

SNAP On Campus: A UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Hub Fall 2021 CalFresh Outreach Report

Prepared by

Michelle Fausto,

Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow



FRESH 
UCI Basic Needs **HUB**

February 2022



Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
2. Background	4
3. Introduction	5-6
4. Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach	7-14
5. Assessment of FRESH's CalFresh Marketing & Communication	15-19
6. CalFresh Outreach Practices at Other University of California Schools	20-22
7. Recommendations	23-35
8. 10-Week CalFresh Outreach Manual	36
9. SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses	37-42
10. Methods	43-46
11. References	47-49

Executive Summary

01

SNAP Outreach at the University Level is Vital for Creating Zero Hunger Campuses

Students' basic needs are often unmet at the university level because of the rising cost of attendance, rising housing costs both on and off campus, gaps in financial aid, and more. SNAP provides a long-term solution to food insecurity during college, paving the way for zero hunger campuses and creating a safety net for students beyond graduation.

02

The FRESH Basic Needs Hub at UC Irvine Should Be a Model for College SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Everywhere

The FRESH Basic Needs Hub has been able to enroll hundreds of students into CalFresh every year. A variety of strategies, such as in-person enrollment events with the county, tabling efforts, and virtual application assistance, have been FRESH's hallmark to increasing CalFresh enrollment among the UCI student body. Colleges seeking to reduce food insecurity on campus should look towards UCI's outreach strategies and read the SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit included in this report.

03

The Answer to Increasing College Student SNAP Enrollment Lies in Collaboration

Throughout this report, the importance of collaborating with campus organizations and county social services agencies is consistently highlighted. Knowledge about college student eligibility for SNAP is spread through word-of-mouth, so developing a successful SNAP enrollment project means creating lines of communication with various entities that can help increase applications being submitted by students.



Background

The University of California Irvine (UCI) is one of ten campuses that are part of the University of California, one of the largest and most prestigious public university systems in the world. In the fall of 2021, UC Irvine enrolled a population of 41,045 undergraduate students while receiving 133,805 applications for admission from the undergraduate population alone.¹ Despite its rigor and prestige, many students enter the university setting lacking a stable support network and fulfillment of their basic needs. In turn, students diverge time from their academics and experience an unsatisfactory education, take longer to complete their degree, or otherwise do not make it to graduation day.² In many cases, universities hold the misconception that students enter the university setting at the same baseline level, while the truth is that some students are highly prepared while others are not. This may be due several different external factors, such as those associated with the disinvestment of BIPOC communities, racial inequity, and income inequality.

In a series of studies conducted by the University of California in 2016, 2018, and 2020, it was found that at least 40 percent of undergraduates at UCI reported facing food insecurity in 2020.³ In 2018, that figure was as high as 48 percent. Looking at that figure more closely, African American, American Indian, and Hispanic/Latinx students were more likely to report facing high or low food insecurity. These figures tell us that college food insecurity is more common than we think and it disproportionately affects those segments of the student population that identify as a historically underrepresented student in higher education.

To address these issues, the University of California launched the Global Food Initiative (GFI) as a means to partially fund organizations with the mission of improving “food security, health, and sustainability.”⁴ With funding provided by the GFI, UCI’s Student Outreach and Retention Center—alongside other community partners and leaders—opened a food pantry on campus during fall 2015.⁵ In 2016, as a result of various efforts on the part of students and campus leadership, a \$150,000 “Food Pantry Initiative” student referendum was successfully passed.⁶ With a newfound funding stream, the student-initiated effort now known as the FRESH Basic Needs Hub successfully launched during the summer of 2017.



Introduction

The FRESH Basic Needs Hub at UC Irvine actively works toward making UCI a basic needs-secure campus by providing a variety of services and resources such as the UCI Food Pantry, Emergency Meal Swipes, and Grocery Card Support. While these often short-term or temporary services are essential to reducing basic need insecurity on UC's campus, long-term support is needed to support students throughout their college career and once they graduate. CalFresh is one of these long-term support services, as it is federally funded and provides students with consistent money for groceries so long as they maintain their eligibility. The FRESH Basic Needs Hub has been consistently working toward increasing and improving outreach efforts to get more students enrolled into the program, many of whom may not know they're eligible.

In 2021, UC Irvine, along with the other UC campuses, received funding from the State of California to expand the number of students enrolled in CalFresh. Assembly Bill 85 amended the 2020-21 State Budget Act to include a one-time appropriation of \$650,000 for the UC campuses to increase CalFresh outreach efforts.⁷ UC Irvine received \$87,000 based on the proportion of food-insecure undergraduate and graduate students, which was estimated from data collected during the 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey and the 2016 UC Graduate Student Wellbeing Survey.⁸

Since the start of 2021, the CalFresh team at UCI has been using AB 85 funds to conduct heavily targeted CalFresh outreach. Since the return to in-person classes this fall, much of the funding has been used for in-person awareness and enrollment events to increase the number of students enrolled in CalFresh. The shift to online classes in 2020 drastically affected CalFresh outreach and assistance numbers, but the team quickly adapted to virtual outreach and assistance. Now, the CalFresh team is seeing numbers higher than ever before with in-person operations allowing for more heavily targeted outreach.



Introduction

The purpose of this report is to evaluate both new and traditional outreach efforts that the CalFresh team at the UCI FRESH Basic Needs Hub has adopted as a result of AB 85 funding from the State of California. An assessment of in-person outreach and marketing and communication will be used to provide recommendations for future outreach efforts that the CalFresh team at UCI should undergo. Since AB 85 only provides a one-time appropriation, this assessment must take into consideration which outreach efforts worked best so that they are replicated, as well as which efforts did not work too well in communicating to eligible students.

This report is informed by my own experiences working at these outreach events and conducting CalFresh-specific outreach myself during my time with the FRESH Basic Needs Hub. It is also informed by interviews with student staff and professional full-time staff at the Hub. With this assessment, and with a cross-comparison of CalFresh efforts across other University of California schools, a 10-week outreach manual for Fall, Spring, and Winter Quarter will outline what outreach efforts could look like for the FRESH Basic Needs Hub moving forward. The report also includes a SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses that campus leaders or student basic needs advocates can use to create a CalFresh outreach program on their own campuses.



Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



Week 0 Outreach

Week 0 (including move-in weekend) proved to be a critical time for conducting CalFresh outreach to students returning to in-person instruction for the 2020–2021 school year. After a year of being fully remote, students returned eager to learn about all the resources and opportunities available at UCI and were actively engaged in the week's events. The FRESH Basic Needs Hub tabled at several of these events, with a CalFresh education and outreach component incorporated into the FRESH resource table. These events included the Anteater Involvement Fair and Late Night at the ARC, as well as outreach during move-in weekend at the Arroyo Vista student housing community.

This fall, the highest number of students (592) were pre-screened for CalFresh during week 0. We also had the highest number of students (80) schedule a CalFresh assistance appointment throughout this week, in

Week 0 Outreach						
Date	Location	Checked-in Students	Pre-screened Students	Eligible Students	Students that Scheduled Appt	Students that Used Referral Link
9/17 to 9/19	Arroyo Vista	60	53	39	13	0
9/20	Anteater Involvement Fair	294	389	186	55	7
9/20	Late Night at the ARC	179	150	51	12	2
Outreach Totals		533	592	276	80	9

part due to coming into contact with the CalFresh team at these events. These numbers indicate that CalFresh outreach is most effective at large-scale events at times during the quarter when students are less busy and more easily accessible via in-person contact.

The Anteater Involvement Fair (AIF) alone was able to pre-screen the most students out of any CalFresh outreach effort, with 389 students pre-screening at the event. When asked what CalFresh events they thought were most effective at educating students about CalFresh, a few CalFresh Advocates mentioned the high turnout of the AIF and the importance of taking advantage of opportunities where there will be high foot traffic on campus. One Advocate highlighted that the addition of CalFresh promotional materials at the event worked well to attract students to the table. Many students approached the table knowing nothing about CalFresh but often left with the knowledge that they may be eligible for the program.

Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



Outreach at Ring Road

Ring Road is one of the most population-heavy pedestrian walkways on UCI's campus, connecting students to the majority of the academic buildings where their classes reside. Because of its centrality and foot traffic, Ring Road is a reliable location for a lot of organizational outreach such as tabling and flyer-ing.

Ring Road Outreach					
Date	Checked-in Students	Pre-screened Students	Eligible Students	Students that Scheduled Appt	Students that Used Referral Link
WK0 - 9/22	26	44	19	6	1
WK1 - 9/29	5	36	26	11	0
WK3 - 10/13	0	9	5	2	1
WK4 - 10/20	0	14	5	2	0
WK5 - 10/27	0	6	2	1	1
WK7 - 11/10	0	3	1	2	0
Outreach Totals	31	112	58	24	3

From weeks 0 to 8, the CalFresh team tabled on Ring Road at the same location once a week between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. except for the weeks that an Enrollment Party was hosted. A total of 112 students pre-screened for CalFresh at Ring Road, with the first two weeks gaining the most traction.

A few of the CalFresh Advocates and Peer Educators noted that tabling at Ring Road began to slow down around week 6 as students began to get busy with midterms and finals. As the data indicates, the number of students completing the pre-screen begins to fall drastically beginning week 4. This suggests that students are more inclined to stop at the CalFresh table near the beginning of the quarter before class workloads begin to pick up. On the other hand, some CalFresh Advocates and Peer Educators pointed out that weekly tabling at the same location could have been a factor in the declining number of students being pre-screened. Dakota Tomas, a member of the CalFresh team, attended all Ring Road tabling days and noted that he saw the same students pass by most of the time. One Advocate mentioned the same observation, adding that it was mostly students already familiar with CalFresh going up to the table during later weeks with clarifying questions. Nonetheless, another Advocate stated that Ring Road is one of the most accessible locations for tabling since the FRESH Basic Needs Hub location is a bit more hidden and difficult to find.

Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



Outreach at Housing Communities

The on-campus student housing communities at UCI are great opportunities for engaging and connecting students with CalFresh resources. For one, students have more downtime to stop at the CalFresh table and receive more information than they would at a location like Ring Road because they are likely heading back to their rooms after classes or other activities. Annelyz Garcia, the CalFresh Coordinator at FRESH, similarly notes that housing outreach is great because of how far the FRESH location is from on-campus housing, making it more easily accessible to housing residents to get the same resources and education at a closer proximity. Additionally, the rising cost of living on-campus in a wealthier city like Irvine means that students have to allocate more money toward housing. In turn, students are left with less money to buy adequate groceries and nutritious food. With the right marketing and communication, making students living in these housing communities aware of CalFresh would increase the number of those enrolled in the program.

Housing Communities						
Date	Location	Checked-in Students	Pre-screened Students	Eligible Students	Students that Scheduled Appt	Students that Used Referral Link
9/17 to 9/19	Arroyo Vista	60	53	39	13	0
10/13	VDC	14	11	8	4	0
10/19	Arroyo Vista	60	84	30	2	3
10/27	Plaza Verde	32	22	11	2	0
11/10	Verano	6	4	4	1	0
Outreach Totals		172	174	92	22	3

Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



Outreach at Housing Communities, cont.

In total, FRESH tabled at four different housing communities at UCI. At these events, 174 students pre-screened for CalFresh and 22 scheduled an appointment with a CalFresh Advocate sometime after coming into contact with us at an outreach event. While the Arroyo Vista outreach events attracted a high number of students, Vista del Campo and Verano had less student turnout.

When assessing the data, one pattern that can be observed is that housing outreach was most successful in the evening (5 to 7 pm) than in the afternoon (3 to 5 pm). Sandra Cuyuch, the CalFresh Manager at FRESH, notes that “time is essential” when conducting outreach because one has to keep in mind what time students will be back in their dorms or apartments. This explains why the CalFresh team was able to talk to more students in the afternoon once they had returned from classes or other obligations.

Another objective to keep in mind other than timing is to reserve an accessible location with high foot traffic. For instance, outreach at Verano place was conducted in a secluded hallway where not too many students passed by. Further collaboration with UCI Housing community offices to ensure that the location is readily accessible to students would curb this problem. Additionally, one Peer Educator noted that WiFi connectivity issues in the housing communities sometimes posed a problem for students trying to complete the pre-screen survey on their phones. Ensuring that the tabling occurs somewhere with a strong WiFi connection would reduce any issue posed by technology.

Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



Outreach at UCI, ASUCI, SOAR, and Other Campus Partner Events

UCI is a large campus and the dozens of organizations, departments, and student groups that comprise it have a significant reach on the student body. Campus partners like ASUCI, SOAR, and UCI Housing present an opportunity for the FRESH Basic Needs Hub to come into contact with more students and especially with specialized student populations. These opportunities are great for outreach because it requires less work on FRESH's part (i.e. marketing, reserving a space, purchasing food) while still allowing CalFresh Advocates to talk to students who may be CalFresh eligible. Additionally, many of these campus partner events are large-scale and attract many students, such as the Anteater Involvement Fair and the Sweatshirt Distribution events; Therefore, the reach of FRESH's CalFresh efforts increases.

