, student senate, and the app to share resources and make announcements.

Hennepin County Recommendations
1. Student fees contribute to a healthy snack—currently free coffee is available from student fees. Is there an opportunity to include or replace this with a healthy snack?
2. Change parking fee to an “opt in” rather than an “opt out.” Many students are not aware that there is a parking fee included in tuition costs. Also, many may not be utilizing the space and therefore pay unnecessarily if they do not have a car. Is there an opportunity to change this to an “opt in” fee?

"I am an international student. It is sometimes very difficult to get food. It is very expensive. I can only get cheap food. Then, if I want food from African stores is very expensive." - Eden Prairie Student

"I have energy now because I had a healthy meal this morning. When you eat well, you think better. With bad diet you are grumpy, dragged, out of balance. I am living testament to this." – Eden Prairie Student

Key Informant Interviews with Hunger Relief Stakeholders

Key informant interviews were conducted with six hunger relief stakeholders (list of interviewees can be found in Appendix A). All interviewees agreed that food insecurity is a concern for students. Interviewees shared the following reasons that they believe contribute to food insecurity for students:

Contributors to Food Insecurity

- Constrained/low/lack of finances
- Limited budgets
- Lack of transportation to food options
- Adapting to not being offered free lunch as they had in high school
- Generational poverty
- International students have increased barriers to job opportunities and financial aid; this may lead to an increase in food insecurity
- High tuition costs
- High costs of textbooks
- Racial inequities. Low income, first generation, students of color have higher incidents of food insecurity
- Lack of time to work
- High cost of college meal programs
- Work requirements make it difficult for students to access SNAP

Interviewees differ in how they address food insecurity among college students. Some are focused on improving direct services to students and others are working on increasing knowledge, systems, and/or policy changes to improve student access to food and resources on campus.

“Until all of us - community, students, researchers, institutions - sit together to find solutions our students will face more food insecurity in MN.” - Oballa
Oballa, LEAD President

Improvement Strategies		
Fare for All	LeadMN	Second Harvest SNAP Outreach
<p>Direct service</p> <p>To assess student food insecurity, Fare for All is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - examining food emergency programs regionally - examining college best practices - assessing current locations of Fare for All sites and distance to colleges. <p>Findings will help Fare for All staff identify how to best support colleges to decrease food insecurity.</p>	<p>Policy approach</p> <p>Advocating for ‘Hunger Free Campus’ throughout the state of MN for all community and/or technical colleges.</p> <p>The Hunger Free Campus act was passed in 2019 and since then more than 16 colleges in Minnesota have earned the designation by serving more than 6,596 students through campus food pantries, distributing more than 61,600 pounds of food to students, providing emergency assistance funding to 260 students, and more. Learn more about the impact of Hunger Free Campus and designated schools in Minnesota.</p>	<p>Support to systems changes within colleges, education, and direct service</p> <p>Second Harvest is currently working with several colleges and universities to increase awareness and access to SNAP and other community food resources.</p> <p><u>Onsite pantry</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assistance in building relationship(s) to food providers - resources, information, and support to the planning process <p><u>Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presentations on food insecurity - SNAP advocacy and resource trainings - onsite SNAP outreach and application assistance <p><u>Direct service</u></p> <p>A 3-step outreach tool and easy-to-use referral form to simplify the process of getting students connected with specialists who can</p>

		connect students to food resources
CEAP	PROP	Student Activist
Direct service Client choice food pantry; allows students to shop here with a student ID even if they do not reside in needed zip codes	Direct service Client choice food pantry; allows students to shop here with a student ID even if they do not reside in needed zip codes	Education & Implementation Implementing strategies that are informed by students at individual institutions; not a one-size-fits-all approach

Lessons Learned
Lack of transportation is a barrier for students to access offsite food resources.
Bringing free food strategies to campus is challenging for the following reasons: 1) tracking for eligibility that is required by funders 2) food delivery and storage that need to be accommodated 3) equipment needed to host food distribution operations and staffing
All agreed that the issue is not getting the food, it is the operations needed for distributing the food.
Staffing and funding are common concerns for food emergency outlets.
Destigmatizing the need for free food and the resources and programs that exist is needed. Work needs to be done to ensure that the solutions are empowering vs. needy. Framing the need for healthy food as a "health and wellness" priority vs a "free handout."
Creating unique models vs. one-size-fits-all is needed. Some students need something to eat in that moment and others need food to take home and make for their families.
Students are not aware of the resources available to them; institutions do not understand the issue of food insecurity among students.
Institutions do not understand the issue(s) of food insecurity among students.

Additional Existing Resources
Fare for All sites throughout the region
Community gardens
Food emergency outlets
Edible landscapes
Farmers' market rescue / farm gleaning that leads to free produce drop offs
SNAP benefits
Faith communities that offer free dinners
Aldi grocery stores

Needed Resources to Address Food Insecurity
Increased marketing opportunities of existing resources and streamlined process for press releases.
Assistance with creating and/or identifying space and delivery accommodations for on-site pantries.
Ensure there is a consistent supply of food at emergency food outlets throughout the year for youth and families.
Increase in high-quality foods vs taking whatever we (food pantries) can get.
More staffing and funding at food pantries.
Increase in mental health services on campuses.
Reduced cost of textbooks and/or make them available in the library. Check Open Textbook Library
Student financial literacy classes, keep in mind that not all students have money to manage.
Improved transportation options for students to access emergency food resources.
Lower tuition costs.

Recommendations	
LeadMN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advocate for free two-year degree options like legislation passed in Tennessee and Maryland. ○ Collaboration among the community, students, researches, and institutions is needed.
PROP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Survey students; include a question or two regarding college cupboard vs PROP usage / desire; Need should be assessed as two different types: 1. need food while at school and 2. need food to make meals at home or is it both?
An Garagiola-Bernier, Food Justice Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Century College = Bridge to Benefits = on-line tool for students - enroll to SNAP and get connected to county staff ○ Second Harvest has a SNAP outreach coordinator (Betty Balan) who has worked with campus-based food pantries to assist students on access SNAP. ○ Houston Food Bank has food scholarships for students. They receive 60lbs of food twice monthly; results show success in school enrollment retention rates. ○ HOPE Lab studies show that 50% of students are experiencing food insecurity and therefore can benefit from SNAP. SNAP eligibility requirements need to be modified to accommodate the unique needs of students balancing classes with or without work hours.
Community Emergency Assistance Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For a list of food resources and local food shelves, check: https://www.ceap.org/services/resources/

Key Informant Interviews with College and University Staff

Seven key informant interviews (KIIs) with institutions addressing food insecurity among their students were conducted by Public Health Promotion staff. The intention was to understand the most pressing perceived needs by their students, learn about solutions being implemented, and gather their recommendations to address food insecurity at Hennepin Technical College.

