Basic Needs at CWU

CWU

Goal 3: Elevate the holistic well-being of our students.

Initiative 3.3: Support and expand access to basic needs, including establishing a resource coordinator dedicated to assisting students experiencing food and housing insecurity.

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Question 1:
What are some basic needs concerns that you see students face in your role? (Please provide three strategies)

Basic Needs Statistics

- WSAC Statewide Postsecondary Basic Needs Survey - 2023
  - South Kittitas reported the highest rate of basic needs insecurity at 57.9%.
  - 35% of CWU students reported as facing housing insecurity.
  - 78% of students in the South-Central Region reported the inability to afford childcare.

- Student Financial Wellness Survey - Fall 2023.
  - 65% of students worry about having enough money to pay for school.
  - 44% of students reported being housing insecure.

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"…Basic needs insecurity is a structural issue, not an individual characteristic or shortcoming. People face basic needs insecurity when the "ecosystem" of support is not in place, not because of a personal decision or action." (Henry& Beecher, 2021).

Barriers for Support

Systematic	Assistance Programs Qualifications
Institutional	Capacity
	Resource Scarcity
Student Focused	Stigma
	Academic Schedule

CWU

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Question 2:
What are some strategies we can use to reduce the stigma surrounding basic needs? (Please provide three strategies)

Reducing Stigma

Creating a culture of caring depends on the whole community, including you.

- Never assume someone's basic needs security based on appearance or actions.

- Be open about resources on campus and if you've used them.

- Introduce students to resources yourself if you can.

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Strategic Priorities

Hunger Free and Basic Needs Strategic Plan

Strengthen existing support resources for CWU students.

- Housing
- Food
- Transportation
- Technology
- Healthcare

Equitable access to resources

- Community partnerships and collaboration.
- Basic Needs Resource Hub plan by 2025.
- Broadening community awareness

Create sustainable infrastructure

- Implement sustainable funding models.
- Align University infrastructure to support long term basic needs programs and initiatives.
- Expand online resource support for students.

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Resource Coordinator

- Funded through HB1559

- Serves as the single point of contact for students seeking basic needs assistance

- Oversees:
  - WSAC SSEH Grant Opportunity
  - Hunger-Free Basic Needs Strategic Plan
  - Connects students with resources
  - Assists in applications for state benefits
    - WIC
    - SNAP

How has the position shifted?

Resource Navigator

Under Case Management

Part-time Graduate student at 10 hours

Focused primarily on WSAC SSEH

Basic Needs Resource Coordinator

Under the Presidents Office

Full Time at 40 Hours

Focused on Basic Needs Initiatives outside of the grant

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WSAC SSEH Grant

$102,000 annual grant issued to support students experiencing homelessness

- Funds a Part-time Student Position

- Budgeted $91,500 towards basic needs assistance – Indefinite funding

- Cost of Attendance is no longer a barrier

- Students are eligible if they:
  - Aged out of foster care
  - Homeless
  - Housing Insecure
  - Non-tradition, graduate, and international students are eligible as well

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WSAC SSEH Grant

What can funds go towards?