As can be seen below, the largest quantity of students pre-screened for CalFresh was as a result of tabling at campus partner events. A total of 612 students were pre-screened, with the Anteater Involvement Fair and Late Night at the ARC seeing the most pre-screens in a single day.

Increasing cross-organizational collaboration efforts by seeking out more opportunities to get involved on campus is a great and steadfast way to increase CalFresh outreach.

Tabling at UCI Events						
Date	Location	Checked-in Students	Pre-screened Students	Eligible Students	Students that Scheduled Appt	Students that Used Referral Link
9/20	Anteater Involvement Fair	294	389	186	55	7
9/20	Late Night at the ARC	179	150	51	12	2
10/13	SOAR Carnival	19	27	16	6	1
10/12 and 10/14	Sweatshirt Distribution	3	41	14	2	1
11/19	Zotopoly RHA Event at AV	11	5	4	1	0
Outreach Totals		506	612	271	76	11

Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



Outreach at Enrollment Parties and OCSSA Partner Events

Given that the Orange County Social Services Agency (OCSSA) is the organization that handles all applications submitted by students attending UCI and residing in Orange County, maintaining a good working relationship with the OCSSA is imperative to ensuring that students receive the help they need. The FRESH Basic Needs Hub's designation as a community-based organization allows for streamlined communication with the county, which opens the door for collaboration.

This year, that meant two enrollment parties and one walk-in enrollment event. The two-day CalFresh Enrollment Parties this fall were major successes in helping students apply, interview, and receive their physical Electronic Benefits Card (EBT) in the span of two days.

Enrollment Parties/Partnerships with OCSSA				
Date	Students Submitted App	Students Interviewed by OCSSA	Students Approved for CalFresh	Students Received EBT Card Same-Day
10/4 and 10/6	49	48	46	33
11/1 and 11/3	48	47	46	37
11/15	35	15	14	N/A
Assistance Totals	132	96	106	70

Additionally, the introduction of a new event—a one-day CalFresh enrollment event with a walk-in component—was also found to be equally successful. In total, these three enrollment events allowed 132 students to submit applications with a CalFresh Advocate where at least 106 students were approved to receive benefits.

Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



Outreach at Enrollment Parties and OCSSA Partner Events

The CalFresh Enrollment Parties are also great avenues for conducting outreach to students who did not have the chance to sign up for the event beforehand. At each enrollment party, the CalFresh informational tables were great for managing questions from students who would approach the booths with curiosity about the event. Several CalFresh Advocates mentioned that during day two of the enrollment parties, location was a large contributor to the traction the event received. The centrality of the UCI Flagpoles location as students walked to and from class propelled many students to stop and inquire. Additionally, the size of the event (i.e. several booths, OCSSA trucks, and a significant number of students, staff, and caseworkers present) was reason enough for many students to stop by to ask what event was taking place. One Advocate noted many students were encouraged to stop by the CalFresh table because they witnessed other students receiving help. The Advocate further stated that witnessing students receive first-hand help has a greater impact on potential applicants than marketing materials on their own.

Enrollment Parties/Partnerships with OCSSA					
Date	Checked-In Students	Pre-screened Students	Eligible Students	Students that Scheduled Appt	Students that Used Referral Link
10/4 and 10/6	13	64	35	8	2
11/1 and 11/3	10	32	12	6	2
11/15	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outreach Totals	23	96	47	14	4

Overall, having an outreach component during the enrollment parties is effective and time-saving because they can be planned for the same day, at the same hours, and the same location. A total of 96 students pre-screened at the enrollment parties which is significant given that there were only two of such events. Continuing this pattern will allow for awareness about CalFresh to spread across the UCI campus.

Assessment of FRESH's In-Person CalFresh Outreach



In-Person Outreach Totals

In total, the CalFresh team was able to reach at least 1,046 students at these events, of which at least 470 were deemed likely to be eligible. The exact figure of outreach totals is likely higher if including the check-in totals, which were not included here because it does not filter for unduplicated students who completed the pre-screening form.

In-Person Outreach Totals						
Date	Location	Checked-in Students	Pre-screened Students	Eligible Students	Students that Scheduled Appt	Students that Used Referral Link
9/17 to 9/19	Arroyo Vista	60	53	39	13	0
9/20	Anteater Involvement Fair	294	389	186	55	7
9/20	Late Night at the ARC	179	150	51	12	2
9/22	Ring Road	26	44	19	6	1
9/29	Ring Road	5	36	26	11	0
10/4 & 10/6	Enrollment Party 1	13	64	35	8	2
10/13	SOAR Carnival	19	27	16	6	1
10/13	VDC Fair	14	11	8	4	0
10/13	Ring Road	0	9	5	2	1
10/12 & 10/14	Sweatshirt Distribution	3	41	14	2	1
10/19	Arroyo Vista	60	84	30	2	3
10/20	Ring Road	0	14	5	2	0
10/27	Ring Road	0	6	2	1	1
10/27	PV Fair	32	22	11	2	0
11/1 & 11/3	Enrollment Party 2	10	32	12	6	2
11/10	Ring Road	0	3	1	1	0
11/10	Verano	6	4	4	1	0
11/15	OCSSA Walk-In	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
11/17	Faculty & Staff Open House	0	0	0	0	0
11/18	Grad Student Open House	13	2	2	N/A	N/A
11/19	Zotopoly RHA at AV	11	5	4	1	0
Outreach Totals		745	996	470	135	21

Assessment of FRESH's Marketing & Communication



CampusGroups

Before the start of fall quarter of 2021, FRESH transitioned to a new campus engagement platform called CampusGroups (CG). Through CG, the process of pre-screening students for CalFresh eligibility became more centralized in one platform because students are required to sign into their UCI Zot account to complete the form. In doing so, CG pulls student information such as name, contact information, and undergraduate/graduate status which makes it easy to contact students directly through the platform as opposed to sending emails through a separate email platform. Additionally, organizing and categorizing survey responses for data purposes is simple to do through CG. This is especially apparent through the use of *submission tags*, which can note anything from an event name to a CalFresh student exemption category. For example, there are submission tags for students who indicated they have federal work study, tags for events like the AIF, and CalFresh eligible/ineligible tags.

CG has also been used to send mass emails that promote upcoming CalFresh events or to create email templates that can be easily transferred to Google Mail or Outlook. On the right is an example of an email template promoting a CalFresh Enrollment Party to students with zero EFC. As opposed to other email listserv services, sending emails through CG is simplified by the fact that CG gathers the emails of all students who have interacted with the FRESH Basic Needs Hub whether through survey forms or by becoming a “member”. For example, on the pre-screening form, CG gives us the option to “email users” who have submitted a survey response. One limitation is that a CG email cannot be sent to students who have not interacted with the FRESH Basic Needs Hub on CG. Therefore, when trying to reach new students that have not previously interacted with us, sending mass emails is not feasible. Nonetheless, email templates can be created on CG and then saved to Google Mail or Outlook for simplified use.



Hello! You're invited to participate in our upcoming CalFresh Enrollment Party happening on January 24th and 26th (Week 4).

We are sending you this email because you may have a 0 Expected Family Contribution (EFC) on your FAFSA or UCI Financial Aid Award. Based off this indication, you may be eligible to receive CalFresh.

[As such, if you are interested in applying for CalFresh, we encourage you to register for this upcoming event!](#)

Our CalFresh Enrollment Party is a 2 day event in which students who apply with the event have their application processed within 3 days and are able to use their benefits more quickly than with the regular 30-day processing time. This event is all done on-campus and is divided into two separate days, an application day and an interview day.

Appointments are required for this special event.

Come to an in-person application appointment on Monday & come back for an in-person interview on Wednesday to receive a response from the county on the spot!

SPACE IS LIMITED! So please RSVP soon to secure your spot!

A flyer for the CalFresh Enrollment Party. It features the CalFresh logo at the top, followed by the text "Come join us at our CalFresh Enrollment Party!". Below this, it states "CalFresh is a program that issues up to \$204/month in electronic benefits on an EBT card to use at most stores and farmer markets." It then provides application submission dates: Monday 1/24/22 (9AM-5PM) at FRESH Basic Needs Hub/ACRC (6079 Moor Rd, Irvine, CA 92617) and in-person interviews with county eligibility workers on Wednesday 1/26/22 (9:00AM - 2:30PM) at Flagpoles. It includes a QR code for RSVP and a link to the application form. The flyer also mentions that appointments are required and that the exact location will be shared via email. A small basket of produce is shown at the bottom left of the flyer.

[Click here to fill out the RSVP Form!](#)

Assessment of FRESH's Marketing & Communication



CampusGroups

CampusGroups is also a great tool for assessing the impact of CalFresh efforts, especially when searching for areas of improvement. This is because CG allows us to see what type of students attend and pre-screen at the CalFresh outreach events. For instance, we can see in the table below that 36 students registered with the Disability Services Center completed the pre-screening form through CG. This type of information is important to know when planning targeted outreach efforts because we can see what student populations are not being represented in the CG pre-screening form. Student parents and families, for example, only represented 4 of over 1,000 submitted pre-screening forms. This CG data indicates that the CalFresh team should look at ways of increasing targeted outreach toward student parents and families. This would lead to increased knowledge about CalFresh and therefore more applications submitted by student parents. The table also highlights other students that are eligible for CalFresh by exemption category, such as zero EFC and Student Success Initiatives participants.

Impact of CampusGroups Outreach on Eligible/Exempt Student Populations	
Eligibility/Exemption	Students that Completed Pre-Screen Form
Expected Family Contribution ("EFC") of zero	215
Federal Work Study	207 (unverified)
TANF-funded CalGrant A or B	177
Works 20hr/week or more	98
Registered with Disability Services Center	36
Parenting students with child under 12	4
A FYRE, TRIO, or Summer Bridge Scholar under the Student Success Initiative program	6
Total	743

Several CalFresh full-time staff expressed their satisfaction with CampusGroups as a campus engagement platform moving forward, noting its practicality and efficiency in managing and assessing outreach efforts. Continuing the use of CG and improving the way that it is integrated into CalFresh communication will make for a more comprehensive CalFresh outreach strategy moving forward.

Assessment of FRESH's Marketing & Communication



CalFresh Promotional Materials



Pictured: FRESH volunteer talking to a student about CalFresh at a tabling event, with promotional items visible on the table.

When conducting in-person outreach, FRESH Basic Needs Hub pamphlets and CalFresh “passports” have proven to be incredibly informative to students approaching the CalFresh table at in-person events. The passports especially do a great job of synthesizing the eligibility guidelines, student exemptions list, and general information about CalFresh while including QR codes that allow students to book a CalFresh Application Assistance appointment. The QR code signs at the CalFresh outreach events also make it quick and simple for students to scan the code with their phone camera and fill out the pre-screening form.

Due to additional funding from the State of California, the FRESH Basic Needs Hub was able to purchase a variety of items to give away to students who attend CalFresh events or stop to pre-screen at the CalFresh tabling booths. The items, consisting of sandwich containers, cutlery sets, water bottles, insulated lunch totes, and canvas totes, are branded with the CalFresh and FRESH Basic Needs Hub logos. These items attracted students to the CalFresh table at all outreach events—on Ring Road, at campus partner events, and housing community fairs.

Several CalFresh Advocates noted how these items played a role in the success of outreach efforts at large-scale events like the Anteater Involvement Fair, Late Night at the ARC, and the Enrollment Parties. One Advocate stated that students know what the FRESH Basic Needs Hub is because of these items, now that bright orange insulated lunch bags can be seen all over campus. Continuing to invest funding in creating CalFresh promotional items for students not only will continue to attract students to the CalFresh outreach table, but spark more conversations about CalFresh among students when CalFresh items are seen across campus.

Assessment of FRESH's Marketing & Communication



Student Exemption Targeted Email Outreach

The CalFresh team has made it one of their priorities this academic year to target outreach efforts toward students that are eligible under three CalFresh student exemptions: an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of zero, federal work study recipient, and TANF-funded CalGrant A or B recipient. The team was able to perform these outreach efforts thanks to the help of the UCI Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, which retrieved identifying data on students who fell under these three categories. As can be seen below, the total number of students who the CalFresh team had the potential to outreach to was 9,823.