Most Pressing Concerns for Students at Your Institution:

Food insecurity among students is a concern for all the college and university stakeholders interviewed. They also expressed many other concerns regarding their students that impact food security and academic success such as housing insecurity, mental health issues, childcare difficulties, financial struggles, transportation barriers, problems balancing work, family and school responsibilities, and lack of well-paid jobs. Increases in tuition and fees and decreased access to scholarships have also negatively affected students, leaving them with less disposable income to get food. Food insecurity was also recognized as a factor that contributes to lower academic success and college retention. *Most barriers for students to be successful are non-academic.* Food insecurity is the symptom of something larger.

“Students are at college because they want to better themselves and we need to help them to succeed”
- College staff working with food insecure students

Resources to Address Food Insecurity and Other Needs

All the higher education institutions interviewed are finding some success addressing food insecurity by using several strategies. A food pantry or bank is the most common response to food insecurity on campuses. Food pantries represent the most basic and direct intervention; it is an effective strategy for getting resources to students. School food pantries are sourcing foods from Loaves and Fishes, Second Harvest, Twin Cities Food Justice, Good Acre, Cooperative Partners Warehouse, and Groveland Food Shelf. Food cost and ease of the ordering process seem to influence which food source is chosen.

All institutions mentioned are also trying to decrease barriers and stigma among students to use the food pantry. Some have chosen food pantry locations in less visible areas within the campus, others have located the food pantry within a “service center” so others won’t be able to know what kind of service the student is looking for. They also have tried to schedule the hours of operation to accommodate to their student needs.

In addition, staffing the pantry seems to be a common difficulty shared by various institutions. Finding the economic resources to pay for staff has been a challenge; many rely on volunteers. Most also expressed the desire to have more student involvement, however, low-income students do not have much spare time to volunteer and the low wages offered to work in the pantry are not very appealing.

Other initiatives to decrease food insecurity among students mentioned by stakeholders included meal donations at the cafeteria, vegetable gardens, snack programs, and food drives. Many also have some small cash grants available for students in need. It is important to highlight that few stakeholders mentioned actively working to help students enroll in the SNAP program. This is a lost opportunity to start addressing food insecurity in a more systemic way.

There is also a need for most schools to have a more integrated support through existing campus structures. Most institutions seem to offer many resources for students, but they are housed under different offices which makes it difficult for students to find the existing resources. Among the schools that were interviewed, the Minneapolis Community & Technical College has a more advanced model of service integration, offering food, childcare, housing, mental health resources, and social services under the same roof.

Not everybody [at school] sees food insecurity as a problem, "Why are we worrying to feed our students? We can send them to church to eat." There is a lot of privilege and there is a need for education. Leadership changes, donors change.
- College staff working with food insecure students

Resources to Address Food Insecurity and other Needs	
Augsburg University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food shelf on campus, Campus Cupboard, attended by 7–8 work study interns, open 3–4 days a week ○ Food comes from Loaves and Fishes and is very low cost ○ Food drives during university events ○ Distribution of fresh produce once a week from Twin Cities Food Justice, held as free farmers market ○ Open cooking hours at the Food Lab, the college provides basic ingredients (e.g., spices) and cooking tools
College of St. Scholastica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial help when there is a need ○ Help with student employment ○ Implemented the national Swipe Out Hunger program; formed a task force to address food insecurity among their students ○ Food shelf

Hamline University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developed a partnership with Keystone Community Services, Food Mobile program, bringing food shelf services directly to the college ○ Health in the Environment class focused on food insecurity and is used to raise awareness on the issue ○ “Food and chats” is a campus event that provides free food for student participants ○ Feed Your Brain campaign
Macalester College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food co-op that was started and is maintained by students, food purchased from Good Acre and Cooperative Partners Warehouse. ○ Open pantry ○ Vegetable garden run by students; produce is sold to the cafeteria
Minneapolis Community & Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One-stop shop for non-academic support, initial assessment results direct students to various resources (e.g., housing, childcare, food, employment, etc.) ○ Food pantry and snack packs, pantry food comes from Groveland and Second Harvest, snacks come from a community of faith ○ Parent Center provides a space for students to study that also allows their kids to be there ○ Winter gear distribution ○ Toys for Tots ○ Fare for All during the holidays ○ Free food that is left over from campus events is offered to students through hospitality tables ○ The Swipe Drive program, students can donate extra meals to their peers ○ Actively promoting and enrolling students in SNAP
St. Catherine University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tried different ideas with variable success, such as leaving free snacks around campus and free microwavable lunches in the library ○ Food pantry that is open every other week, everyone is welcome, run by staff and faculty, would like to have more student involvement ○ Food comes from Second Harvest and the Twin Cities Food Justice ○ Vegetable garden that is attended by students, produce is donated to the food pantry, and shared with student and volunteer gardeners ○ Round up purchase program in the cafeteria, funds are used for providing meals for students in need <p>Ideas they would like to explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Buy food pantry directly from a food shelf, this doesn't require as much paperwork and unused food can be returned ○ Collaborative mobile food shelf that stops at several colleges and universities ○ Coordination among different universities or colleges so students can access different food shelves depending where they live, sharing food among colleges if they have extra food ○ Offer food justice classes ○ Have students run the food pantry

University of Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Food pantry; food comes from Second Harvest; open the last week of the month for 3 days (serves 400–500 students), strong emphasis on providing fresh food ○ Swipe Out Hunger program ○ Emergency grants for students that are offered by different colleges and university administration; ensure opportunity disparities don't occur across colleges ○ SNAP screening at pantry ○ Work group that is working on a comprehensive plan to address food insecurity; housing solutions communication campaign that encourages students to shop around and find less expensive options; hoping to start advocating for zoning regulations that protect low cost housing
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Marketing Strategies Used by Schools to Promote Food Resources:

The cultural stigma associated with facing hunger, of being seen by their peers receiving free food, can discourage students from utilizing on-campus pantries or other resources. The institutions interviewed are using various methods to promote their services to students as detailed in the table below. Even though many good advertising methods are being used, it seems there is a need for institutions to create comprehensive marketing plans that clearly define the target population (students, staff, and faculty), use messages that decrease stigma, link food availability with positive outcomes (e.g., Feed Your Brain by Hamline University) and provide the same message throughout different services.

Marketing Strategies to Promote Food Resources	
Augsburg University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flyers around campus ○ Daily email to students ○ Information shared by the TRIO office and the Student Wellness Center
College of St. Scholastica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referrals from counseling or other student services to the food shelf ○ Student-to-student referrals ○ Signs, emails to student contacts, social media/Facebook group, student senate ○ Educating advisors about resources ○ Offering a tour of the pantry during orientation/campus tours ○ Pop-up markets in public spaces and sharing available food resources at the events
Hamline University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Feed Your Brain (FYB) Campaign is a student-led initiative to increase awareness of food insecurity on college campuses, increase food access for Hamline students, and support the Food Resource Center (a center that provides food and other resources to help students meet their basic needs)

Minneapolis Community & Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bulletin boards, posters, Facebook, faculty/staff referrals, email communications, word of mouth
St. Catherine University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Referrals from the Access and Success Office ○ Welcoming event for new students every year, the food pantry is highly advertised in the event ○ Student worker from the food shelf goes to <i>every</i> class to promote it
University of Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SNAP application can be completed in the pantry ○ Wellness programming ○ Social media ○ Paper posters, bulletin boards "Well U" ○ Promoting services at events and partnering with departments

"Utilizing Facebook, faculty/staff referrals and emails for messaging would be ideal for Hennepin Tech."
 - HTC student reviewer

Recommendations from College & University Stakeholders to Increase Student Access to Resources:

The staff and faculty from institutions interviewed shared lessons learned that can help other schools develop, enhance and implement specific initiatives to address food insecurity.

