

Queensborough Community College, CUNY

Academic Senate

To: Joel Kuszai, Secretary, Steering Committee of the Academic Senate

Fr: Emily S. Tai, Chair, Subcommittee on Food Insecurity

Date: August 28, 2016

Subject: Report of the Committee on Food Insecurity

As of this writing, the Lucille A. Bova Food Pantry, established in May, 2016, has sustained a four-month pilot. Between May-August, 2016, through a food drive that brought together various student groups, and donors across campus from students, faculty, and staff, the Pantry collected enough food to completely fill all twelve shelves. We also distributed food, responding to approximately 30 requests, generated by approximately 10 students. Most of these requests were referrals from Single Stop, which identifies students who may be struggling with housing and food insecurity. Members of the Committee on Food Insecurity were pleased to see that at least one homeless student was able to be assisted via these contacts. This student is now domiciled in CUNY housing and working toward an anticipated January, 2017, degree.

Members of the Food Insecurity Committee are also gratified to see that that following faculty members are interested in establishing Service-Learning Partnerships with the Food Pantry:

Dr. Lana Zinger (Health, Physical Education, and Dance) would link Health and Nutrition Classes to the control of food expiration dates, monitoring food safety, and food distribution. A Food Health Fair event, coordinated with Queensborough's PTK Chapter, and other student clubs, would be planned for November, 2016.

Dr. Christine Mooney (Business) would have her class design a "Financial Plan" for the Food Pantry, applying an NSF-based "Mission Model Canvas" Pedagogy.

Dr. Cheryl Tokke (Business) would work with student to help "market" PTK Food Drives

Dr. Amy Traver (Social Sciences) will be organizing a Service Learning Project with her EDUC-101 course involving the Food Pantry this semester. Students will be studying the relationship between food insecurity and learning at various levels of education, and they will coordinate a food drive. The project might take additional directions depending on student interests/ideas, as well.

A possible project with a faculty member in the Department of Art and Photography is also under development.

Queensborough's NYPIRG chapter (coordinator, Ms. Grace McGee, a Lambda Sigma alumna) would also promote Food Drives, and assist with Food Pantry staffing needs.

We would like to acknowledge President Diane Call and Vice-President Sherri Newcomb, who have agreed to provide additional keys for faculty involved in service-learning projects connected to the Food Pantry.

We are also grateful to Mr. Stephen Di Dio, and Mr. Ralph Romanelli, who have indicated that a special Food Pantry Address and website page will be established.

We would finally like to acknowledge Ms. Amawati Gonesh, Program Administrator of Queensborough's Single Stop, and her colleagues, who worked closely with us, this summer, referring needy students. We hope this partnership will continue.

As of this writing, the Food Pantry will be available five days a week, as per the availability of the following five faculty members:

Mondays, 2-3 P.M. (Dr. Amy Traver)

Tuesdays, 9.30-10.30 A.M. and by appointment (Dr. Sharon Ellerton)

Wednesdays, by appointment (Dr. Emily Tai)

Thursdays, by appointment (Dr. Aviva Geismar)

Fridays, 2-3 P.M. (Dr. Susan Jacobowitz)

All requests should be sent to the new food pantry email address, or to etai@qcc.cuny.edu

In addition, Father Anthony Rosado will be making fresh-cooked food available at the Newman Center (open 12-4, Monday through Thursday, across the street on Cloverdale Boulevard), on the following schedule:

Monday, pasta

Tuesday, rice and beans

Wednesday: Cooking with the Newman Club

Thursday: omelets/waffles

In addition, the Committee would like to advance the following long-term recommendations for consideration:

- The Committee on Food Insecurity might benefit from becoming a permanent committee of the Academic Senate, or a permanent sub-committee of either the Steering Committee or the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life and Disability Matters. This matter should be considered by the Steering Committee and the Committee on Bylaws.
- Several members of the Food Insecurity Committee have been approached by faculty members (and off-campus donors) who would like to contribute to the cost of stocking the Food Pantry financially rather than in kind. We are therefore recommending the establishment of a bank account, either on, or off-campus, and believe the feasibility of establishing a “treasurer’s” position for the Committee, who would manage this aspect of supplying the pantry, should be explored.
- Given the productive partnership between Single Stop and faculty on the Committee on Food Insecurity during the pilot period, the Committee on Food Insecurity would also recommend consideration that, at some point in the future, it might be useful to allocate a Pantry key to the Director of Single Stop, who could assist students in emergency situations.
- The members of the Committee would also like to respectfully suggest that a student desk be placed in the Lucille A. Bova Food Pantry, so that a faculty member or student making the pantry available would have work space for the duration of their service period.
- It has been suggested that a connecting link to the Lucille A. Bova Food Pantry should be established within the Blackboard Course Shell referral to useful student resources.
- It has been suggested that the Food Pantry door be given an identifying sign.
- Finally, members of the Committee on Food Insecurity would like to advance the following recommendations regarding future food supplies:
 - Given student interest in ready-to-eat items, donation of cans with easy-open lids should be encouraged . (Faculty have also responded to this need by supplying plastic utensils and light canvas carry bags. We are also thinking to encourage the donation of can-openers.)
 - Given the needs of students with housing insecurity, the provision of a few cosmetic/personal hygiene items (Soap, shampoo, etc.) might also be encouraged. (A few items of this type are now in the pantry, donated by the NYPIRG Chapter.)

As of this writing, a Food Drive, lead by Queensborough’s Phi Theta Kappa Lambda Sigma Chapter, and supported by Student organizations, and Service-Learning Partners, will be launched in early September (probably between the 6-15th September). We are hoping to announce it at the September meeting of the Academic Senate.

The chair of the Subcommittee on Food Insecurity would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge President Call, Stephen Di Dio, Ralph Romanelli, as well as her colleagues, Drs. Traver, Jacobowitz, Ellerton, Geismar; Ms. Gonesh and her colleagues at Single Stop, and Father Anthony Rosado. The selfless energy of Queensborough faculty and staff who have supported this project is an inspiration.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily S. Tai

Associate Professor of History

Vice-Chair, Steering Committee of the Academic Senate

Chair, Special Sub-Committee on Food Insecurity