Impact on Outreach to Eligible Students with 0 EFC, Federal Work Study, and TANF-Funded CalGrant A/B		
Eligibility/Exemption	Students with the Exemption	Students that Scheduled Appt.
Expected Family Contribution ("EFC") of zero	2,321	26
Federal Work Study	4,440	272
TANF-funded CalGrant A or B	3,062	455
Total	9,823	753

Retrieving the names and emails of students who qualify under these eligibilities was incredibly useful in conducting targeted email outreach. For the CalFresh Application Session Day on November 15th, the CalFresh team sent targeted emails to CalGrant recipients encouraging them to secure a spot to the event. Targeted emails were also sent to federal work study recipients and students with zero EFC, notifying them that they may be eligible for CalFresh because of their work study award or EFC status. These email outreach efforts partly explain why there have been more Zoom CalFresh Application Assistance appointments scheduled by students with either of these three eligibilities. There are significantly fewer appointments scheduled by students with zero EFC since the outreach email to this student population was sent just recently.

Assessment of FRESH's Marketing & Communication



Student Exemption Targeted Email Outreach

A large number of scheduled appointments by TANF-funded CalGrant A/B recipients can also be explained by the email that was sent by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) notifying students that they may be eligible for CalFresh. Seeking out outreach collaborations like this with CSAC, FAFSA, and even local-level financial aid administrators like the UCI Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships can make more financial aid recipients aware of CalFresh and increase the number of applications being submitted.

Nonetheless, it's important to note that the number of students who scheduled appointments isn't just a result of targeted email outreach. These figures represent the total number of students per exemption category and tracing whether students signed up after receiving the email is difficult. Despite this, the high volume of appointments from these exemption groups compared to others indicates that email outreach worked to a great extent.

Appointments Scheduled per Eligible/Exempt Student Populations	
Eligibility/Exemption	Students that Scheduled Appt.
Works 20hr/week or more	110
Registered with Disability Services Center	67
Parenting students with child under 12	8
A FYRE, TRIO, or Summer Bridge Scholar under the Student Success Initiative program	33
Total	218

Tapping into other student exemption categories is equally important. As we can see in the above, the other exemption categories scheduled appointments at lower rates. Conducting email outreach and other forms of targeted outreach toward these communities could also produce results as we saw above.

CalFresh Outreach Practices at Other UC Schools



While UC Irvine established one of the first higher education basic needs centers in the country, we can look at other University of California schools as a model for new CalFresh outreach practices that have not been done on UCI's campus.

UC San Diego

The CalFresh initiative at the Hub Basic Needs Center at UCSD shares many similarities with UCI. For example, they also have a pre-screening form that is used to evaluate student eligibility, a virtual and in-person application assistance program, a relationship with the county, and frequent enrollment parties.⁹ Some of the key differences in programs and practices that the FRESH Basic Needs Hub might consider implementing include:

- **Virtual Clinics** – Similar to UCI enrollment parties, San Diego county workers assist students with their CalFresh applications on a one-on-one basis; However, UCSD's virtual clinics have the added component of inviting UCSD Financial Aid & Scholarships to join the event. The virtual aspect is great for garnering a wider reach, since commuters, students living at home, parenting students, and others who may not be able to make it to an in-person event can join. Further, inviting the Financial Aid office to events like these is a great way for resolving case concerns with financial aid on the spot. For example, students who want to apply to CalFresh and know they are eligible for work study, but did not receive an offer in their financial aid award letter, can ask a financial aid worker to fix the problem on their letter. The event, hosted on Zoom, includes a walk-in aspect where students fill out a pre-screen form and are then placed in the appropriate breakout room with either a county worker or financial aid worker. In Summer and Fall 2021, the Hub hosted four virtual clinics with a total of 99 attendees.¹⁰
- **Waived Interviews** – On April 1, 2020, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) waived the vast majority of initial CalFresh application interviews in response to issues posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.¹¹ Since then, the county has repeatedly extended the waiver period. Currently, initial application interviews are waived until March 31, 2022.¹² Interviews are often a barrier for students at UCI because the county calls at random and only a limited amount of times. With students in classes, work, and other obligations, they can miss the phone call and have their entire case closed. To increase the number of students receiving CalFresh, FRESH might consider working with the CalFresh team at UCSD and with OCSSA to waive CalFresh interviews for student applicants unless necessary for missing documentation or other clarification.

CalFresh Outreach Practices at Other UC Schools



UC San Diego, cont'd.

- **Electronic ROI Signatures** - Like the waived interviews, San Diego County also became more flexible with application signatures, accepting verbal signatures for applications, verifications, and Release of Information (ROI) forms until March 31, 2022.¹³ The County also allows the UCSD team to collect ROI signatures electronically via DocuSign.¹⁴ This is important because FRESH is not allowed to advocate on behalf of a student whose case is denied unless they have the ROI signature, which only happens in-person. With the reduction of in-person application assistance, this means fewer ROI signatures are being collected. Adopting an electronic system for collecting ROI signatures, with the consent of the OCSSA, will allow the UCI team to advocate on behalf of more students.
- **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** - The Hub has an MOU with San Diego County HHSA to have a county eligibility worker assigned to work with UCSD's campus.¹⁵ As long as students use the UCSD GetCalFresh referral link, applications get sent to county workers that work directly with UCSD and fully understand the language behind student exemptions. This process allows for a more seamless review of applications, which means fewer applications being denied.
- **Verification Document Templates** - To streamline the CalFresh application process for students, the Hub has created PDF templates for CalFresh verification documents.¹⁶ For example, there are templates for household members who are paid with cash, sublease, and receive monetary contributions from another person. Producing these templates for students would speed up the application process and remove any barriers associated with incomplete or incorrect verification documents.
- **Virtual Application Webinars** - The Hub hosts webinars where they walk students through the application process and overview of CalFresh.¹⁷ While FRESH often holds webinars and information sessions online, there is usually no stand-alone CalFresh webinar. More zoom webinars may be a new outreach strategy that the UCI CalFresh team would want to implement.

CalFresh Outreach Practices at Other UC Schools



UC Los Angeles

The CalFresh Initiative at UCLA, similar to both UCI and UCSD, has an application assistance component, enrollment days, and a relationship with the county. The program was launched in 2017 and has since expanded its efforts, some of which the UCI CalFresh initiative might replicate:

- **Virtual Office Hours** - On top of private application assistance appointments, the UCLA CalFresh Initiative hosts virtual Zoom office hours two times a week.¹⁸ Students can drop in and receive assistance from trained advocates and are broken up into different Zoom breakout rooms.
- **On-Campus CalFresh Eligibility Worker** - While UCLA has enrollment parties that CalFresh eligibility workers attend, prior to the pandemic they also had an eligibility worker on campus every first and third Monday of the month.¹⁹ The worker was able to assist students with their case through private appointments, which helps eliminate barriers to getting a hold of a worker via phone call or in-person at the county office.
- **Graduate Student Enrollment Days** - The UCLA CalFresh Initiative hosts enrollment parties/days specifically for graduate students.²⁰ This is a great way to encourage more eligible graduate students to sign up for this event since it is being targeted towards them instead of the entire eligible student body.
- **Exempted Graduate CalFresh Application Workshops** - Like graduate student enrollment days, UCLA also holds virtual workshops specifically for graduate students applying through the different exempt graduate programs.²¹ Holding tailored workshops encourages more graduate students to attend and sign up for CalFresh since they are often under-enrolled at greater numbers than undergraduates.

UC Santa Barbara

The UCSB Food Security and Basic Needs Advising Center (SNAC) has a CalFresh team that has services and hosts events similar to UCI, UCSD, and UCLA. However, one key difference from the other schools is that UCSB hosts enrollment party collaborations where specific student populations can receive application assistance.²² The CalFresh team at UCSB allows clubs, organizations, fraternities, sororities, residence halls, and other student groups to schedule an enrollment party on behalf of their members/students. A team of CalFresh advocates attend the organization's meeting in-person or schedule a virtual enrollment party session for the organization.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:
Strengthen relationship with the Orange County Social Services Agency (OCSSA) through continued and increased collaboration.



Suggest new ways for the County to update its website to better reflect CalFresh student eligibility guidelines and student exemptions.

The current website is outdated and inaccessible to students whose special eligibilities are not considered in the County's eligibility list. Creating a website page specifically for college students that is both easy to read and navigate would remove any barriers to finding that information elsewhere. For example, the Yolo County Department of Health and Human Services has a Frequently Asked Questions section on its CalFresh information page that details eligibility for college students.²³

Have mutually beneficial trainings with OCSSA

These trainings would both improve FRESH staff's knowledge of county-specific CalFresh information and OCSSA's knowledge of college student circumstances and exemptions. Since federal and state policies are always changing, it would benefit FRESH staff to learn first-hand about the way the county is handling these changes and how they can affect college students. Likewise, the county could benefit greatly from FRESH's knowledge about the student body and their specific basic needs. By informing OCSSA staff about UCI's student body, there will be higher application approval rates, increased marketing and communication about CalFresh, and more collaborative opportunities for OCSSA to be on-campus.

As a start, this can be one training at the beginning of the year or one training per quarter for a total of three trainings throughout the academic year. These trainings can be interchangeably held at OCSSA offices and the FRESH Basic Needs Hub.

Consider bringing an OCSSA CalFresh caseworker on-site at the FRESH Basic Needs Hub.

There is often a disconnect between the county and college campuses because CalFresh caseworkers are not present on the campuses, so they are not well aware of the circumstances students face when it comes to their eligibility. Collaborating with OCSSA to bring a full-time CalFresh caseworker at FRESH or having a caseworker on-campus on an occasional basis will better equip OCSSA with knowledge about UCI's student body. As a model, UCLA has a CalFresh eligibility worker from the Department of Social Services present on their campus every first and third Monday of the month. It is important to create a space for students to meet with a caseworker without the barriers of transportation to OCSSA offices and unreliable telephone communication. Students can receive assistance with their specific case from a case worker that is equipped with the knowledge to handle special situations. Additionally, an on-site caseworker can perform application assistance and a follow-up interview all in the same session, thereby expediting the application process for students. At the same time, county caseworkers will learn more about the college student experience and special eligibilities and exemptions which they can then relay to all OCSSA CalFresh case workers. This relationship will ideally reduce the number of applications being wrongfully denied and increase overall knowledge of college student CalFresh eligibility.

Recommendations

Work with OCSSA to have CalFresh eligibility workers specifically assigned to work on applications that get submitted by UCI students.

For example, the Hub Basic Needs Center at UCSD and the San Diego Health and Human Services Agency signed a Memorandum of Understanding to have UCI applications designed to specific CalFresh caseworkers. As opposed to having mass trainings, training a few caseworkers about UCI’s student exemptions and the situations that college students experience is more feasible. These trained caseworkers can work directly with the FRESH Basic Needs Hub to reduce the number of wrongful denials.

Given the success of enrollment parties and the walk-in enrollment event, continue to work with the county to periodically put on these events.

Continue to hold at least two enrollment parties per quarter and increase the number of walk-in events because of their practicality. Several CalFresh Advocates as well as Sandra Cuyuch highlighted the effectiveness and feasibility of putting on a walk-in event in comparison to an enrollment party. Walk-in events are a one-day commitment, fewer on-campus reservations are required because the event is held at the ACRC, and there’s more flexibility for students without an appointment to receive assistance. Increasing the frequency of walk-in events and increasing the number of county caseworkers present at the event will allow more students to complete a CalFresh application.

**Recommendation 2:
Improve CampusGroups (CG) use and communication**



When looking at CampusGroups pre-screen form response data, ensure that FRESH communicates with students who began the form but did not submit their response.

A substantial subset of students approached the CalFresh informational table and were interested enough to determine their eligibility. Approximately 1,354 students started a Pre-Screening Form but were not able to submit it. Below is an overview of the students who started but did not complete a Pre-Screening Form at each applicable outreach event.

CalFresh Pre-Screening Form Unsubmitters		
Date	Location	Students with Unfinished Form
9/17 - 9/19	Arroyo Vista Move-In	80
9/20	Anteater Involvement Fair	516
9/20	Late Night at the ARC	212
9/22	Tabling at Ring Road	55
9/23	Tabling at ARC Snack Bar	12
9/29	Tabling at Ring Road	43
9/30	Tabling at ARC Snack Bar	5
10/6	Enrollment Party 1	76
10/7	SSI Welcome Packet Pick-Up	7
10/12 & 10/14	Sweatshirt Distribution	49
10/13	Ring Road Tabling	10
10/13	SOAR Carnival	32
10/13	VDC Outreach Fair	13
10/19	Arroyo Vista Outreach Fair	90
10/20	Ring Road Tabling	15
10/27	Ring Road Tabling	6
10/27	PV Outreach Fair	30
11/3	Enrollment Party 2	40
11/10	Verano Outreach Fair	9
11/18	FRESH Open House	7
11/19	Zotopoly RHA	7
N/A	Uncategorized outreach efforts	40
Outreach Totals		1354

Recommendations

Students who were not able to submit the form did not receive any email from FRESH about their eligibility nor any resources about further steps to take. To increase the number of students applying to and receiving CalFresh, FRESH should also follow up with students who did not completely submit the form and encourage them to complete it.