Recommendations	
Augsburg University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decrease stigma around food insecurity by promoting services as available to everyone ○ Find student volunteers or student workers for creating/maintaining the space, for students by students ○ Increase awareness among staff and faculty, better food = better academic success
College of St. Scholastica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Decrease stigma, students expressed wanting a different name other than "food shelf", finding language that does not contribute to stigma is important ○ Address student retention and find sustainable solutions; the Swipe Out Hunger program and Student Task Force rely on student participation and become less sustainable when involved students graduate
Hamline University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Build coalitions; the solution comes from a community-wide effort; recruit help from community-based organizations, volunteers, staff/faculty, religious based organizations, and others

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lower tuition costs, provide more tuition assistance/grants ○ Get inspired by others' innovative ideas: ○ The Houston Food Bank has food scholarships for students that provides 60lbs of food twice monthly. It has shown success in school retention rates ○ Century College has a good model called Bridge to Benefits. It is an on-line tool for students; they can enroll in SNAP and get connected to county staff ○ Conduct research on whether food pantries making a difference ○ Connect to other organizations working on the same issues; Second Harvest has a SNAP outreach coordinator
Macalester College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Carefully study your options; the food co-op is a hard model to sustain when it is only run by volunteers; it is the volunteer work that keeps the food priced at very low cost (30–50% less than prices at conventional stores)
Minneapolis Community & Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Educate staff and faculty; they may not relate with their students' realities ○ Decrease stigma about students using services; their one-stop center has helped with this ○ Start with the student senate, the students guide all the processes at MCTC
St. Catherine University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Talk to other institutions addressing food insecurity through food pantries; Concordia and Metro State have good ones ○ Find ways to involve students; it would be ideal to have a work study student in charge of the food pantry ○ Make food insecurity part of class projects; have students take ideas to address food insecurity and make them part of their class projects
University of Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look for up-stream and sustainable solutions ○ Provide SNAP education and training to faculty/staff and ensure that SNAP benefits are known and easy to access ○ Advocate for more affordable housing and assist students in 'shopping around;' provide improved financial assistance to those who need dormitory accommodations ○ Partner with organizations who "do" this work (e.g., Second Harvest, The Food Group, local food pantry etc.)

The two recommendations that I would highlight for HTC are 1) food scholarships for all students that have or don't have Financial Aid (Hamline University) and 2) educate staff and faculty (Minneapolis Community & Technical College).

- HTC Student Reviewer

In Their Own Words:

Augsburg University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "We need more conversation on campus about the root causes for food insecurity and how the college can be more supportive."
College of St. Scholastica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "If you don't feel connected [to the college] then you can't address the issues." They are working on a sense of belonging.
Hamline University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Low-income, first gen students of color have come from a life of these struggles and not just in college – the stereotype of struggle in college and then have arrived once out is not accurate." ○ "Muslim students are 12 times more likely to be food insecure due to cultural foods being unavailable in the last 12 months."
Minneapolis Community & Technical College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "People in need have been turned away SO many times. Be mindful about from where students are coming. They may not be ready to ask for help because their experiences have been very bad in the past asking for help."
St. Catherine University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Many students never had been in a food shelf before. It is a barrier to recognize the need." ○ "Summer is harder—there is not much food for students."
University of Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "[Regarding SNAP] 50% of eligible students are not using it."

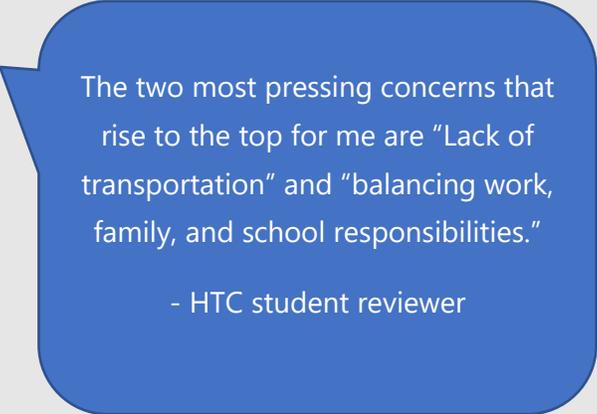
"Culture and personal choice are blamed as reasons for students to be food insecure."
-College staff working with food insecure students

Focus Groups with HTC Faculty and Staff

Two focus groups with faculty and staff from HTC (Brooklyn Park and Eden Prairie Campuses) were held to increase understanding of perceived student needs, learn about available resources, and provide recommendations to address food insecurity.

Most Pressing Students' Concerns Perceived by HTC Staff and Faculty

Faculty and staff from both campuses shared similar concerns about their students, citing many difficulties experienced by students that affect their academic performance. Most of the difficulties are non-academic in nature.

Brooklyn Park	Eden Prairie
Poverty	Housing insecurity
Lack of transportation to come to school and lack of transportation between both campuses	Lack of transportation
Food insecurity	Childcare
Family responsibilities	Balancing work, family, and school responsibilities; most students are in their upper 20s and early 30s
Need to have several jobs to get by financially	Single mothers
Lack of sleep due to family/work/school responsibilities	Cost of transferring transcripts; syllabi need to be translated
Students from different countries must navigate a difficult education system; difficulties finding resources, not being able to apply for many resources; they are more vulnerable	 <p>The two most pressing concerns that rise to the top for me are "Lack of transportation" and "balancing work, family, and school responsibilities." - HTC student reviewer</p>
Language barriers for immigrant students	
Students only have one week to drop a class without being charged for it; this timeline makes it difficult to determine how much work the class will be and if they can balance school with the rest of their responsibilities (family/work). This means they incur the tuition costs and cannot return to school until it is paid	

"Hopefully the one week drop out can be changed to at least 2 weeks soon. It is hard to get the new schedule and the hang of all the homework that needs to be finished in the first week of school."
- HTC student reviewer

Resources Available at HTC to Address Students’ Challenges

Some of the faculty and staff who participated in the focus groups seemed more aware of resources available for students than others. Many did not offer much information and expressed the need to educate staff and faculty about available resources. Staff and faculty also expressed concern about the lack of enough counselors which is a barrier for students to access resources. Sometimes students have pressing needs and are forced to wait a long time to get an appointment with a counselor. Some suggested exploring new systems to connect students to resources.