Housing

Food

Healthcare
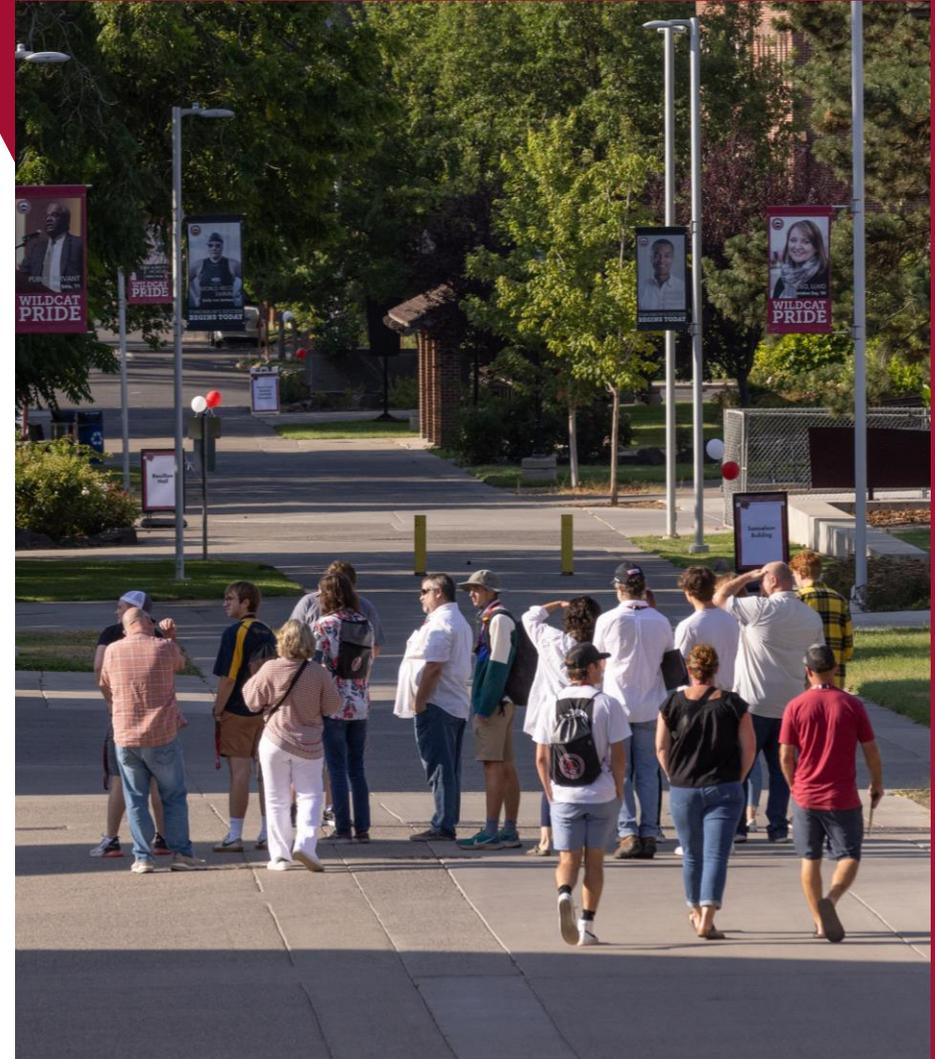
Childcare

Transportation

Technology

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Question 3:
What state-wide survey is being distributed to students in October?

WSAC SSEH Grant

- Distributed over $86,000 worth of aid in 2024

- Awarded to 40 students

- Award amounts range from $300 - $4,000

- Increase of interest from the following student populations:
  - International Students
  - Students with families
  - Attend in CWU Centers

What's Next?

- WSAC Pilot Program
  - Targeted SNAP Outreach to students
- State-wide WSAC Basic Needs Survey
- Implementation of the Hunger-Free and Basic Needs Strategic Plan
- Basic Needs Resource Database
- Basic Needs Toolkit

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Question 4:
How many pounds of food has the wildcat pantry distributed over the last three years?

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In three years, we have...