To stop responses from going unsubmitted in the Pre-Screening Form, reconsider the formatting of questions and the length of the form.

One reason that responses may go unsubmitted is that students do not have time to complete the form in its entirety while they are on the way to classes or other obligations. Some changes that can be made to the pre-screening form to increase completion include:

- Keeping all pre-screening questions on one page of the form to deter connectivity issues when students are trying to refresh to the next page.
- Having an image or a list of the income guidelines embedded in the form as opposed to a link taking students to another page. For example:

“Do you make under the income limit for your household? (Household is defined as the number of people you buy and share food with).

- 1 household member: \$2,148
- 2 household members: \$2,904
- 3 household members: \$3,660

 Yes No

Alternatively, consider removing the question about household income limits completely. Many students do not know their or their household’s income, or otherwise misunderstand the wording of the question and mistakenly choose “no”.

It is also important to note that when tabling for CalFresh, students completing the pre-screen form often inquire the most about this particular question. In most cases, students fall below the income limit and they will see this question again when trying to schedule a CalFresh Application Assistance Appointment anyway.

Improve survey tags and messaging on CG Survey & Forms to streamline outreach data collection efforts.

Since FRESH is very new to CG, many features have yet to be explored, many of which were created to make data collection easier. Currently, when a student submits a pre-screening form or fills out a form expressing interest in the enrollment parties, someone on the CalFresh team goes into the form and manually updates the tag to match the student’s responses. For example, if the student indicated they receive federal work study, their submission would be updated with the “CalFresh eligible – work study” tag. This can be a tedious process, especially on days when CalFresh is at large-scale outreach events and receives dozens of pre-screen form submissions. Creating a more streamlined process for this categorization of responses would allow the CalFresh team to communicate with students who submitted the form sooner. It would also give the team more time to focus on other outreach efforts, since updating tags and messages can be a very long process. One way of doing so is by adding tags to CalFresh forms using survey logic, which allows users to create a survey tag based on given answers submitted by a student. Instead of manually having to choose tags based on a student’s response, survey logic assigns tags to a student’s submission based on their responses.

Recommendations

Below is an example of how survey logic works, which is further explained in a step-by-step guide that can be found on CG's website.²⁴

Create/Edit Survey Logic

Logic Type Submission Tag

IF

*** Question** What is your level of interest in attending?

*** Condition** Is

Value Very interested

THEN

*** Do** Add Tag To Submission

*** The Following Submission Tags**

- High interest
- Low interest
- Medium interest
- No interest

MORE

*** Activate Logic** Yes No

Additionally, instead of manually sending out messages to students whose forms are approved (because they are CalFresh eligible) or denied (because they are ineligible), pre-written messages can be sent out whenever a student is approved or denied. This can be found in the notifications section of the settings tab on the form.

Message sent when a submission is approved

B I U [Color] [Background Color] [List] [Link] [Unlink] [Image]

Format - Size - Font - Line Hei... [Send]

Together, these survey/form features would only require someone on the CalFresh team to simply pre-screen the student for meal plan eligibility and TANF verification. This process would also produce cleaner data for outreach evaluation purposes.

Recommendation 3: Conduct CalFresh outreach tabling at different locations each week



In their interviews, many CalFresh Advocates and Peer Educators noted the repetition of the weekly Ring Road tabling location. While there is a lot of foot traffic, CalFresh tabled Wednesdays at the same time and spot each week. As a result, the same students often passed by and fewer and fewer pre-screening forms were submitted each week. Along with Ring Road, CalFresh should conduct weekly tabling at targeted locations that eligible students frequent. For example, this could include:

- **Campus Resource Buildings**
 - **Student Success Initiatives** – Housed in 2200 Student Services II. Setting up a CalFresh table inside the building could have the potential of reaching more students from the TRIO Scholars, Summer Bridge, and FYRE programs. These are all approved local student programs, which makes students eligible for CalFresh as long as they meet the income, citizenship, and meal plan requirements. The building also houses the Student Parents & Families, First Generation, and Transfer Success programs, which help student populations that are also likely to be CalFresh eligible.
 - **Latinx Resource Center** – Housed on the fourth floor of the RISE suite in the Student Center. Like the Cross Cultural Center, tabling at this location would reach more Latinx students who disproportionately experience high food insecurity.

Recommendations

- Cross Cultural Center – The center was established to create a social-cultural support system for ethnic minority students. It recognizes five student “umbrella” organizations: Alyansa ng mga Kababayan, American Indian Student Association (AISA), Asian Pacific Student Association (APSA), Black Student Union (BSU), and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA).²⁵ This would be a great location to reach more students of color, who according to the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey, experience food insecurity at the highest rates.
- Student Outreach & Retention (SOAR) Center – Housed in the Gateway Study Center. The mission of the center is to ultimately “increase college access, readiness, and retention rates for historically marginalized communities in higher education.”¹²⁶ Thus, tabling at SOAR would reach historically marginalized students who disproportionately experience high food insecurity.
- Graduate & Postdoctoral Scholar Resource Center – Housed at Graduate Division in Aldrich Hall. The center provides academic and professional support to graduate and postdoctoral students, so tabling here would cast a wider reach on the graduate school-eligible population.
- Student Wellness & Health Promotion Center – Housed on the third floor of Student Center South. Among many values, the center promotes nutritional wellbeing, so students visiting the center for these services may benefit from learning more about CalFresh.
- Disability Services Center – Housed in the Continuing Education 3 building. Since being registered with the DSC is a CalFresh eligibility, tabling here would reach more of that eligible population.
- Financial Aid and Scholarships – Housed in Aldrich Hall. CalFresh is a form of financial aid/relief since it provides students with money to purchase groceries. Students seeking help at the Financial Aid office should be made aware of CalFresh as a financial resource. Tabling here would also potentially increase applications from TANF-funded CalGrant A/B, zero EFC, and federal work study eligible students.
- Early Childhood Education Center, Children’s Center, Infant Toddler Center, and/or Verano Preschool – These childcare service facilities provide support to UCI student, staff, and faculty families as well as community members. Since parenting students with children under the age of 12 are eligible for CalFresh, tabling at these facilities will expand our reach on this population.
- Food and Dining Buildings
 - Student Center – CalFresh can table in the area between the West Food Court and East Food Court inside the Student Center. Since students come here to dine, they may be interested in learning more about how to obtain free grocery money.
 - BC’s Cavern Food Court – This food court is located in between Steinhaus Hall and Howard Schneiderman Lecture Hall, which are buildings closer to the biological sciences area of campus. Not only is it food-related, but the location would reach more STEM students since the Ring Road location was in the Humanities and Social Sciences area of campus.
 - Phoenix Food Court – This food court is located next to Social Sciences buildings, Engineering buildings, and Middle Earth housing. Tabling here would also reach these new student communities.

Recommendations

- School Department Buildings
 - Social Ecology I - Houses the School of Social Ecology. Tabling here would reach more CalFresh-eligible MPP and MURP students.
 - Law Building - Houses the School of Law. Tabling here would reach more CalFresh-eligible law students.
 - Medical Education Building - Houses the School of Medicine. Tabling here would reach more CalFresh-eligible Medical Doctorate students.
 - Education Building - Houses the School of Education. Tabling here would reach more CalFresh-eligible MAT students.
 - Beck Hall - Houses the School of Nursing. Tabling here would reach more CalFresh-eligible DNP, MEPN, and undergraduate nursing students.
 - Anteater Instruction and Research Building - Houses the program in Public Health. Tabling here would reach more CalFresh-eligible MPH students.

Recommendation 4:
Involve more faculty and staff in efforts to increase CalFresh education



Connect with the UCI Academic Senate to require all UC Irvine professors include a section in their syllabus regarding campus resources.

Mandating a campus resources section on the syllabus that includes information about the FRESH Basic Needs Hub and CalFresh will raise awareness about CalFresh across the entire undergraduate student body.

Alternatively, the CalFresh team can consider individual outreach to department heads or professors to ask them to include CalFresh in their syllabi.

With the help of Peer Educators, expand classroom presentations about FRESH and CalFresh.

Given the return to in-person classes, the team can do in-person outreach to a large lectures and small discussions. If professors are not open to the idea, urge them to send an email to their class about CalFresh instead.

Conduct CalFresh awareness trainings and invite faculty and staff to attend.

These can be hosted virtually or at the FRESH Basic Needs Hub. A more feasible way of approaching this could be to contact the undergraduate department chairs and request to give a short training at the beginning of their faculty department meetings.

Recommendation 5:
Increase cross-campus collaboration with UCI departments and centers



Financial Aid and Scholarships

In the 2020 UC Special Committee on Basic Needs report, one recommendation was that Financial Aid & Scholarships offices coordinate financial aid packages with notification of CalFresh eligibility.²⁷ While the California Student Aid Commission sent emails notifying students of their CalFresh eligibility due to being TANF-funded CalGrant A/B recipients, UCI Financial Aid & Scholarships does not send emails to students regarding their CalFresh eligibility. Rather, FRESH coordinates with the office to gather a roster of students to then outreach to.

Recommendations

One suggestion that the CalFresh team might consider is having Financial Aid do the outreach via information on their financial aid package or award letter about their potential eligibility, the CalFresh program, and FRESH's CalFresh application assistance. Another suggestion is to integrate CalFresh into Financial Aid & Scholarships advising. When students come to financial aid seeking financial help, the office can also point students toward FRESH and CalFresh services. This partially requires training on the financial aid advisor's end, so hosting a virtual CalFresh/FRESH workshop with Financial Aid could be a solution.

Disability Services Center

Coordinate with the Disability Services Center to send a CalFresh eligibility email notification similar to the one that was suggested Financial Aid & Scholarships send. For example, students likely receive a welcome email or notification when they are first registered with the center. In this email could be a list of campus resources, including a blurb about CalFresh and their likely eligibility due to being registered with DSC.

Accounting and Fiscal Services & the Division of Career Pathways

Collaborate with both of these UCI Departments to reach more working students. Accounting and Fiscal Services handles payroll and UCPATH for students with campus jobs. Students likely receive correspondence from the office concerning their jobs or visit the office if they have job-related issues. The Division of Career Pathways offers career development and preparation, so students preparing for job interviews or seeking work likely visit this office. With both student populations, they may be working at least 20 hours a week.

This would make them eligible for CalFresh, so collaborating with these offices to send email correspondence or post flyers and leave information cards at their offices would be a sustainable way of reaching this CalFresh-eligible population.

Dining

Establishing a relationship with UCI Dining to raise CalFresh awareness is a clear choice, given their relation to food and student nutrition. One way of doing so is by having CalFresh passports/information cards at the entrance of all UCI dining commons in the area where students swipe in with a dining employee. There could also be a flyer with the QR code for easy viewing at the front door entrance of each dining common. Alternatively, CalFresh could also choose to table outside the dining commons to reach more students. One limitation is that students may go over the meal plan eligibility limit for CalFresh, but there are still students with CalFresh-eligible meal plans that eat at these locations.

Athletics

One CalFresh Advocate noted that student athletes could be a population in need of basic needs support, especially food support. Student athletes can train up to almost 30 or 40 hours a week while these hours go fully unpaid because they are only receiving athletic scholarships unless they hire a sports agent.²⁸ Like any academic scholarship, it is often not enough to cover expenses beyond academic tuition and housing. Since student athletes are balancing being a full-time student and full-time athlete, they do not have time for a steady paying job. Thus, they may sacrifice the fulfillment of their basic needs, especially when it comes to food security and nutrition.

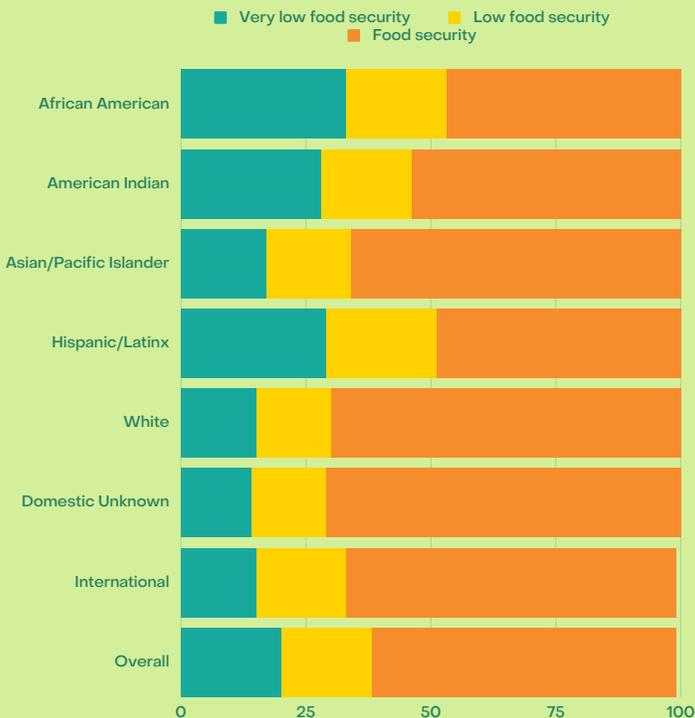
Recommendations

The CalFresh team should collaborate with UCI Athletics to make student athletes aware about CalFresh, whether through online workshops or presentations, in-person outreach, or student athlete-specific enrollment parties. In the future, FRESH can look into the feasibility of making participation in the UCI intercollegiate athletic program a student exemption.