Here is a list of the most common resources mentioned by staff and faculty:

Brooklyn Park	Eden Prairie
Emergency crisis grant is a one-time \$500 grant; students need to talk to a counselor, and this can be a barrier; there are long wait times to get an appointment	Emergency crisis grant: Student needs to be referred by a counselor
Gas and grocery cards	Children’s clothing drive
CARES support teams advertise resources in an event called What’s Poppin’ through Student Life and email blasts	Some mentioned that having to get approval for accessing the on-campus snack program is a barrier for students
Various foundation’s scholarships; this is the only way that some students who are not eligible for FAFSA can receive help (e.g., international and undocumented students/DACA recipients)	Childcare grant
Free women’s health products in bathrooms	Scholarship application deadlines are in October; this deadline helps only existing students and not new students starting their first year
Resource closet	Campus Assessment Referral Education team (CARES team), committee of staff and students
	Resource closet; it is currently empty; staff/faculty help re-stock it but there’s fewer staff and faculty

Is Food Insecurity an Issue for HTC Students?

Staff and faculty expressed different levels of knowledge regarding food insecurity among the students. Some had noticed and heard directly from their students about not having enough money to buy food and being hungry. Others realized the magnitude of the problem only after data from the Boynton Health study, including information on student food insecurity, was made public. Most agree that students do not want to share their challenges with staff and faculty unless they have developed a close relationship. They also recognized that food insecure students may be at a higher risk of dropping out of school and dealing with health issues such as loss of energy, sleep and depression.

Reasons Leading to Food Insecurity:

Focus group participants cited many reasons leading to food insecurity. Some factors are part of the school environment, for example the lack of affordable, accessible and healthy food in both campuses and limited access to resources. Other factors are more related to systemic issues such as limited access to financial resources or barriers for getting good jobs.

Some of the most common comments are summarized here:

Brooklyn Park	Eden Prairie
Food at the HTC cafeteria is of poor quality and expensive; students cannot afford it	Food in cafeteria is not healthy or affordable; cafeteria is underutilized; bistro closes at 1p.m.; there are no food options for students in the evening
SNAP requires students to work 20 hours/week; some scholarships require students to have a minimum of 12 credits in order to get insurance or other benefits; this adds to the difficulty of balancing family/work/school life for low-income students	Vending machines have expired food; students can go to the tuition office to be reimbursed for these purchases, but this is a barrier
Students need to take multiple loans in order to make it through school	Limited access to financial assistance, especially for international students
	Limited access and/or time for employment
	Limited access to information and/or personal relationships for resource guidance; on-line students do not know about the Resource Closet or get to use it and other resources on campus

Proposed Solutions to Address Food Insecurity:

Brooklyn Park	Eden Prairie
Provide more financial counseling to students so they have a better understanding of their loans and the consequences	Designate space/private room to chat with other students and connect them to resources.
Better advise students on the appropriate number of classes to take; they end up dropping the class and going into debt	Have a learning resource center
Have an office that houses all resources; it is difficult to navigate different offices to find all the resources	Need to educate more staff and faculty about resources available to students
Make it mandatory for deans to talk to instructors about resources so they can refer students	Need more counselors on campus
Increase promotion of resources; host more 'What's Popping' events, resource fairs, etc.	Need to better promote resources to students
Have vending machines with healthy food options	
Continue and expand the Hunger-Free Task Force	

Open the cafeteria for longer periods of time and have food that is healthy and affordable	<p>“Two [Recommendations] that rise to the top are 1) better advise students on number of classes to take 2) have an office that houses all resources.</p> <p>- HTC Student Reviewer</p>
Have better/healthier food at the school store	
Have outside resources come to workshop day for staff and faculty	

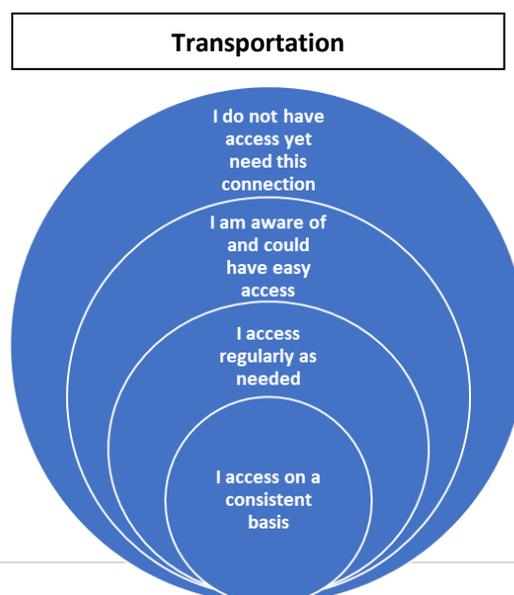
See Appendix C for focus group participant information.

Collaboration Mapping

Hennepin County staff led three “collaboration mapping” sessions 1) with Hennepin Technical College Staff 2) Eden Prairie students and 3) Brooklyn Park students. The goal was to identify strengths, gaps and opportunities in current support services both internally and externally (within 5 miles of campus). All participants contributed to the conversation and helped to map existing resources that connect students to the following social determinants of health (SDoH):

- Finances
- Job placement / employment
- Housing
- Transportation
- Food services and assistance (internal and external)
- Supportive services, e.g., childcare, mental health

A large piece of paper identified the social determinant of health in discussion at the top as the title. Four circles represent the level to which students access internal and external partners to address the SDoH listed; see image below for visual example.



Results from Collaboration Mapping Exercise

Job placement resources:

These are staff perceptions regarding the most/least used HTC job placement resources by students.

HTC Internal Job Placement Resources				
Staff/Faculty	Most Used Resources	Comments	Least Used Resources	Comments
	Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all staff know about the same resources 	Advisory Board	NA
	Work Study Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial aid requirements Limited availability No benefits Onsite Accommodating 	Reverse career fairs: students table and employers come to visit	NA
	Student Life, Career Development	NA	College hosts 13 industry specific career fairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs high faculty engagement Most successful with high faculty involvement
	Advisory Boards	NA	College Central Network (CCN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs more awareness Students learn about jobs

External Job Placement Resources				
Staff/Faculty	Most Used Resources	Comments	Least Used Resources	Comments
	Pilot project: Scholarship / Internship Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition is paid Paid internship 10 worksites 30 students 	Hennepin County Workforce Center	Not enough information about job fairs is shared

Financial Resources:

These are staff perceptions regarding the most/least used HTC financial resources by students.

Financial Resources				
Staff/Faculty	Most Used resources	Comments	Least Used Resources	Comments
	Johnathan, TRIO Director	NA	Public classes "Adulting 101" for 18- to 24-year-olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customized training Classes available
	Financial literacy workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big picture finances (e.g., mortgages, retirement) and not daily budgeting 		
	Student Success class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided after one suspension Has financial literacy sections 		
<p>General Recommendations from Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the financial literacy course to address "how to manage the money you have." Goal would be to address needs in real time vs. into the future. Provide student loan counseling; teach students that they can choose what they need vs. taking all that is offered. Engage with top feeder high schools prior to enrollment to prepare students for college life early to avoid surprises, e.g., no free lunch, independence in financial decisions, etc 				

Food Access Resources

These are staff perceptions regarding the most/least used food access resources by students.