Served 5,000+ individuals
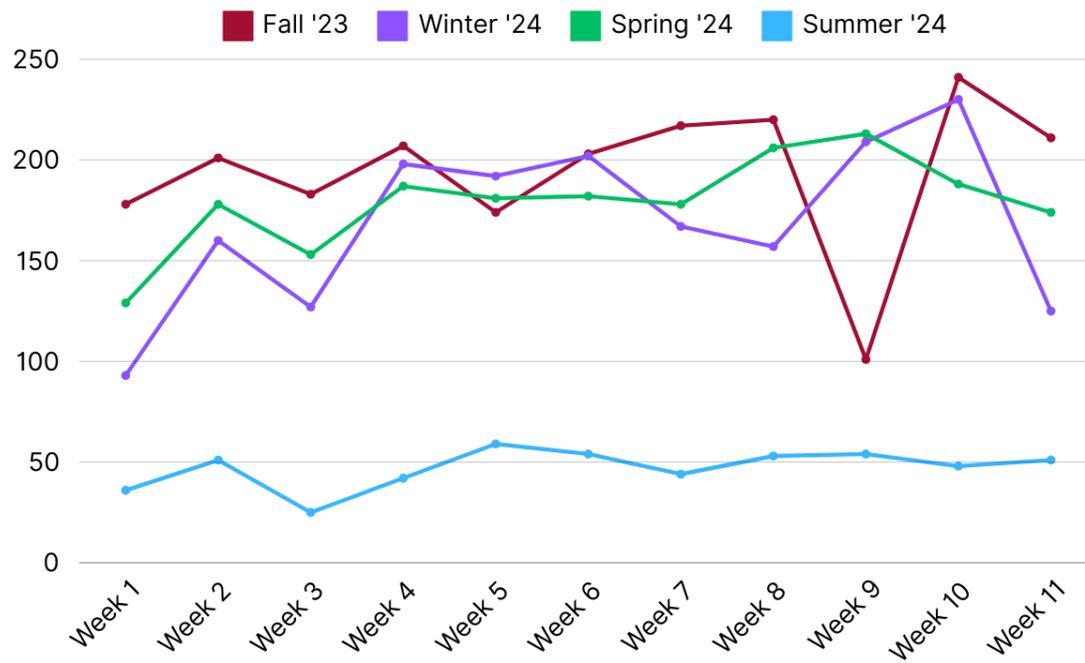
Distributed 50,000lb+

Basic Needs

- 47% of CWU students are food insecure (WSAC, 2023)
- That is a total of 3,700 students in a single academic year
- 3000+ Wildcat Pantry visits in AY 2022-23, 22% recurring
  - 100% said pantry improved their CWU experience
  - Save money for other living/college costs 70%
  - Improved Mental health 56%
  - More time to focus on academics 49%

Question 5:
How many visits is the wildcat pantry projected to receive in the 2024-2025 academic year?