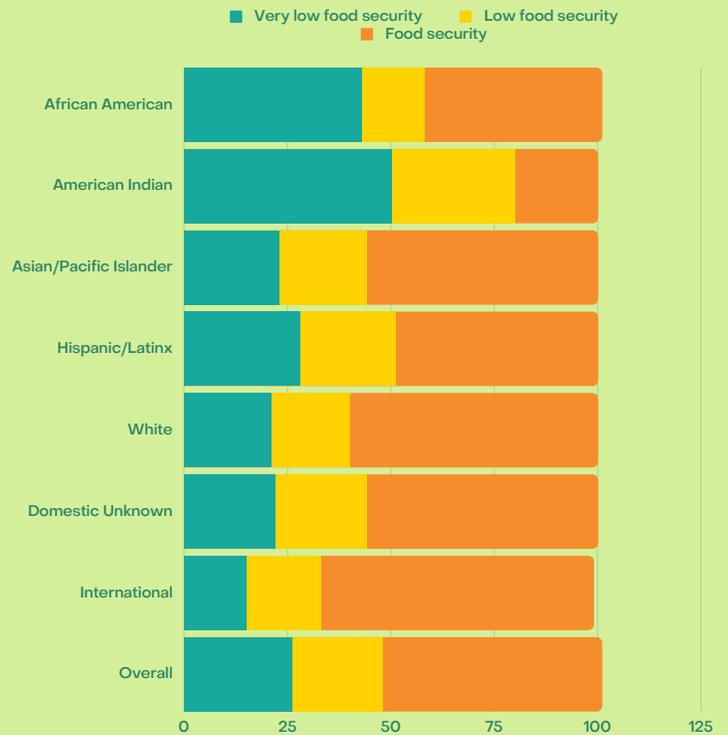
**Recommendation 6:
Improve commitment to racial equity by increasing number of BIPOC students applying for CalFresh**



The UC Undergraduate Experience Survey, launched by the UC Global Food Initiative, identifies levels of basic needs security among students enrolled at nine of the University of California campuses.²⁹ When looking specifically at food insecurity on UCI's campus, we can see that African American, American Indian, and Hispanic/Latinx students report facing food insecurity at rates higher than other students.



Among first generation students of color, the rate of food insecurity is even higher. This is important to note since first generation students are raised in households with parents without a college degree. Since high salaries are so dependent on educational experience, we can deduct that these first generation students of color tend to be raised in low-income households.



As such, these students often enter college lacking a financial support system and therefore may experience basic needs insecurity.

To increase the number of BIPOC students applying to CalFresh, connect with organizations on campus that primarily serve BIPOC students.

The best way to meet the basic needs of BIPOC students is to provide tangible support. In this case, meeting the needs of food-insecure students means intervening with a program like CalFresh that provides long-term support.

Recommendations

It can be difficult to conduct targeted outreach toward demographic groups at UCI since demographic data and contact information is not easily accessible; Instead, FRESH can connect with UCI organizations that serve BIPOC students, such as:

- Student Outreach and Retention (SOAR) Center
- Student Success Initiatives → FYRE, TRIO, and Summer Bridge scholars
- Cross-Cultural Center → Alyansa ng mga Kababayan, American Indian Student Association (AISA), Asian Pacific Student Association (APSA), Black Student Union (BSU), and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA)
- Latinx Resource Center
- Center for Black Cultures, Resources & Research

Equally important is connecting with student affinity groups that are made by and for BIPOC students at UC Irvine. These student groups often have a tight-knit community and are already used to sharing resources like CalFresh to support their members. Among the student groups that serve BIPOC students include:

- Native American Law Students Association
- Asian Pacific Student Association
- Asian Pacific American Law Student Association
- Pilipinx-Americans in Social Studies
- Vietnamese Student Association
- Southeast Asian Student Association
- Black Student Union
- Black Law Student Association at UCI
- Black Graduate Student Network
- Black Queer Collective
- East African Student Association
- East African Student Association
- Nigerian Student Association
- Chicano/Latino Graduate Student Collective

- Latinx Law Student Association
- Latino Medical Student Association
- Mesa Unida UCI
- Hermanas Unidas and Hermanos Unidos de UCI

Connecting with these organizations and student groups to encourage them to share CalFresh resources in their newsletters, have a CalFresh Advocate attend a virtual or in-person club meeting to give more information about CalFresh, or hand out flyers and other marketing material at their club meetings would be some ways to increase the number of BIPOC students receiving benefits.

Along with connecting with BIPOC organizations and student groups, FRESH must ensure that they can gather information about how many BIPOC students they are serving.

In doing so, the team could see if their outreach efforts toward BIPOC communities have been successful and look for ways to further improve these efforts. One way to measure this is to gather data on student demographics in the application assistance form, check-in form, and in the pre-screening form. If the CalFresh team happens to give a presentation at a student club meeting, they can use the CG check-in or pre-screening form QR code to gather the students' contact information and follow-up with further details about applying. Similarly, if a student receives an email about being eligible for CalFresh due to a student exemption, they can follow a link to the application assistance appointment sign-up form.

Recommendations

No matter how a student happens to learn about CalFresh, there should be changes made to these three forms to collect data about student demographics. For example, this question could look like:

“How do you identify yourself?” (Select all that apply)

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other: _____
- Prefer not to disclose

In gathering this information, the CalFresh team could conduct improved targeted outreach toward student populations that are not completing the pre-screen form or signing up for application assistance as often as other populations.

Recommendation 7:
Focus on targeted outreach to specialized student populations



As the data has indicated, students that receive federal work study, receive TANF-funded CalGrant A/B, or meet the 20/hour week minimum work requirement scheduled CalFresh application assistance appointments at higher numbers. This has largely been as a result of strategic outreach toward federal work study and TANF-funded CalGrant A/B recipients. The same targeted outreach should be performed toward undergraduate and graduate degree programs that increase employability.

As we can see below, the number of students who scheduled a CalFresh appointment in proportion to the number of students who are enrolled in the program is very low.

Outreach to Exempt Undergraduate and Graduate School Programs			
Degree Program	Students Enrolled In Program	Students FRESH Reached In Fall 2021 (CG)	Students Scheduled Appt In Fall 2021 (Acuity)
UC Masters Entry Program in Nursing (MEPN)	N/A	*11	*17
Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)	81		
B.S. in Nursing Science	175		
Master in Urban and Regional Planning (MURP)	65	1	3
Master of Public Health (MPH)	69	4	3
Master in Public Policy (MPP)	56	0	1
Masters of Art in Teaching + Teaching Credential (MAT)	138	1	2
School of Medicine: Medical Doctorate (MD)	449	0	30
School of Law: Juris Doctorate (JD)	444	1	17
Total	1,477	18	73

*Please note that FRESH's CampusGroups data does not gather separate information regarding whether a nursing student is enrolled in the BS, MEPN, or DPN program.

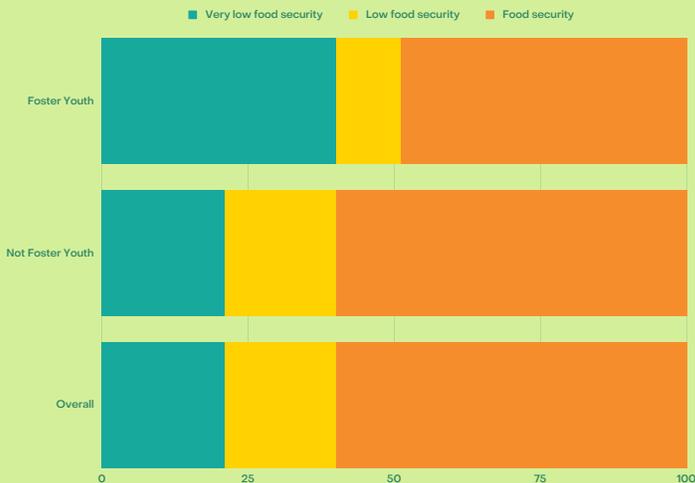
Even with MD program students, who scheduled the most appointments, the number of students enrolled in the program in proportion to the number of students who scheduled an appointment is only 7 percent. In total, approximately 5 percent of students in all eligible graduate degree programs sought CalFresh application assistance from the FRESH Basic Needs Hub.

Recommendations

Some ways to increase outreach among these eligible graduate degree programs include connecting with graduate department heads, sending targeted mass emails to all eligible graduate students, connecting with graduate student groups (i.e. Latinx Law Student Association), tabling outside graduate department courtyards, posting marketing material on graduate building bulletins, and conducting graduate student enrollment parties.

FYRE, TRIO, and Summer Bridge Programs

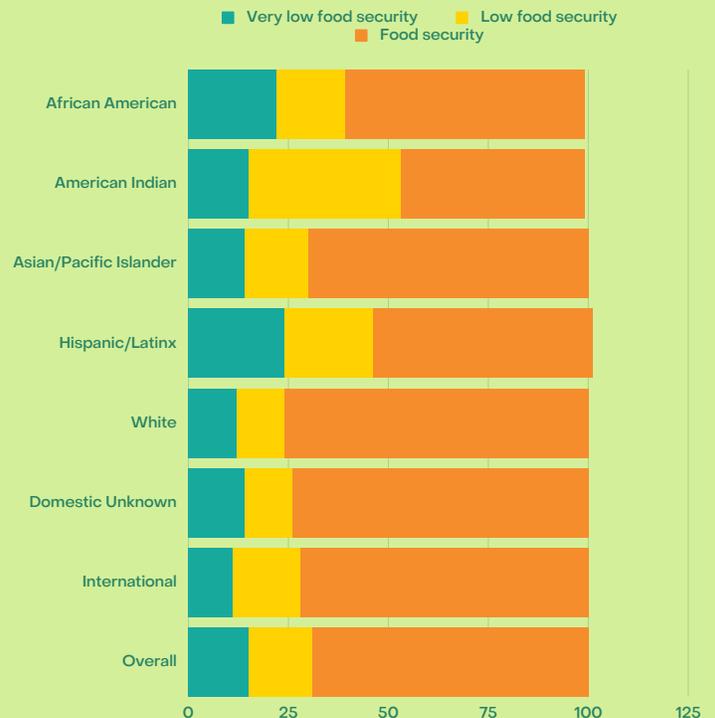
Other local student programs that are CalFresh exempt and signed up for CalFresh assistance at low numbers are the FYRE, TRIO, and Summer Bridge programs. Outreach to these programs is essential to meeting the needs of marginalized and historically underrepresented students in higher education, who experience food insecurity at disproportionately higher rates. For example, according to the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey, foster youth at UCI are more likely to experience food insecurity than non-foster youth students.³⁰ In 2020, 51 percent of foster youth reported facing low or very low food insecurity compared to only 40 percent of non-foster youth. This makes CalFresh outreach and enrollment of FYRE students essential to reducing food insecurity on campus.



While there is no data on students in the TRIO and Summer Bridge programs at UCI, there are eligibility requirements to join these programs. To apply to TRIO, students must either be low-income, first-generation, or have a disability.³¹ To apply to Summer Bridge, students must either be low-income or come from disadvantaged backgrounds/circumstances.³² As data from the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey indicates, low-income and first-generation students are more likely to experience food insecurity.

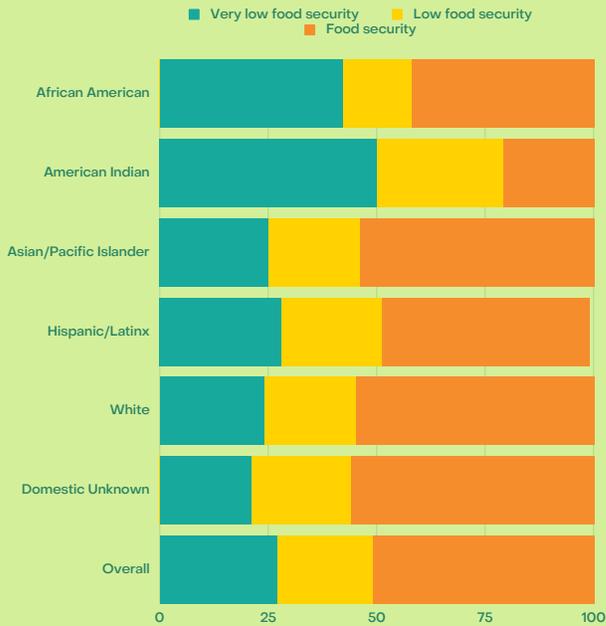
Low-income here is indicated by being a federal Pell grant recipient, since students with “exceptional financial need” receive this grant.³³ We also know that low-income students in general are more likely to be food insecure since they have limited money to meet their basic needs.