HTC Internal Food Access Resources				
Staff/Faculty	Most Used Resources	Comments	Least Used Resources	Comments
	Coffee Shop / Bistro (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited food options Expensive 		
	Bookstore (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited food options; only packaged foods; no fresh options 		
	Gourmet Dining room (Brooklyn Park)	N/A		
	Baked goods weekly (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informal relationship with a faculty member Free 		
	Coffee Shop / Bistro (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited food options Expensive 		
	Bookstore (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited food options; only packaged foods; no fresh options 		

General Recommendations from Staff:

- Secure a partnership with a nearby faith community (possibly Pax Christi) for a Fare for All site. (Eden Prairie)
- Create a sustainable plan for students to access free and reduced cost food for both emergencies and on a recurring basis. (Both campuses)

External Food Access Resources

Staff/Faculty	Most Used Resources	Comments	Least Used Resources	Comments
	PROP (snack program) (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not food with substance • Available by request; must know where/who to ask • Free snacks/energy bars monthly 		

Food Access Resources

These are students' responses regarding the most and least used food resources:

Internal Food Access Resources

Students	Most Used Resources	Comments	Least Used Resources	Comments
	Vending Machines (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited food options • Not healthy • Convenient 	Cafeteria (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive • Not healthy
	Cafeteria (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor quality • Expensive • Free for high school students 	Student Life Center (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not reliable • Free leftover food, coffee, tea

	Bookstore (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited food options; only packaged foods, no fresh options 	Onsite culinary school restaurant (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short hours
	Breakroom / Student Life Center (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leftover food from events Free popcorn, coffee, tea 	Snacks provided by counselors (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not substantial
	Cafeteria (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor quality Expensive 	TRIO (Eden Prairie)	N/A
	Veterans Center (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not available to all Foods to heat up 	Vending Machines (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expensive Not healthy
	Coffee Shop / Bistro (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited food options Expensive 	Cafeteria / Vending/Bistro/ Coffee Shop (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options are not healthy Too expensive Need more fresh options
	Bookstore (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited food options 	Snacks provided by counselors (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not healthy or substantial

General Recommendations from Students:

Brooklyn Park students:

- Make the hours to existing onsite restaurant more convenient and less expensive.
- Consider an onsite food pantry that has convenient hours and offers free food and personal care items.
- Provide food that meets dietary preferences and restrictions.
- Provide culturally appropriate food options.

Eden Prairie students:

- Connect with MnDOT – they need a shuttle from the bus depot to school.

- Start offering Fare for All.
- Have a small food market.
- Bring food trucks to campus.
- Start an onsite pantry.
- Have an onsite restaurant.
- Allow Culinary Arts students to cook for students.

External Food Access Resources				
Students	Most Used Resources	Comments	Least Used Resources	Comments
	Food from home (Both campuses)	N/A	Gas Station (Brooklyn Park)	• Need a car
	Gas station (Both campuses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a car • Fast 	Cub, Walmart, Target (Brooklyn Park)	• Need a car
	Local fast food restaurants (Brooklyn Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a car • Fast • Affordable 	Fast food outlets (Eden Prairie)	• Need a car
			Uber Eats (Eden Prairie)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive • Convenient • More options
			Hy-Vee (Eden Prairie)	• Need a car

Recommendations from students to improve housing resources and supportive services at HTC:

Strategies to Improve Housing Resources		
Participant	Location	
Students	Brooklyn Park and Eden Prairie	Secure partnership with somewhere/someone to connect with regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing programs • Housing support services • Advice on housing programs and loan services • Affordable housing listings • Affordable student housing near campus
Students	Eden Prairie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a class on housing and budgeting • Secure more loan money for living expenses

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mechanism to connect students looking for roommates • Provide apartment listings in the area
Strategies to Improve Supportive Services		
Participant	Location	
Students	Brooklyn Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve mental health services on campus and provide more counselor hours • Provide a health educator • Provide more financial assistance for tuition and books • Provide a meditation room • Provide better resources for on-line students • Provide an on-site health clinic or secure a relationship with an external clinic; students need access to medical supplies, e.g., band-aids, ibuprofen, hot/cold packs • Provide a game room • Work with MNDOT to improve transportation to and from the campus

Recommendations from Hennepin County Public Health

Based on the conversations with HTC students, staff, faculty, and external stakeholders, we offer the following recommendations for HTC to continue addressing food insecurity:

- **Focus on systemic solutions** for addressing food insecurity recognizing the many challenges that low-income college students face: housing, transportation, childcare, low-paid jobs, higher tuition and book cost among others. Throughout this report, recommendations coming from HTC students and staff provide guidance on how to tackle some of the most pressing issues.
- **Create a centralized student service center.** At HTC many good resources are being offered, but they are located under different offices. It is difficult for students to navigate the current system and access resources. In a centralized resource center, students can complete a needs assessment and be connected to different resources. The current system of accessing resources through a counselor doesn't seem to be working for students. The Minneapolis Community & Technical College has a good centralized student service model that can be replicated.

- **Continue supporting the Hunger-Free Task Force** to address the basic needs of students. The task force coordinates and oversees advocacy initiatives around meeting the basic needs of the students. Initiatives include identifying the prevalence of food insecurity and homelessness among others, and then developing solutions.
- **Assess food and beverage offerings** at HCT to ensure healthy, accessible and affordable options are available for students.
- **Establish campus food resources** to address student food insecurity, such as establishing or linking to community food banks, pantries, food recovery programs or building campus community gardens.
- **Normalize the use of campus food resources** to facilitate greater access. Hamline and CEAP have good ideas for framing access to food resources while decreasing stigma, e.g., Feed Your Brain and Health and Wellness.
- **Strengthen partnerships/coalitions with other food relief groups.** This may include local food shelves, communities of faith, organizations such as United Way, The Salvation Army, etc. For example, Minneapolis Community & Technical College has a free sandwich initiative for students supported by a community of faith.
- **Develop and strengthen partnership with state and county offices** to connect more students to services.
- **Educate faculty and staff about food insecurity** issues among their students as well as resources available at HTC and in the surrounding community to support students. Some roles faculty and staff can play include distributing information to students that directs them to food and other resources on campus; and hosting and participating in campus-wide conversations around inequality in higher education to bring food insecurity out from the shadows.
- **Foster conversations among students and faculty.** Based on the conversations with HTC students and staff, there seems to be a disconnect between staff/faculty experiences and those of their students.
- **Provide easy access to information about Federal and State assistance program eligibility** and help students with the enrollment process.
- **Support policy solutions** through partnerships with organizations looking for solutions to decrease tuition and book costs, increase access to scholarships, decrease housing and food access barriers, and expand eligibility for federal food assistance programs (such as SNAP and the National School Lunch Program to include college students). LeadMN is a good organization to connect with and support.

