

STREAMLINING FOOD INSECURITY EFFORTS WITH PHILANTHROPY

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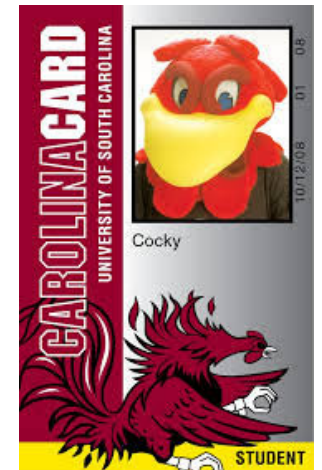
PURPOSE

Donor Interest:

- Two different donors interested in students with food insecurity having access to campus dining through their Carolina Card
- Area 1: Access to more retail swipes with the addition of funds on the card (Chick-Fil-A, etc.)
- Area 2: Donation of unused swipes from students to the CommUnity Shop/Gamecock Pantry for use by students in need

Original Intended Outcomes:

- Ability to collect more swipes across campus to go to the CommUnity Shop
- Ability to add swipes to those in need for use in retail outlets
- Possibility of working with annual giving to collect swipes



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PEOPLE INVOLVED

Project Sponsor: Michelle Dodenhoff, VP for Development

Project Team:

- ❖ Joe Sobieralski: Senior Associate VP for Administration
 - Governance Process for swipe administration
- ❖ Joe Fortune: Direct of Business Affairs- Carolina Card
 - Purchase of Carolina Card Readers & I-Pads
- ❖ Mark Shook: Dean of Students
 - Money for the Carolina Cares Fund
- ❖ Cameron Hall: Executive Director, Annual Giving
 - Promotion of funding for swipes in Nov through annual giving appeals



CommUnity Shop:

- ❖ Jennifer Whetstone-Jackson, Assistant Director for Basic Needs



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PROJECT PATH

BASIC NEEDS AT USC 2026

Every student deserves access to the essential resources to thrive.

- College students face a higher rate of food insecurity than the general population
- 29% of four-year college students have experienced food insecurity (1 in every 3 students)
- 515,350 SC residents face food insecurity
- Visits to USC's CommUnity Shop increased by 70% during the 2024-2025 academic year

2025: Year In Review

- 15,000+** visits to the CommUnity Shop
- 1,800** unique households served
- 100,000** items distributed
- 770** Care Team cases - 80 involving basic needs
- 2,500** Garnet Bites subscribers
- 150+** events hosted & held
- 90** Carolina Cares Fund applications
- 19** Established USC & community partnerships



See what our students need most right now!



Make a lasting impact through our Endowed Fund.



Support our CommUnity Shop directly.

Investing in Impact

\$500 - CommUnity Shop Daily Sustainer
Keeps the CommUnity Shop stocked each day.

\$2,000 - Student Support Champion
Covers one student's urgent and emergent needs.

\$8,000 - SEC Food Pantry Conference Sponsor
Connects food pantry leaders and community partners.

\$25,000 - SEC Food Fight Champion
Empowers our larger initiatives, fueling programs to fight hunger.

\$50,000 - Community Shop Annual Fund
Sustains the CommUnity Shop for a full year.

\$100,000 - Carolina Cares Funding (annually)
Provides emergency funding to support students for one year.

\$1 Million Endowed Donor
Establishes a lasting legacy, permanently supporting programs and initiatives for generations to come.



Office of the Dean of Students
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PROJECT PATH

✓ More Food Directly into the CommUnity Shop for students who need it

- X More funding
- X More swipes
- X More food collected across campus



Actual Needs:

- ❖ Pathways for food donations directly to the shop
- ❖ Students who have the ability to bring the food to the pantry
- ❖ Ease of purchase for food to be transported directly to the shop with recurring funding
- ❖ Pick-ups across campus and direct delivery to the CommUnity Shop
- ❖ Student Involvement that accomplishes these objectives



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KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Parking Tickets = Food Donation at the Shop

Impact:

- First week of classes = Tickets waived if students bring 5 food donations directly to the CommUnity Shop
- One needs to be peanut-butter (highest need item)



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KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Gamecock Club Points

Impact:

- Points added to Gamecock Club Account for students who bring food directly to the CommUnity Shop
- Additional points for dairy food items (milk)



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KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Back-To-School USC Can Drive on the Horseshoe

Impact:

- Visual representation of the food that is needed
- Project for Student Government
- Transportation of goods collected directly to the CommUnity Shop



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KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Harvest Hope Food Bank Direct Delivery

Impact:

- Delivery stop twice a week from Harvest Hope Food Truck directly to the pantry
- Influence from donors to Harvest Hope to influence this decision



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KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Amazon Wish List Food Drives



Impact:

- Focus on donors giving through annual giving to the Amazon Wish Lists for the pantry
- Using Annual giving funding for wish list purchases
- Amazon delivers to the pantry on pallets directly- which gets the food to the consumer quicker



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RESULTS

Donor Feedback: Communication of actual needs & funding impact to key donors

Partnership Coordination:

- Use of van
- Food delivery schedules
- Maximizing student volunteers to set delivery times to get food on the shelves through drives
- Purchase of food with donor funds weekly in bulk with van and student volunteer help

Overall = Efficient Processes & Effective use of Resources



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NEXT STEPS



Fall 2026: Implementation of marketing campaign to internal campus for efforts to get food to the pantry in real time through the improvement optimization areas

Annual Giving/Fundraising: Meeting to be scheduled with Student Affairs and Annual Giving to discuss opportunities with donors- Emphasis on the Amazon Wish Lists

Student Government: Awareness to students of new opportunities to source food for the pantry

Nov 2026: Food Drive on the Horseshoe prior to Thanksgiving – can drive to be used in future communication efforts



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REFLECTIONS

Problem Solver =/ Process Improvement

- Food Insecurity on a college campus isn't a problem for me to solve. Solving the problem came with opening the pantry and setting up food drives.
- Improving the process – starts with the notion that we need to improve our institutional systems to reduce food insecurity long-term and get the product to the consumer in a more efficient ways.

Starting with the Bottom vs. the Top

- Meetings with three top level administrators = 3 different visions and process improvements
- Meeting with the CommUnity Shop coordinators and volunteers = what really needed to happen
- You need buy-in at all levels but starting with the end-user could have saved me lots of time in order to get started on the key improvements sooner!



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REFLECTIONS



We are just getting started!!!



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REFLECTIONS

Personal Reflection:

- ❖ Passion Project to help the CommUnity Shop
- ❖ Process Improvement: Daily in new role; from parking spaces to guest speaker forms, to launching new programs and planning events – Gaining Buy-In; meeting with the end-users and the importance of the discovery phase to understand the “Why”!



THANK YOU!

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