Non-Pell Grant Recipients



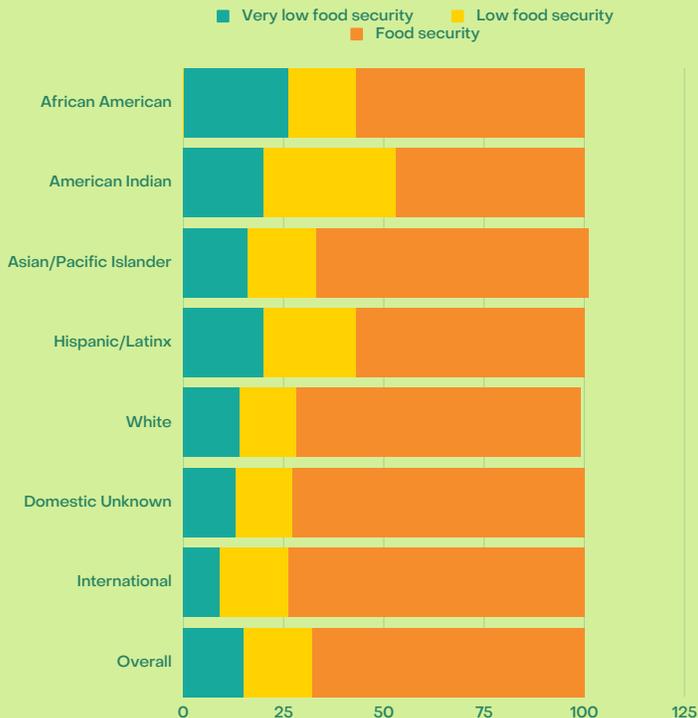
Recommendations

Pell Grant Recipients

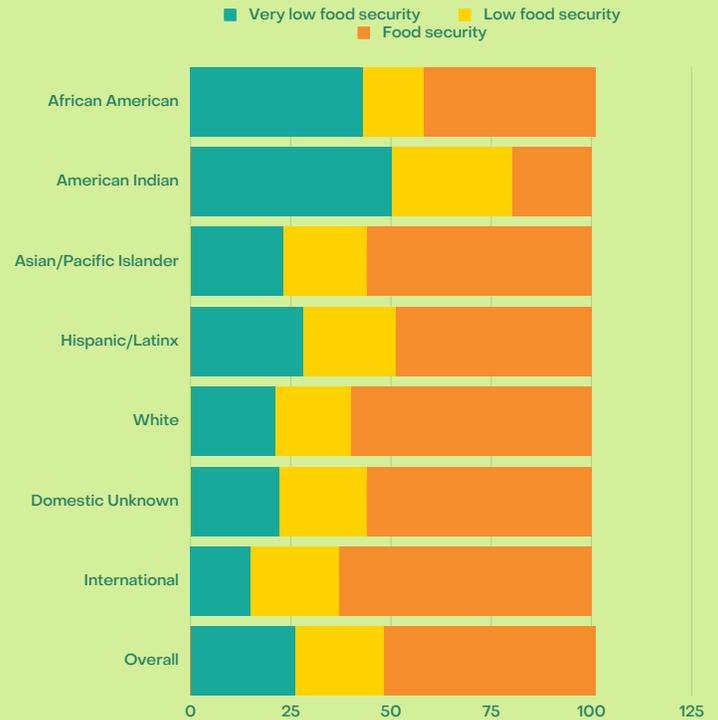


As we can see below, in 2020, the rates of food insecurity among first generation students is higher than non-first generation students.

Not First-Generation



First-Generation



As we can see below, the number of SSI students who scheduled a CalFresh appointment is very low. While it is unknown how many students are enrolled in each program and which program they are specifically a part of, more targeted outreach should be done toward these student programs assuming their enrollment numbers are higher.

Outreach to Exempt Student Programs				
Student Program		Students Enrolled in Program	Students FRESH Reached in Fall 2021 (CG)	Students Scheduled Appt in Fall 2021 (Acuity)
Student Success Initiatives Program	TRIO Scholars	N/A	6	33
	FYRE Scholars			
	Summer Bridge			

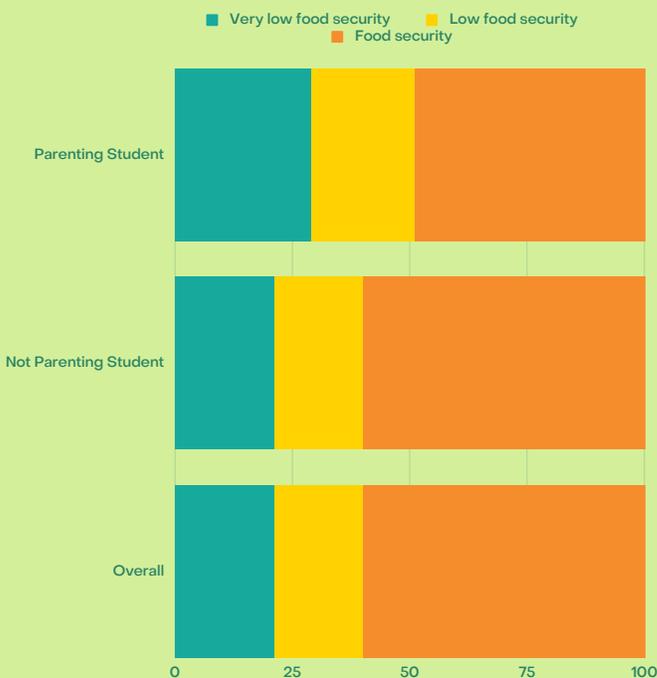
*Please note that FRESH's CampusGroups data does not gather separate information regarding whether a Student Success Initiatives Program student is enrolled in TRIO, FYRE, or Summer Bridge.

Recommendations

Some ways to increase outreach among Student Success Initiatives students include sending targeted mass emails to all eligible program students, posting marketing material at the SSI office, and collaborating with SSI to host virtual or in-person information sessions about CalFresh. Additionally, to get a better idea of who is signing up for CalFresh assistance, survey forms and the appointments website should be modified to separate TRIO, FYRE, and Summer Bridge into their own distinct answer choices.

Parenting Students

According to the UC Undergraduate Experience Survey, parenting students at UCI are more likely to experience food insecurity than non-parent students.³⁴ In 2020, 51 percent of parenting students reported facing low or very low food insecurity compared to only 40 percent of non-parent students.



More outreach toward parenting students is necessary to reduce this number. As we can see below, the number of students who scheduled a CalFresh appointment in proportion to the number of parenting students is very low. While it is unknown how many students are eligible parents, the UC Undergraduate Experience received 7,980 responses from parenting students. We can deduce that there are at least 7,980 parenting students, but this doesn't account for those who did not respond to the survey. Further, we do not know if these are eligible students with a child under 12. More targeted outreach should be done assuming there are more parenting students on campus.

Outreach to Parenting Students			
Student demographic	Parenting Students	Students FRESH Reached in Fall 2021 (CG)	Students Scheduled Appt in Fall 2021 (Acuity)
Parenting students with child under 12	At least 7,980	4	8

Some ways to increase outreach among parenting students include connecting with the Student Parents and Families (SPF) program, posting marketing material at the SPF office, collaborating with SPF to host virtual or in-person information sessions about CalFresh, connecting with the different UCI child care facilities, posting marketing material at the different child care facilities, and tabling at the child care facilities.

10-Week Outreach Manual for Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarter

To ensure that the CalFresh team at the FRESH Basic Needs Hub takes full advantage of the fast-paced 10-week quarter system, the outreach manual lays out ideas for outreach events and collaboration opportunities in the fall, winter, and spring. The idea here is that the CalFresh team hosts events of its own, such as the enrollment parties, application walk-ins with the county, open houses, and virtual workshops, while also seeking out opportunities with other organizations on campus. This is where campus partners play a key role. Since the CalFresh team has a smaller staff capacity, participating in events as a campus partner is a great way to increase awareness about CalFresh without placing a strain on the team because events like the enrollment parties take much more time, money, and resources. Simply having a CalFresh information table at campus partner events like the Anteater Involvement Fair and instituting regular tabling at locations like the Student Success Initiatives building will also increase CalFresh awareness and enrollment while reaching a new audience. The 10-week outreach manual for fall, winter, and spring [can be found here](#). Below is an example of what the manual entails.

Event	Event Description	Date/Time	Location	Point of Contact	Supplies/Materials	Staffing	Timeline	Reach/Impact
Community Roots Festival	Celebrates UCI's diverse communities. Cultural performances, boothing and fundraising opportunities for our affiliated student organizations, community resource fair, and a mural contest.	One day 3-4 hr event or week-long virtual event	UCI Flagpoles or virtual	Daniel K. Park, Assistant Director of Cross-Cultural Center, danielkp@uci.edu.	Tablecloths, CalFresh merchandise, flyers/marketing materials, snacks, canopy, possibly table and chairs	3-4 CalFresh Advocates at a time	Contact Assistant Director at the beginning of fall quarter for details about how to get involved	In 2020, there was 349 unique views on a special website created to support the event. The website included the virtual community resource fair with resources like the FRESH Basic Needs Hub.
First Generation Week and/or First Generation Day	Celebrating UCI's first generation students, faculty, and staff. Performances, music, giveaways, and a resource fair will be available throughout the event.	Week 6/7, First Gen day: Nov 8	Student Services II building	Student Success Initiatives	Tablecloths, CalFresh merchandise, canopy, flyers/marketing materials	At least 3 CalFresh advocates at a time	Contact SSI to settle logistics about tabling well before the event	First generation students are more likely to face food insecurity than non-first generation students. Therefore, the impact could be substantial.
Sustainival	An annual fair that encourages sustainability on campus and works to educate students on the importance of sustainability. The event features booths from campus and community organizations.	Typically held late January/early February, 2-3 hours long.	Upper Gateway Plaza & Anteater Plaza	UCI Sustainability Resource Center (SRC)	Tablecloths, CalFresh merchandise, canopy, flyers/marketing materials	About the same as SOAR Carnival - at least 2 CalFresh Advocates at a time	Sign up to reserve a booth at the event on SRC's CG page in early January.	Since typically held at the Upper Gateway Plaza & Anteater Plaza, might have the same reach as the SOAR Back to School Carnival (~59 students prescreened, including students who did not submit the pre-screen).

SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses

If you are a social justice advocate, a university administrator, or even a student activist trying to establishing a SNAP outreach program at your university, the following toolkit provides suggestions on what steps to take to establish the appropriate relationships, gather the right funding, and create the most impactful programming. The suggestions in this toolkit were gathered from literature reviews, CA Department of Social Services handbooks, and the FRESH Basic Needs Hub's experience creating their SNAP/CalFresh outreach and enrollment program.

1. Parent organization & staffing



As a start, leaders and advocates who seek to increase SNAP enrollment among college students at their university should consider establishing themselves under a parent organization. For example, this parent organization could be Associated Students, the financial aid office, or even a cultural center on-campus. It's best if the SNAP initiative is housed under a well-known campus organization or department that 1) aligns with the

mission of the SNAP initiative, 2) has a wide reach, 3) has office space or good funding sources or 4) works directly with student populations that the SNAP initiative is seeking to primarily serve. The best case scenario is that you find a parent organization that fulfills all four of these attributes. The CalFresh initiative at UC Irvine was started under the FRESH Basic Needs Hub, an organization that had already established a name for themselves and developed several community partnerships because of their food pantry. The Hub's mission also aligns very well with the mission of CalFresh, which is to promote equitable access to basic needs.

Any SNAP initiative that seeks to increase outreach and enrollment on college campuses must also have a knowledgeable team of staff and/or volunteers. The Center For Healthy Communities at California State University Chico finds that the inclusion of student staff allows CalFresh outreach and enrollment efforts "to stay relevant and student focused" since students know what their peers experience the best.³⁵ In interviews conducted with student staff working in the CalFresh team at the UCI FRESH Basic Needs Hub, students often pointed to this peer-to-peer model as one of the most significant aspects of the CalFresh application assistance program. Many of these student staff, known as *CalFresh Advocates*, talked about the student experience and the value of student-to-student resonance.

SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses

Students know what other students go through during college the best because they may often share the same experiences and hardships. For example, most CalFresh Advocates at FRESH have themselves experienced food insecurity and applied to the program. These Advocates are then able to share their own experience with students and students are able to resonate with the Advocate. In turn, this makes students more comfortable to seek help. This resonance is harder to establish for county eligibility workers because they do not have the same shared lived experiences of going to UCI, being a college student, and struggling to meet your basic needs. Additionally, some Advocates mentioned that students feel like they have to present themselves a certain way to the county, so the process feels more "uncomfortable" and "scary". For example, one Advocate shared that during one of her appointments, an applicant came in feeling very nervous but when the Advocate clarified that she was a student herself the applicant's "whole demeanor changed." With student advocates, the process feels more comfortable, non-judgmental, and casual, making it a safe space for students to show vulnerability in sharing their experience with food insecurity.

"A huge reason that I felt comfortable applying for CalFresh was because a student was helping me" – CalFresh Advocate who applied for benefits through FRESH.

Student staff also have the advantage of holding more knowledge about UCI campus resources (to refer students to) and college application materials like on-campus housing leases and financial aid award letters. Ensuring that your school's SNAP initiative is staffed with trained students is key to a successful program, with the addition of full-time professional staff that can dedicate their time to programming and funding.

2. Comprehensive training process

Documents to Submit with Application

documents
IST have your
ne/or head of
usehold's name
them!



- Form of ID (driver's license, state ID, passport, green card, birth certificate)
- Proof of student eligibility (TANF email, DSC Participation form, Program Verification form)
- Social security number (memorized is okay!)
- Proof of income for past 30 days (payslips, paycheque, signed letter from employer, unemployment benefits)
- Financial aid award letter (2020-2021 year)
- Class schedule on DegreeWorks (In Progress)
- Proof of living expenses (rent utilities, phone, child medical costs if any)
- Other documents

While having student staff is a great strategy for improving SNAP efforts on college campuses, these students need to be trained to be very well-informed about SNAP, the application process, and fast-changing federal and state policies surrounding SNAP. Important to note is that being in a college setting means high job turnover when student staff "graduate, switch jobs, and have schedule changes."¹³⁶ Developing an extensive and

detailed training program for SNAP student staff is therefore imperative to the longevity of the program.

SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses

When a student is first hired, the CalFresh team at UC Irvine conducts a two-day, six hour-long training via Zoom covering all topics from CalFresh basics, duties of a CalFresh Advocate, what documents students should upload in the CalFresh application, and how to schedule appointments and guide students through the application. The training for CalFresh Advocates also includes a comprehensive shadowing, practice, and reverse shadowing component that ensures student staff are ready to take on appointments with student applicants. During shadowing, new student hires shadow CalFresh Advocates as they navigate that application with a student applicant. During practice appointments, new student hires get a fake scenario and must walk the fake student applicant through the application. Then, in the reverse shadowing phase, new student hires help a real student applicant with the application while a CalFresh Advocate or other staff member is there to take notes and provide feedback. The team at UC Irvine also has a shared Google Drive with all training materials so student staff can go back and review the material at their own time. Creating a comprehensive training program like this at your own school ensures that student staff can answer student's CalFresh questions and help students with the application process.

3. Establish & expand student exemptions

Enrolled in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program?

swipe to learn how to get free groceries every month!



To increase SNAP enrollment among college students at a university, leaders and advocates must do the work of expanding SNAP eligibility for students who are food insecure, but do not fit the current eligibility as established by the USDA's SNAP guidelines. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has established the following exemptions for students that meet the SNAP eligibility requirements.³⁷

- Are under age 18 or are age 50 or older.
- Have a physical or mental disability.
- Work at least 20 hours a week in paid employment.
- Participate in a state or federally financed work study program.
- Participate in an on-the-job training program.
- Care for a child under the age of 6.
- Care for a child age 6 to 11 and lack the necessary child care enabling you to attend school and work 20 hours a week or participate in work study.
- Are a single parent enrolled full-time in college and taking care of a child under 12.
- Receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) assistance.
- Are enrolled in a TANF Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) program.
- Are assigned to, placed in, or self-placed in a college or other institution of higher education through: a SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) program; certain other E&T programs for low-income households, which are operated by a state or local government and have an equivalent component to SNAP E&T; a program under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (PL 113-128); a Trade Adjustment Assistance Program under Section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974.
- Meet one of the new, temporary exemptions listed under Covid-19 Temporary Updates: 1) eligible to participate in state or federally financed work study or 2) have an expected family contribution of 0.

SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses

According to Title 7, Section 273.7(e)(1) of the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, "work registrants not otherwise exempted by the State agency are subject to the E&T program participation requirements imposed by the State agency."³⁸ The California Department of Social Services (DPSS) has used this electronic code to expand the number of students eligible for SNAP/CalFresh in California. DPSS does this by allowing higher education institutions to submit a request form for approval of local educational programs that increase employability.³⁹ These educational programs must contain "at least one employment and training component" as defined by Section 273.7(e)(1) highlighted above.⁴⁰ These educational programs can include anything from a Juris Doctorate (JD) degree program to educational support programs like summer bridge. In addition to allowing colleges to submit these requests, DPSS also pre-selected state-funded programs as exempt because they increase employability.⁴¹ Among these include the Educational Opportunity Program, Guardian Scholars Program, Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program, and more. This opens up eligibility for college students who may not meet the 20 hour work week requirement but still hold a job that increases employability.

Leaders and advocates in higher education institutions across California can benefit from this precedent set by other schools. Those trying to establish a CalFresh initiative on their campus can submit a request form to make their own programs a CalFresh student exemption, thereby expanding the pool of eligibility for basic needs-insecure students on their campus. For those outside of California, work with state social services leaders to utilize the federal electronic code to establish pre-approved local educational programs that increase employability in your state.

4. Partner with your local social services agency



Establishing a relationship with your local county social services agency is key to making a CalFresh outreach and enrollment successful on your campus. For example, the FRESH Basic Needs Hub is able to collaborate with their local county offices to bring caseworkers on campus to assist students with their CalFresh applications. These types of events would not be possible without building a foundation for a partnership with the county.

One way of doing so is by becoming a Community-Based Organization (CBO) with your county. FRESH is a CBO and now they have a direct relationship where they are able to communicate news of the new eligibilities so that caseworkers don't wrongfully deny students. As the UC Special Committee on Basic Needs finds, "enrollment is best facilitated when there is direct communication between basic needs staff and county agency personnel."⁴²

SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses

A relationship with the county is also essential when it comes to advocating on behalf of students. For example, FRESH conducts county follow-ups on behalf of students who sign a Release of Information (ROI) Authorization form. The county allows FRESH to see student's case information if they obtain a signed ROI from the student, who is then able to call the county if a student's case is being delayed or was wrongfully denied. This type of advocacy is essential to a successful SNAP outreach and enrollment projects on college campuses because students often face barriers due to their specific exemptions which not every caseworker may be familiar with. Lastly, a county partnership also allows more room for collaboration in events and workshops which attract many students. Once your SNAP program has its foot in the door, start communicating with the county about your efforts to expand eligibility and enrollment on your campus.

5. CalFresh application assistance program



While outreach is often the goal for leaders and advocates who want to spread the word about SNAP, pairing outreach with enrollment is the best way to reach the most students and create a long-lasting impact on your campus. Students can learn about SNAP at an outreach event, but will likely not apply because the application can be confusing and daunting to many. If they want to receive assistance with their application, the county is often short-staffed and caseworkers have full caseloads. When a student chooses to apply on their own, they might forget to submit important documents and the county can delay or deny their case. Therefore, the county itself presents a barrier to students who want to apply. This can be avoided by establishing a SNAP application assistance program led by professional full-time staff and student staff on your campus.

"A huge reason that I felt comfortable applying for CalFresh was because a student was helping me" - CalFresh Advocate who applied for benefits through FRESH.

Some suggestions for creating a successful SNAP application assistance program include:

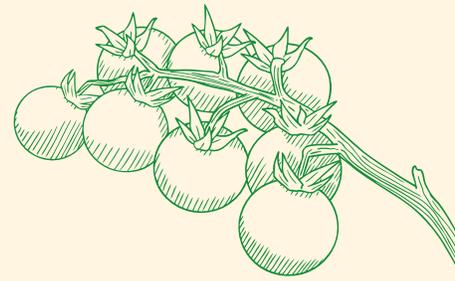
- **Creating an authorized application assistance tool, such as [GetCalFresh.org](https://www.getcalfresh.org):** In partnership with the State of California, Code for America launched this "user-friendly" website that allows applicants—especially students—to complete a CalFresh application most of the time in under 20 minutes.⁴³

SNAP Outreach & Enrollment Toolkit for College Campuses

- Paper applications can be inaccessible to students and county portals are often confusing and hard to navigate. Developing a website application assistance tool such as this one in your own state can greatly increase the number of applications coming from students on your campus.
- **Developing a pre-screening form to quickly screen for student eligibility:** According to the Center for Healthy Communities at CSU Chico definition, "a prescreen consists of a series of questions that will provide a general overview of a student's situation, including but not limited to: their household, income, and student status. This will enable outreach staff to determine whether a student is meeting the minimum requirements to potentially be eligible for CalFresh benefits."⁴⁴ At the FRESH Basic Needs Hub, the CalFresh initiative pre-screens student eligibility by asking the following questions:
 - How many adults (ages 18–65) in your household do you buy and share food with, including yourself?
 - Any children in your household (ages 18 and under)?
 - Any seniors (65+) in your household?
 - Are you a US Citizen or Legal Permanent Resident?
 - Are you currently enrolled or continuing your studies at UC Irvine in the Fall 2021?
 - Do you make under the income limit for your household?
 - If you have a meal plan, what type of meal plan do you have?
 - Check all the following that apply to you (referring to list of student exemptions).
- Of course, student eligibility can only be fully determined by the eligibility worker that reviews a SNAP case. As such, although a pre-screening form provides helpful eligibility information, a student who may seem ineligible should still be given the option to apply.⁴⁵
- **Putting student staff at the center of application assistance:** As discussed in section one of this toolkit, student staff bring valuable insight to helping students learn about and apply to SNAP. Having a dedicated team of students to lead the one-on-one application assistance efforts will encourage more students to sign up to receive this help.

This toolkit is not comprehensive and campus leaders across the country can develop SNAP programming that best fits their school and student body. Nonetheless, these outreach and enrollment suggestions have paved the way for successful CalFresh efforts in California college campuses and could be replicated in colleges elsewhere.

Methods



1. The quantitative data collected in this report was gathered from multiple sources, including CampusGroups, Acuity Scheduling, GetCalFresh, University of California data compiled from the 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey & 2016 UC Graduate Student Wellbeing Survey, and the UC Irvine Office of Institutional Research Data Hub's data on student enrollment.

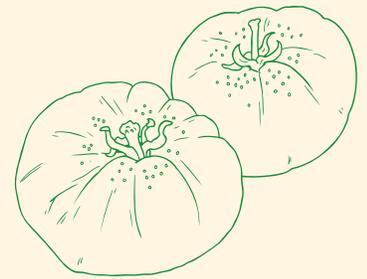
CampusGroups, Acuity Scheduling, and GetCalFresh

Data from CampusGroups, Acuity Scheduling, and GetCalFresh were cross-referenced on Microsoft Excel to evaluate the impact of outreach efforts on student's propensity to 1) schedule an appointment with the FRESH Basic Needs Hub for CalFresh application assistance or 2) submit an application through the GetCalFresh.org website on their own or with the help of one of FRESH's CalFresh Advocates.

I compared the pre-screen data from CampusGroups with data from the GetCalFresh Assister Dashboard to see how many students completed a CalFresh application after filling out the pre-screen form. I also compared CampusGroups pre-screen data with data from Acuity Scheduling to see how many students scheduled an appointment (even if they didn't show up, canceled, or had to reschedule) after filling out the pre-screen form. The assumption here is that a FRESH CalFresh outreach event was a student's first exposure to information about applying for CalFresh. After a student completed the pre-screen form at a FRESH event, they visited the GetCalFresh website to submit an application on their own or scheduled an appointment to receive assistance from a CalFresh Advocate. Student names and emails were cross-referenced to see if they submitted an application or scheduled an appointment sometime after completing the CampusGroups pre-screen form. Assessing the impact of a given outreach event was achieved by using the date and time stamps on CampusGroups, Acuity Scheduling, and GetCalFresh data. The date/time stamps allowed me to identify during what outreach event the pre-screen form was submitted by a student. The date/time stamps also showed me whether a student scheduled an appointment or submitted an application sometime after the outreach event.