- **Continue collecting data on food insecurity** to evaluate progress with the initiatives being implemented and continue to highlight issues that need to be addressed.
- **Evaluate outcomes** and effectiveness of initiatives being implemented.
- **Create a comprehensive marketing plan** to highlight available resources. Clearly define the target population (students, staff and faculty), use messages that decrease stigma, link food availability with positive outcomes (e.g., Feed Your Brain by Hamline University), provide the same message throughout different services, and produce culturally relevant information to promote student services to the more vulnerable groups.
- **Do targeted outreach** to students more vulnerable to experience food insecurity at HTC. More vulnerable populations include Black, low-income, first-college generation, and LGBTQ students.

Conclusion

Food insecurity is a significant public health concern on campuses across the country and can interfere with a student's ability to learn, thrive, and complete their education. This initiative sought to examine factors related to food insecurity among HTC students and describe solutions to address food insecurity for students in need. A good number of possible related food insecurity factors and solutions were found at campus, community, state, and federal levels. The final goal is to increase students' academic success and well-being by addressing food insecurity at HTC.

One of the HTC students who reviewed this report summarized the project findings in a magnificent way:

"Food insecurity is one of the major problems facing students in Hennepin Technical College. It is not commonly observed because many students are not comfortable discussing their food challenges with other people, especially strangers. So, the problem is masked even though it is implicated in the poor retention and completion observed among some students. This problem is usually not in isolation and it can be used to signify the lack/inadequacy of other social determinants of health in the life of a student, such as good accommodation, sustainable employment, financial capacity, emotional or mental wellbeing. Sometimes combating the associated problems alone can solve the problem of food insecurity but focusing only on the adequate provision of food without attending to the associate problems does not solve the problem of food insecurity. Resources made available to help students should be properly marketed so that the intended recipients (students) will know about them and make use of them. Faculty members are better

positioned to inform students about resources available to combat food insecurity but most of them are also not aware of these resources. That is why faculty members should be trained on the resources available to combat food insecurity within the campus and in the community. So many community-based organizations are involved directly or indirectly in efforts of combating food insecurity, some of them are willing to partner with the management of schools to fight food insecurity. Such community-based organizations should be sought out and the partnership forged to help the students."

"I believe that this report has the heart of the students. It is full of deep concerns and great examples on how to keep moving forward to achieve a hunger-free campus. The recommendations sound achievable."

- HTC student reviewer

Appendix A – Key Informant Interviewees

Hunger relief organizations and advocates:

Organization	Interviewee	Description of Service(s)
Community Emergency Assistance Programs (CEAP) Address: 7051 Brooklyn Blvd. Brooklyn Center, MN 55429 Phone: 763-566-9600 Website: https://www.ceap.org	Clare Brumback, Executive Director	CEAP Family Services not only provides food support but includes resource referrals so families can connect with partner agencies and services that may be able to help in Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, and East Champlin (East of Hwy 169). Students who may not live within the zip codes that CEAP serves but who do have an HTC student ID are welcome and encouraged to use CEAP services.
LeadMN	Oballa, LeadMN President	LeadMN represents 180,000 two-year college students throughout Minnesota.

<p>Address: 1515 South Robert Street West Saint Paul, MN 55118 Phone: 651-297-5877 Website: https://www.leadmn.org/</p>		<p>Hunger Free Campuses is an initiative by LeadMN to address food insecurity on community and technical colleges. A Hunger Free Campus is a Minnesota State community and/or technical college that is actively taking strides to reduce food insecurity among students. In order to be awarded the designation, a campus must meet minimum criteria that have been established through legislation created and advocated by LeadMN staff and volunteers and passed into MN law in 2019.</p>
<p>The Food Group/Fare for All</p> <p>Address: 8501 54th Avenue N New Hope, MN 55428 Phone: 763-450-3880 Website: https://fareforall.thefoodgroupmn.org/</p>	<p>Lisa Sabourin, Retail Operations Manager</p> <p>Linh Xiong, Retail Programs Coordinator</p>	<p>Fare for All (FFA) is a program of the Food Group. FFA buys fresh produce and frozen meat in bulk from wholesalers and manufactures. Volunteers then pack the produce and meat into food packages and sell them monthly for \$10 to \$30 at their 38 locations throughout Minnesota. FFA has been consulting with colleges to identify possible strategies that could benefit colleges implementing Hunger Free Campus policies.</p>
<p>Second Harvest Heartland</p> <p>Brooklyn Park Address: 7101 Winnetka Avenue N. Brooklyn Park, MN 55428 https://www.2harvest.org/</p>	<p>Charlene Graff, SNAP Outreach Team Member</p> <p>An Garagiola-Bernier, Policy Intern</p>	<p>Second Harvest Heartland works to end hunger through community partnerships. They offer many innovative programs to reach their goals. One such program is SNAP</p>

		education and outreach. SNAP educators work with organizations in the community to raise awareness about the availability of SNAP benefits. This is a proven method for decreasing student food insecurity.
<p>People Reaching Out to People (PROP)</p> <p>Address: 14700 Martin Drive Eden Prairie, MN 55344 Phone: 952-937-9120 Website: https://propfood.org/</p>	Cindy McPherson, Operations Manager	<p>PROP serves Eden Prairie and Chanhassen residents. In addition to their Fresh Choice Market food pantry there are case managers onsite to work with clients and design action plans to address barriers they may be experiencing. Barriers could include unemployment, transportation, lack of affordable childcare, language skills, and lack of education or training. Quarterly check-ins provide an opportunity for clients to assess their progress. Students who may not live within the zip codes that PROP serves but who do have an HTC student ID are welcome and encouraged to use PROP services.</p>

Higher Education Staff and Faculty:

Augsburg University	Natalie Jacobson, Campus Kitchen Coordinator
Macalester College	Elston Adelaide, alumnus who started the food co-op
Minneapolis Technical College	Becky Nordin, Dean of Students Jalex Lor, Resource and Referral Coordinator
St. Catherine University	Jennifer Tacheny, Co-Director Celeste’s Dream: Young Adult Spirituality

	Joshua Haringa, Assistant Professor of Communications and faculty advisor for the Food Justice Coalition
University of Minnesota	Rebecca Leighton, Health Promotion Specialist, Boynton Health
Hamline University	Dr. Susi Keefe, Professor and faculty advisor to the student led "Feed Your Brain" campaign
College of St. Scholastica	Julie Zaruba Fountaine, Wellness Coordinator Jessica Ellingson, Director of Campus Ministry, faculty advisor to the campus food shelf and Swipe Out Hunger initiative

Appendix B – Key Informant Interview Questions

Key Informant Interviews (KII) – Food Insecurity in Colleges

Project Summary

Food insecurity in colleges is a prevalent issue. According to Feeding America, food insecurity is defined as "a federal measure of a household's ability to provide enough food for every person in the household to have an active, healthy life." Food insecurity does not happen in isolation. Students must sometimes make the tough decision between paying rent or paying tuition, as they don't have enough money for both. Food insecurity among college students has been associated with poorer health and academic performance, and increased mental health symptoms, such as depression and anxiety, making it important for public health staff to understand and address the cause.

