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**WCU Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact - Student Basic Needs Insecurity at West Chester University**

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Student Basic Need Insecurity at West Chester University
Agenda

- Introductions
- What We Know A/b Student BNI at WCU
- What the Resource Pantry is doing to Combat Student BNI
- Q/A
Introductions

- Name
- Department or major
- What **you** know about BNI or the Resource Pantry at WCU
How much food is wasted every year?

- 33% of food produced in the world for human consumption is either lost or wasted.
- This amounts to approximately $1 trillion worth of waste.

Fruits and vegetables have the highest wastage rates.

Average annual waste per consumer:
- Europe & US: 95-115 kg
- Africa & Asia: 6-11 kg

Food banks globally prevent nearly 2.96 million cubic yards of edible surplus food and distribute to hungry people.

If 25% of the food currently lost or wasted globally could be saved, it would be enough to feed 870 million hungry people in the world.

- The food currently wasted in Latin America could feed 300 million people.
- The food currently wasted in Europe could feed 200 million people.
- The food currently wasted in Africa could feed 300 million people.

Sources: FAO and GFN
BNI at WCU: #RealCollege Survey

- nation’s largest, most well-established assessment of students’ basic needs
- primarily examines 3 measures of basic need insecurity: food insecurity; housing insecurity; and homelessness
- also allows for critical insights into diversity, equity, and inclusion; student health; and emergency aid, + insights into student experience of the Covid-19 pandemic
WCU Participation

- **Nationally** = 195,000 students from 130 two-year IHEs + 72 four-year IHEs. 11% response rate.
- **WCU** = 2,554 students. 11.3% response rate.
  - 79 percent – bachelors degree program
  - 16 percent – graduate degree program
  - 2 percent – associates degree program
  - 3 percent – other
### Characteristics of WCU Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Percentage of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1,417</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Responses</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Orientation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is LGBTQ</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is not LGBTQ</td>
<td>1,457</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valid Responses</td>
<td>1,876</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Race &amp; Ethnicity</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian or Asian American</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American or Black</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latinx</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>1,545</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valid Responses</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18 to 20</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 25</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 and older</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Responses</td>
<td>1,852</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Enrollment Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>1,873</td>
<td>76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valid Responses</td>
<td>2,457</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Years in College</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 1</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 to 2</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>3 or more</td>
<td>1,389</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valid Responses</td>
<td>2,508</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td><strong>Receives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1,586</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid Responses</td>
<td>2,251</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>
Basic Need Insecurity

- 44% of our students experienced at least one form of basic need insecurity
- 20% of our students experienced food insecurity in the prior 30 days
- 36% of our students experienced housing insecurity in the previous year
- 12% of our students experienced homelessness in the previous year
Food Insecurity

- 26% of respondents could not afford to eat balanced meals
- 23% worried about running out of food before they had money to buy more
Figure 9. Housing Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at West Chester University of Pennsylvania

- Any housing insecurity item: 36%
- Did not pay full utilities (gas, oil, or electricity bill): 9%
- Did not pay full amount of rent or mortgage: 12%
- Had a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay: 9%
- Had an account default or go into collections: 5%
- Moved in with other people, even for a little while, due to financial problems: 10%
- Lived with others beyond the expected capacity of the house or apartment: 7%
- Left household because I felt unsafe: 5%
- Moved three or more times: 11%
- Received a summons to appear in housing court: 0%

Figure 10. Experiences with Homelessness Among Survey Respondents at West Chester University of Pennsylvania

- Any homelessness item: 12%
- Self-identified homeless: 2%

Locations stayed overnight:
- Temporarily staying with relative or friend or couch surfing until I find other housing: 9%
- In a camper or RV: 0%
- Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to: 1%
- In a closed area/space not meant for human habitation (such as a car or van): 1%
- At outdoor location (such as a sidewalk or alley, bus or train stop, etc.): 1%
- At a treatment center (such as detox hospital, etc.): 1%
- In transitional housing or independent living program: 0%
- At a shelter: 0%
- At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance abuse: 0%
39% of our students had a close friend or family member who was sick with Covid-19, while 6% were sick with Covid-19 themselves.

39% of our students exhibited at least moderate anxiety.
FIGURE 4. JOB LOSS OR REDUCTION IN PAY OR HOURS, BY PRE-PANDEMIC JOB STATUS AT WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Part-Time Job</th>
<th>Full-Time Job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I lost my job</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My current hours/pay are lower than they were before the pandemic</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage (%)
FIGURE 5. CHALLENGES FACED BY PARENTING STUDENTS DUE TO THE PANDEMIC AT WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

- I had to help children in my home with their schooling: 47%
- I missed at least one day of work/class due to childcare arrangements: 35%
- My child(ren) will be home at least part-time due to COVID-19 this fall: 80%
Disparities in Basic Needs Insecurities
Utilization of Supports

- Utilization of campus supports was generally uncommon
Reasons why students experiencing BNI did not use campus supports at WCU

- I do not think I am eligible: 78%
- Other people need those programs more than I do: 77%
- I do not need these programs: 60%
- I do not know how to apply: 48%
- I did not know they existed or were available: 45%
- People like me do not use programs like that: 26%
- I am embarrassed to apply: 21%
- I had difficulty completing the application: 8%
The **WCU Resource Pantry** supports student success by minimizing food and basic need insecurity and preparing students for life after graduation.

**How The Resource Pantry Works:**
- Open to ALL undergraduate and grad students.
- No appointment necessary, walk-ins welcome.
- Online ordering available
- No limits on frequency of visits

**What We Offer:**
- Non-perishable food items
- Fresh produce from the WCU Campus Gardens
- Personal Care items
- School supplies
- Career clothing (now located in Career Center*)
- Coming soon: Benefits Hub!
Special Projects

- Destigmatization Efforts
- Food Delivery Service
- After-Hours Package Pick-Up
- Benefits Hub
- Refrigerator Rental Program
- Philly Campus Location
- Policy Advocacy
Enduring Challenges

- Improve Student Awareness
- Heavy reliance on donations (of time, talent, goods, and money)
  - scheduled and consistent drives for food & personal care items
  - scheduled and consistent fundraisers
  - interested / strong FWS-eligible students
  - Community partners / volunteers for Benefits Hub (helping students navigate applications for benefits/services)
Upcoming Event:

The Center For Civic Engagement & Social Impact presents our very first...

WCU Resource Pantry Hunger Banquet Fundraiser

Tuesday, April 26, 2022
7:00pm - 9:00pm
WCU Foundation
202 Carter Drive
West Chester, PA 19382

Join us in bringing awareness to the issues of hunger, poverty, and social injustice through an interactive dinner experience!

For ticket information, please visit: https://tinyurl.com/RP-Hunger-Banquet