



ANNOUNCEMENT:

Innovative New Project at Work in California Aims to Connect California Community College Students with Basic Needs Support

November 09, 2021

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice launched a new project this fall to connect Compton College students with needed supports to improve their academic success.

California has made significant strides in expanding eligibility and access to public support programs to reduce basic needs insecurity among college students. Yet there remains a gap between food insecure students and utilization of food supports like CalFresh (also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP). With support from the Michelson 20MM Foundation, the new project will utilize text-based nudging to provide Compton College students with timely and relevant information about CalFresh.

Over the past six years, The Hope Center has documented that fewer than one in four students experiencing basic needs insecurity access public benefits like CalFresh. Among those with need who do not seek out support, seven in 10 do not believe they are eligible for support.

“Texting is a low-cost, scalable intervention that has the potential to increase students’ awareness of and connection to the supports they need,” said Sara Goldrick-Rab, President & Founder of The Hope Center. “It is hard to study when you’re hungry and worried about where your next meal is coming from. Ultimately, this project is about supporting student success. If we can help mitigate food insecurity of these students, we can help them reach their goals of college completion.”

An [October 2021 study](#), released by The Hope Center found that nudging students at Amarillo College doubled the rate of students visiting the college’s benefits hub – Amarillo Resource Center (ARC). The students nudged to visit the ARC were 20% more likely to pass developmental education courses, a crucial milestone.

“Homelessness, unemployment, and food insecurity disproportionately affect students of color,” said Dr. Keith Curry, President/CEO of Compton College. “This is an opportunity for Compton College to expand our partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services to ensure eligible Compton College students sign up for the CalFresh food assistance program. By encouraging our students to apply for the assistance they need, we can help them focus on their academic and career success.”

ABOUT THE HOPE CENTER

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice is an action research center redefining what it means to be a student-ready college with a national movement centering #RealCollege students' basic needs. Our work is guided by five pillars: action research, institutional transformation, policy and advocacy, communications, and sustainability. For more information, contact us at hcpres@temple.edu.