Hennepin Technical College (HTC) serves many Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, and Eden Prairie residents, many of them representing racial minority and low-income groups. These groups have been identified in different research studies as being at higher risk for being food insecure.

Hennepin County Public Health staff has approached HTC with the intention of being a partner at the table to help increase students' academic success and well-being by addressing food insecurity.

To help with this understanding, Hennepin County will conduct focus group discussions with students, convene a student leadership committee, and conduct one-on-one interviews with stakeholders and experts within academia. We will use what we learn to create a recommendation report. College staff and the student leadership committee can use the report to identify strategies that they are able to implement on campus. The contributing factors to food insecurity will extend

past the college campus and into the larger community and therefore will be shared with city officials, city staff and relevant stakeholders.

Our conversation today should take approximately 60 minutes. It is very important that we capture what you say, so we would like to record the discussion for us to refer to if needed. All the information you provide today will be treated confidentially and we will not use any names in our report. We will develop a summary report, which will be shared with you prior to our recommendations report.

Do I have your permission to record the session? Do I have permission to proceed with the interview?

KII Questions for College Staff

1. What is your role/interaction with students? How long have you been in this role?
2. From your perspective, what are some of the most pressing concerns for students at your institution? Why? (PROBE: financial, insurance, employment – high-level concerns)
3. In your institution, what resources are available to students *while they are in school* for financial, housing, and employment assistance?
4. Do you feel food insecurity is a concern for students? If yes, what do you think leads to food insecurity for students? (PROBE: get beyond personal responsibilities – access to foods, access to financial assistance, access and/or time for employment, limited access to information and/or personal relationships for resource guidance)
5. What are the consequences of food insecurity? (PROBE: how does it affect academics?)
6. Where do students go to get help if they are food insecure? Do you know how frequently these resources are utilized?
7. What changes or additional resources would help the college address food insecurity?
8. What final thoughts do you have?

KII Questions for External Partners

1. What work do you do to address food insecurity in the community?
2. In your experience, do you feel food insecurity is a concern for students specifically? If yes, what do you think leads to food insecurity for students? (PROBE: get beyond personal

responsibilities – access to foods, access to financial assistance, access and/or time for employment, limited access to information and/or personal relationships for resource guidance)

3. What work do you do, have done, and/or would like to do to address food insecurity (or access to foods, access to financial assistance, access and/or time for employment, limited access to information and/or personal relationships for resource guidance) for students specifically?
4. What lessons learned (successes and challenges) have you gleaned from this work?
5. Other than your services, where do community members go to get additional help to address their need for affordable foods?
6. What changes or additional resources would help your community in addressing food insecurity?
7. What final thoughts do you have?

Thank you for your time.

Appendix C – Focus Groups Participant Table

Date	Session	Number of Participants
12/5/2019	Eden Prairie faculty and staff	3
12/5/2019	Brooklyn Park faculty and staff	7

Appendix D – Focus Group Protocol and Questions

HTC Staff Focus Group – Food Insecurity in Colleges

Project Summary

Food insecurity in colleges is a prevalent issue. According to Feeding America, food insecurity is defined as “a federal measure of a household’s ability to provide enough food for every person in the household to have an active, healthy life.” Food insecurity does not happen in isolation. Students must sometimes make the tough decision between paying rent or paying tuition, as they

don't have enough money for both. Food insecurity among college students has been associated with poorer health and academic performance, and increased mental health symptoms, such as depression and anxiety, making it important for public health staff to understand and address the cause.

Hennepin Technical College (HTC) serves a large number of Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, and Eden Prairie residents, many of them representing racial minority and low-income groups. These groups have been identified in different research studies as being at higher risk for being food insecure.

Hennepin County Public Health staff has approached HTC with the intention of being a partner at the table to help increase students' academic success and well-being by addressing food insecurity.

To help with this understanding, Hennepin County will conduct focus group discussions with staff, convene a student leadership committee, conduct one-on-one interviews with students, stakeholders and experts within academia and food emergency organizations. We will use what we learn to create a recommendation report. College staff and the student leadership committee can use the report to identify strategies that they are able to implement on campus. The contributing factors to food insecurity will extend past the college campus and into the larger community and therefore will be shared with city officials, city staff and relevant stakeholders.

Our conversation today should take approximately 60 minutes. It is very important that we capture what you say, so we would like to record the discussion for us to refer to if needed. All the information you provide today will be treated confidentially and we will not use any names in our report. We will develop a summary report, which will be shared with you prior to our recommendations report.

Do I have your permission to record the session?

We have a few simple ground rules for today's listening session:

1. Be **respectful of one another** – you can disagree with others' ideas but do so respectfully.
2. Because we want to be sure we capture your opinions, we ask that **only one person speak at time** and please do not interrupt when someone else is talking.
3. There are **no right or wrong answers** – we are interested in different opinions and ideas.
4. Please, if you have a **cell phone**, turn it off or to vibrate.

Focus Group Questions

Go around the table and introduce yourself and answer:

1. What is your role/interaction with students? How long have you been in this role?

We will start with talking high level about what you perceive as issues for HTC students:

2. From your perspective, what are some of the most pressing concerns for students at your institution? Why? (PROBE: financial, insurance, employment - high-level concerns)
3. What resources exist at the college to address the issues you have shared?

Now we want to concentrate on food insecurity specifically:

4. Do you feel food insecurity is a concern for students?
5. We know there are many reasons that lead to food insecurity. Which of the following do you perceive to be main contributors to students being food insecure while at HTC?
6. Affordability of food on campus
7. Availability of food on campus
 - a. Limited access to financial assistance
 - b. Limited access and/or time for employment
 - c. Limited access to information and/or personal relationships for resource guidance
8. What are the consequences of food insecurity? (PROBE: how does it affect academics?)
9. Where do students go to get help if they are food insecure while at HTC? Do you know how frequently these resources are utilized?
10. What changes or additional resources would help the college address food insecurity?
11. What final thoughts do you have?

Appendix E – Collaboration Mapping Tool

Collaboration Mapping with Hennepin Technical College

Goals and Purpose

Meeting Goal: To learn from Hennepin Technical College students who and where they go to receive support while in college. We will identify strengths and gaps in current support services both internally and externally (within five miles of campus).

Collaboration Mapping Exercise

Together we will map existing resources that connect students to the following social determinants of health:

- Finances
- Job placement/employment
- Housing
- Transportation
- Food services and assistance (internal and external)
- Supportive services (e.g., childcare, mental health)

Each sheet has the social determinant of health (SDoH) listed as the title. Four circles are drawn. The circles represent the level to which students access internal and external partners to address the SDoH listed.