Visits to the Pantry

Wildcat Pantry Weekly Visits 2023-2024 Academic Year

Weekly Average: 138 visitors per week

Monthly Average: 442 visitors per month

2022 – 2023 Visits: 3010

2023 – 2024 Visits: 6628

Growth Rate: 120%

Projected growth rate for 2024 - 2025: 36%

Estimated visits for 2024 - 2025: 9000+

Our Team

Charles Johnson

Lauren Hinkley

Naomi Klockars

Gabriela Becraft

Tianyi Mao

Ales Iriarte-Canales
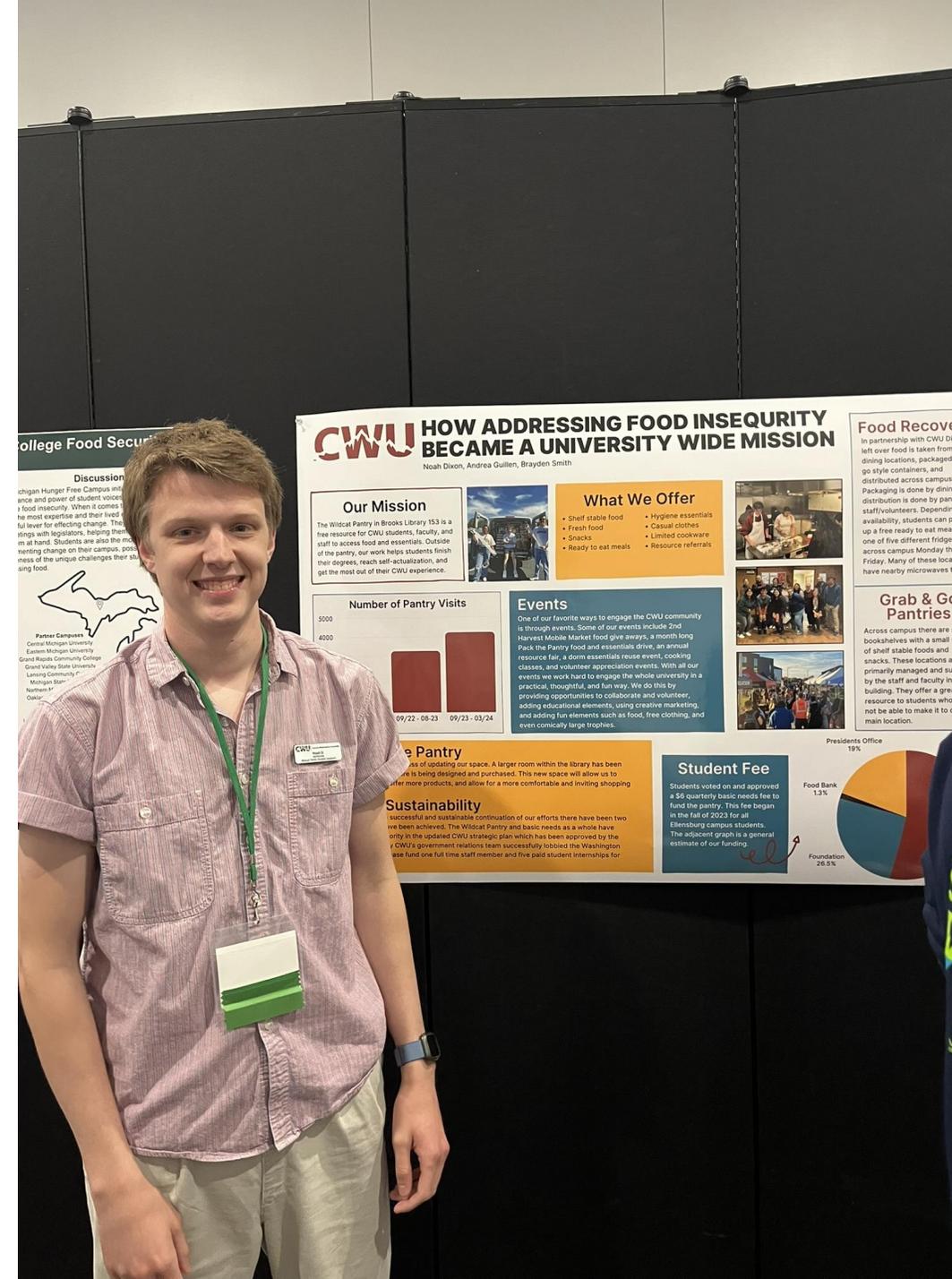
Luis Reyes

Local Partnerships

- FISH
  - Wildcat Pantry is now a Subcontractor
- HopeSource
- 2nd Harvest
  - Hosted three times this past year
  - Served 250+ households each time
  - Upcoming event on October 8th, 2024, from 12:00 PM – 2:00PM

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Question 6:
What international conference is CWU & The Wildcat Pantry hosting April 2025?

Sharing our Knowledge

- Washington Oregon Higher Education Conference
  - Presented on Wildcat Pantry program
- University's Fighting World Hunger
  - Presented on "How Addressing Food Insecurity became a University Wide Mission"
  - Hosting in Spring 2025

Creating a Culture

- Pop-Up Pantries
  - Two - three times per quarter
- Share the Abundance Fall Festival
  - On & Off Campus Basic Needs Resources
  - Free Food, Clothing, Games
- Friendsgiving
  - Free Thanksgiving dinner for CWU students
  - Connect with vital resources
  - Create connections
- Pack the Pantry
  - Annual month-long essentials drive
  - Friendly competition between CWU Divisions/Colleges
  - Provosts Division "won" the last academic year

Hands On Workshops

- Cooking Classes with JumpStart
  - Instructed by CWU Executive Chef Joe Ritchie
- Veggie Seed Planting with Wildcat Farm