It is important to note that this method of measuring outreach impact has its limitations. For example, students who completed the pre-screen form might've known about CalFresh prior to the event they pre-screened at. Therefore, we cannot associate their application submission or appointment to the success of the outreach effort. Some students also scheduled appointments various times, so it is difficult to pinpoint if this was a result of a CalFresh outreach effort. This data also doesn't account for students that might have not completed a pre-screen form, but found out about CalFresh at an outreach event and, as a result, applied or made an appointment. Nonetheless, this analysis serves to measure the impact of CalFresh outreach and which outreach efforts maximized CalFresh knowledge and enrollment.

Methods



CampusGroups

As previously discussed, CampusGroups is a campus engagement platform that FRESH uses for a variety of reasons, such as creating surveys, events, and email newsletters. This report uses data from two forms that FRESH created on CampusGroups: the Fall 2021 CalFresh Pre-Screening Form and the FRESH Check-In Form. At all of our fall 2021 outreach events, the CalFresh team encouraged students that approached our table to complete the check-in and pre-screen forms on their cellular devices. The pre-screen form gathers student contact information, submission date, whether a student is eligible or ineligible for CalFresh, and special college student exemptions. CampusGroups is a great tool for assessing the impact of CalFresh efforts because it allows users to disaggregate different categories of students who completed the pre-screen form. For example, I was able to analyze how many CalGrant A/B recipients pre-screened at a given CalFresh outreach event.

Acuity Scheduling

Acuity Scheduling is an online appointment scheduling software that the FRESH Basic Needs Hub uses to schedule CalFresh assistance appointments with students. The appointment form gathers data like student contact information and the date the student submitted the form, as well as pre-screens students for their CalFresh eligibility. The software allows users to download spreadsheet reports about UC Irvine students that are scheduling these appointments. These reports are useful for measuring the impact of the CalFresh Application Assistance program at FRESH since it allows the team to keep track of how many students are submitting applications.

GetCalFresh Assister Dashboard

GetCalFresh.org is a website designed by Code for America which allows California residents to apply for CalFresh in a simple and quick online application. Community Based Organizations, such as the FRESH Basic Needs Hub at UCI, can apply as a CBO account on GetCalFresh and use the website in their CalFresh outreach and application assistance efforts. GetCalFresh supplies CBOs with a unique referral link that community members can use to apply for CalFresh, thereby allowing the CBO to track the number of applications being completed under the unique GetCalFresh.org referral link. The FRESH Basic Needs Hub has a unique referral link that it uses in all its outreach materials and social media efforts, and is used during the application assistance process itself when students sign up for an appointment. With a CBO account, FRESH uses the GetCalFresh Assister Dashboard to track a student's name, email, phone number, county of residence, and application submission date. If one of FRESH's CalFresh Advocates assisted a student with submitting their application, there will also be a note of this on the dashboard. This information is incredibly useful for tracking how many students are applying for CalFresh. It is also useful for tracking the impact of FRESH's CalFresh outreach efforts on the likelihood of a student submitting an application.

Methods



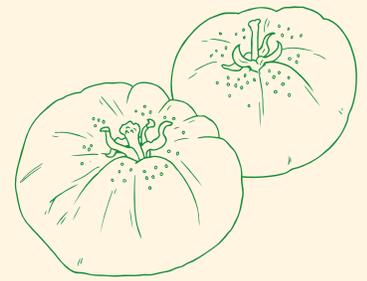
Data from 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey & 2016 UC Graduate Student Wellbeing Survey

In this report, I also used information from the UC Student Basic Needs Dashboard, which provides information on basic needs across all University of California schools and “illustrates the relationship between food insecurity and/or homelessness to student learning, engagement, satisfaction, and outcomes’. This dashboard is informed by the 2020 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey and 2016 Graduate Student Wellbeing survey. I filtered the data to show UC Irvine–specific information and also used the filters to analyze food insecurity across different student demographics.

UC Irvine Office of Institutional Research Data Hub

The UC Irvine Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research collects data about student enrollment characteristics at UC Irvine. This tool was used to obtain information about the CalFresh–eligible graduate student populations at UC Irvine. Specifically, this tool was used to see how many students from each eligible graduate program were enrolled during fall 2021. This information was used to inform Recommendation 7 in this report.

Methods



2. To complement the quantitative data and my first-hand analysis of the FRESH Basic Needs Hub's CalFresh outreach efforts, I conducted a qualitative assessment interview with staff members working on the CalFresh team. A total of eleven interviews were conducted with part-time student staff members, known as CalFresh Advocates and Peer Educators. Additionally, three interviews were conducted with full-time professional staff members of the CalFresh team. With the consent of the individuals interviewed, the interviews were recorded in order to capture accurate qualitative data.

The qualitative assessment interview questions for the student staff members were asked as follows:

- What made you interested in helping other students obtain CalFresh benefits?
- If you currently receive CalFresh benefits yourself, how did you learn about CalFresh and how has this position changed the way you view CalFresh?
- What do you think the value of the peer-to-peer model is? Do you think it's better when students are applying for CalFresh with the help of another student?
- What do you think are some reasons students don't apply for CalFresh even though they may be eligible?
- Out of all the CalFresh events you have participated in, which did you think was the most effective at informing students about CalFresh and helping them apply?
- What has your experience been with tabling for CalFresh (if you have taken part in these outreach efforts)? Is there anything we can improve to increase our reach and improve student engagement?
- Is there a certain student community that you think we could conduct better outreach to so that we can increase their enrollment in CalFresh?
- What kind of outreach would you like to see?

The qualitative assessment interview questions for the professional staff members were asked as follows:

- What made you interested in working in the field of college campus food security/insecurity?
- What's one thing you wish more students knew about CalFresh?
- What are some barriers to getting students acquainted with/made aware of CalFresh? How can we address these barriers?
- What's one obstacle you've encountered in conducting CalFresh outreach? How can we work to address these obstacles?
- Location is a big factor when considering conducting outreach on campus. Do you think the locations we have chosen (such as ring road and the housing communities) have been successful in reaching the communities we want to help? What can we change?
- Which CalFresh event do you think other campuses should replicate on their campuses? Why?
- What has your experience been with CampusGroups? Do you believe it has been an effective platform for conducting outreach or do you think there are better means to do so?

References



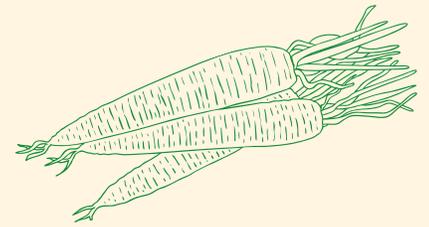
1. UCI Office of Undergraduate Admissions, "Admitted Student Profile."
<https://www.admissions.uci.edu/discover/why-uci/admitted.php>
2. UCI Basic Needs, "Our Vision and Mission." <https://basicneeds.uci.edu/about-us/vision-and-mission.php>
3. University of California, "Student basic needs".
<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/student-basic-needs>
4. UC Office of the President, "Global Food Initiative." <https://www.ucop.edu/global-food-initiative/>
5. UCI Basic Needs, "Our Story." <https://basicneeds.uci.edu/about-us/our-story.php>
6. UCI Basic Needs, "Our Story." <https://basicneeds.uci.edu/about-us/our-story.php>
7. University of California, *CalFresh Legislative Report. 2020-2021.*
https://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/legreports/2021-22/calfresh_legrpt_2021.pdf
8. University of California, *CalFresh Legislative Report. 2020-2021.*
https://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/legreports/2021-22/calfresh_legrpt_2021.pdf
9. UC San Diego Basic Needs, "CalFresh" <https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu/food-security/calfresh/index.html>
10. Information gathered from meeting with UC San Diego's The Hub Basic Needs Center Director Alicia Magallanes and CalFresh Program Coordinator Keliana Rios, 20 January 2022.
11. San Diego Hunger Coalition, "CalFresh (SNAP)."
<https://www.sandiegohungercoalition.org/public-calfresh>
12. California Department of Social Services, "2021 County Letters".
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/letters-regulations/letters-and-notices/county-letters/2021-county-letters>
13. Feeding San Diego, "CalFresh". <https://feedingsandiego.org/calfresh/>
14. UC San Diego Basic Needs, "Applying For CalFresh Independently".
<https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu/food-security/calfresh/calfresh-application-tools.html>
15. Information gathered from meeting with UC San Diego's The Hub Basic Needs Center Director Alicia Magallanes and CalFresh Program Coordinator Keliana Rios, 20 January 2022.
16. Information gathered from meeting with UC San Diego's The Hub Basic Needs Center Director Alicia Magallanes and CalFresh Program Coordinator Keliana Rios, 20 January 2022.
17. UC San Diego Basic Needs, "Upcoming Events". <https://basicneeds.ucsd.edu/food-security/calfresh/calfresh-events.html>
18. UCLA Basic Needs, "UCLA CalFresh Initiative". <https://basicneeds.ucla.edu/services/calfresh>
19. UCLA Healthy Campus Initiative, "The CalFresh Initiative at UCLA Aims to End Food Insecurity for College Students". March 2, 2018.
<https://healthycampusinitiative.wordpress.com/2018/03/02/the-calfresh-initiative-at-ucla-aims-to-end-food-insecurity-for-college-students/>

References



20. CalFresh Initiative at UCLA [@uclacalfresh]. Posts. [Instagram profile]. Instagram, <https://www.instagram.com/uclacalfresh/?hl=en>
21. CalFresh Initiative at UCLA [@uclacalfresh]. Posts. [Instagram profile]. Instagram, <https://www.instagram.com/uclacalfresh/?hl=en>
22. Food Security Taskforce, “CalFresh”. <https://food.ucsb.edu/calfresh>
23. Yolo County, “CalFresh”. <https://www.yolocounty.org/government/general-government-departments/health-human-services/welfare/calfresh-formerly-food-stamps>
24. Cameron, Louis. “Adding tags to your survey/form using survey logic”. CampusGroups. <https://help.campusgroups.com/en/articles/3639433-adding-tags-to-your-survey-form-using-survey-logic>
25. UCI Cross Cultural Center, “Hxstory”. <https://ccc.uci.edu/about/hxstory.php>
26. UCI Student Outreach and Retention Center, “Mission and Core Values”. <https://soar.uci.edu/our-story/>
27. Regents of the University of California Special Committee on Basic Needs, The University of California’s Next Phase of Improving Student Basic Needs. November 2020, <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/nov20/s1attach.pdf>
28. Carrasco, Maria. “Student Athlete Pay Law Takes Effect in California”. Inside Higher Ed. September 2, 2021, <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2021/09/02/student-athlete-pay-law-takes-effect-calif>
29. University of California, “Student basic needs”. <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/student-basic-needs>
30. University of California, “Student basic needs”. <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/student-basic-needs>
31. UCI Trio Scholars Program, “Apply to be a TRIO scholar”. <https://trio.due.uci.edu/about-us/eligibility/>
32. UCI Summer Bridge, “Eligibility”. <https://summerbridge.due.uci.edu/application/eligibility/>
33. Federal Student Aid, “Federal Pell Grants”. <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/pell>
34. University of California, “Student basic needs”. <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter/student-basic-needs>
35. *CalFresh Outreach Campus Handbook*. Center for Healthy Communities, August 2020. <https://csuchico.app.box.com/s/m23javm0bweqt311omrx5sx50e7owt6h>
36. *CalFresh Outreach Campus Handbook*. Center for Healthy Communities, August 2020. <https://csuchico.app.box.com/s/m23javm0bweqt311omrx5sx50e7owt6h>
37. “Students – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)”. U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, 25 March 2021. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/students>
38. 7 CFR 273.7, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-C/part-273/subpart-C/section-273.7>

References



39. Legal Services of Northern California, "Special rules for students". LSNC Guide to CalFresh Benefits, <https://calfresh.guide/special-rules-for-students/>
40. 7 CFR 273.7, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-C/part-273/subpart-C/section-273.7>
41. *CalFresh Student Eligibility Handbook*. California Department of Social Services: CalFresh and Nutrition Branch, January 2020. <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Letters-and-Notices/ACLs/2020/20-08.pdf>
42. Regents of the University of California Special Committee on Basic Needs, *The University of California's Next Phase of Improving Student Basic Needs*. November 2020, <https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/nov20/s1attach.pdf>
43. "California Launches Code for America's GetCalFresh in all 58 Counties." Code For America, 31 May 2019, <https://codeforamerica.org/news/california-launches-code-for-americas-getcalfresh-in-all-58-counties/>
44. *CalFresh Outreach Campus Handbook*. Center for Healthy Communities, August 2020. <https://csuchico.app.box.com/s/m23javm0bweqt311omrx5sx50e7owt6h>
45. *CalFresh Outreach Campus Handbook*. Center for Healthy Communities, August 2020. <https://csuchico.app.box.com/s/m23javm0bweqt311omrx5sx50e7owt6h>