Smallest circle in the middle “1” = resources/people **I access on a consistent basis** and have the support I need

These likely are formal relationships.

Circle “2” = resources/people **I access regularly as needed** - not as deep a connection as “1” but a trusted and valuable source.

This could be a combination of places (such as a city, neighborhood, or site), key stakeholders, organizations, cultural groups, student leaders, or faculty/staff.

Circle “3” = resources/people **I am aware of and could have** easy connection to but do not use.

Who could be a resource to you (people, places, organizations, efforts)? Who/what orgs might you want to connect with or learn more about?

Circle “4” = resources/people you **do not have access** to and need to connect with.

Who is missing?

Take a few minutes to look at your map. Do any post-its need to be moved to another layer of the circle? Added or removed? Are there connection gaps? Any “ah-ha” moments?

Observations

1. What stands out for you about these maps?
2. What opportunities do you see (internal/external)?
3. What has worked well and why? (Prompt: What should we keep doing?)
4. What has not worked well and why not? (Prompt: What/who is needed for success, or should be done differently next time?)

Next Steps

- What we will use this for:
 - To compare to how staff responds to the same activity
 - Follow up on any connections needed/desired to be made
 - To further inform who we need to approach for key informant interviews
 - To add to recommendations report at end of project

Appendix F – Quotes

Quotes – Brooklyn Park Students
“I could not eat healthy with the budget I have; it will be impossible.”
“Transportation to get here kind of suck. It is pretty far. I arrive between 8:30-8:45. Waking at 6 am so I can take the bust at 7 am. It takes me closer to two hours to come by bus. The one bus 721 from the transit runs every 30 minutes.”
“I cannot afford to eat here during the day. Half of the time I get in the morning and go late to home and I don’t eat. I cannot afford it.”
“The water here (HTC) is heavy, it is undrinkable. It is gross.”
“There is not a famous character in the media who uses SNAP to normalize it.”
“As far jobs go, I feel alienated by the job seeking program here. I haven’t seen a single company that is related to what I am studying. I have heard more from my instructors, but nothing from the school. I am in the electronics program.”
“If you are in college people worry about college because you have to worry about so many things: tuition, books.”
“Students don’t worry about food; they worry about more education. We cannot afford it. After I use the money for school from my scholarship, there is not much left.”

"Here, you have to pay for parking here in school even if you don't have a car. Same with gym in the school. (life fitness) there is a fee whether you use it or not."
"My mom is from Somalia. I was born in Yemen, then moved to Somalia, then Ethiopia, Dubai, America in Arizona and then Minneapolis. I remember drinking bad water in the refugee camps. You had to clean the water with your hands and drink."
"Sometimes when you are hungry, I am not listening to the teacher. I am thinking what I am going to eat, when I am going to get food."
"They used to give food stamps to me and my mom. Since I started working, they cut the benefit. They thought I made a lot of money. That was summer when there were many jobs, but now (fall) the jobs are very few and pay little. I can only afford to pay for rent. We asked helped from my uncle so we can eat. I can only afford paying rent; the rest goes to paying college. <i>I cannot do food and rent at the same time.</i> "
"It was helpful to be in SNAP; I could save some money to pay for college. It was one less think to worry about. Now, I worry a lot."
"It is difficult to match your work with school schedules."
"It is very hard to study when you are hungry."
"There were times when I won't eat so he (her son) can eat even with food stamps."
"I think SNAP is great. I used two times in my life. It was one thing less to worry about. I didn't have to send my son to my mom's house so he can eat. It will be great if more people knew."
"Some faculty do not want to talk. Someone who never has been in need doesn't understand."
"[when hungry] Mentally you cannot concentrate. You are only thinking what you are going to eat, you get sleepy, angry, sick."
"If you have too many classes, you won't have time to work. You need time to do your homework."
"Provide transportation for students. You may have a class in am and then another in pm. You are stranded in the school with not food, not possibilities to go to work."
Talking about vending: "When I went to HS in vending there was a lot of junk food, but there were some good options."

Quotes – Eden Prairie Students
"Most of my money goes to gas and school. I am living with my parents so I can get a decent meal and have money for school and gas."
"Main problem is lack of budget. I like to cook. I don't have money for a lot of ingredients. You end up buying microwavable food, so it doesn't break your bank account."
"My teachers send job offers from companies in our field. I am doing fluid power. Many of my classmates have already jobs. Perhaps 3–4 have found jobs through the teacher. I need to wait to get a job in my field because I cannot afford driving so far. Most jobs are far away so I will need to finish first. I cannot afford living by myself and study."
"Our teachers tell us when there are opportunities. Sometimes in class, they help us to fill the scholarship applications. Our teachers are awesome, they are really nice! They send info to our personal emails." (Fluid power program)
"If I start eating healthy it can be a problem. A parfait for \$3 and a cheeseburger for a dollar."

"I have energy now because I had a healthy meal this morning. When you eat well, you think better. With bad diet you are grumpy, dragged, out of balance. I am living testament to this."
"I grew up with free food from pantries, free food in the parks, etc. It was are you hungry or are you not? I go to a pantry now. I went to a diaper drive too."
"I grew up in almost every public program that was available my mom didn't have the means. With my son, I was also at WIC."
"I don't know if other students are in SNAP. From where I am from, you needed so it was not negative. As a kid you made fun. My mom sent me to the store with the vouchers, friends will make fun of you, but perhaps there were part of it too."
"They need more grants. It cost too much. It scares you to go to school. You live more of your life paying students loans. We bought a house and mi wife was going to school too. Once she finished school, the loans kicked right then. It was a difficult economical time for us. I stopped coming to school, but now I am back."
"I am an international student. It is sometimes very difficult to get food. It is very expensive. I can only get cheap food. Then, if I want food from African stores is very expensive."
"I was trying to study, but I cannot study, I am hungry.... I went to get some coffee...I cannot take less than 12 credits so I cannot cut classes to free some budget."
"I can only work on campus with my visa on campus. I just got a job. I am working 10 hours. It is in the enrollment office. There is limitations to find jobs because they can only hire certain number of international students."

Quotes – Food Insecurity Advocates and Community Based Organizations
"Campus Hunger is a much larger problem and needs a larger response than one campus can provide. Need a cross-sector response...coalition building across sectors is the best we can do right now." An Garagiola-Bernier, food justice advocate
"It is not about getting free food; it is about connecting them to the right services. A cooperative model of resources will be successful. If it is only food, it won't be." Clare Brumback, CEAP
"Framing (free food) as health and wellness decreases stigma: how do you nourish your brain? I need good food." Clare Brumback, CEAP
"Food insecurity is a big concern for students. It creates a barrier to finish their education. If students do not have enough to eat, how can they succeed?" Oballa Oballa, LeadMN President
"I experienced food insecurity when I was in a refugee camp and someone who is in a first world country should not experience it." Oballa Oballa, LeadMN President
"Until all of us community, students, researches, institutions seat together to find solutions our students will face more food insecurity in MN." Oballa Oballa, LEAD President