What's Next

Infrastructure

- Pantry Soft (pantry management system)
- New checkout system
- Newly updated Space in the Library

Food Programs

- Mobile Ordering (part of Pantry Soft)
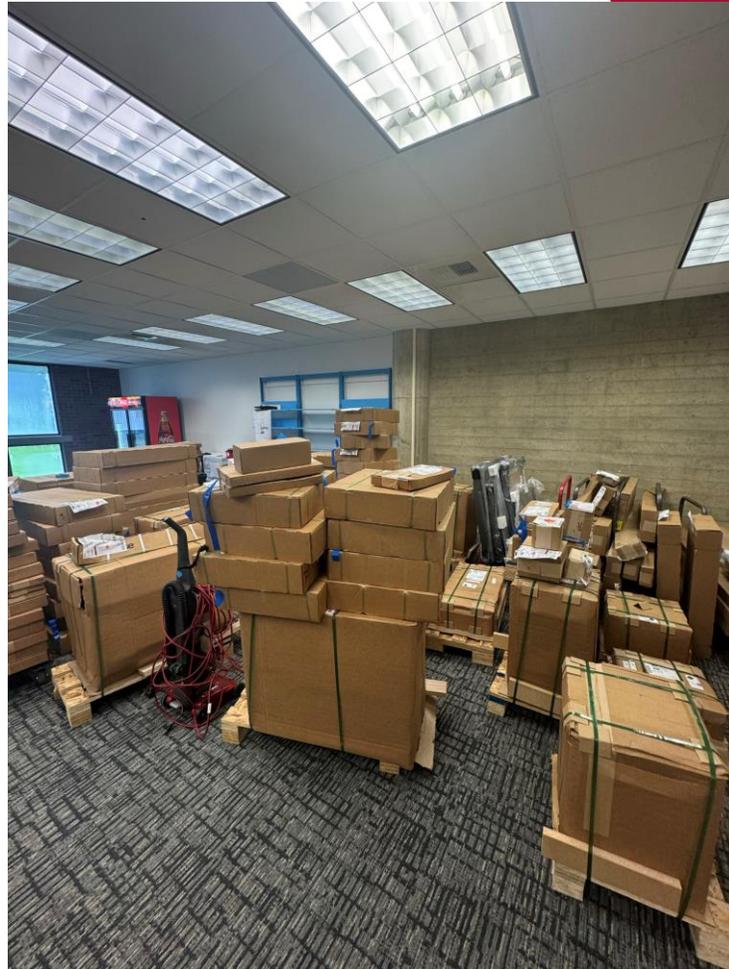- Emergency Meal Card Program (Winter '25)

Growing Team

- State funding for student interns (FY25)
- Hiring permanent Wildcat Pantry Coordinator

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Pantry Projects

Pantry Projects

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Pantry Projects

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Pantry Projects

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Wildcat Pantry
2023 – 2024 Impact Report

- Learn more about the ongoing efforts to support the holistic wellbeing of all students at CWU
- Overview of effective programming centered around fostering a community of equity and belonging
- First-hand testimonies of the impact that the Wildcat Pantry has had on the students at CWU
- Learn more about the future of the Wildcat Pantry
- Discover how you can get involved today

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Thank you, Partners!

Student Volunteers - Staff Volunteers - Faculty Volunteers - FISH Food Bank - CWU Libraries - CWU President's Office - CWU Dining - CWU Career Services - CWU Foundation - HopeSource - APOYO - 2nd Harvest - ASCWU Student Government - CWU Wellness - CWU Orientation - CWU Sustainability - Wildcat Farm - CWU Residence Life - CWU SLICE - KCRCO - CWU PUSH - CWU DEC - CWU University Relations - CWU Recreation - Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce - CWU Police - CWU Office of Title IX - CWU Student Rights & Responsibilities - CWU HR - CWU Capital Planning & Projects - CWU Jump Start - CWU SURC Scheduling - & Many More