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In spring 2020, I was hired in my first, on-campus job. I was excited—not only would I again be working, I would be addressing a topic that concerned me: food insecurity. I was going to be my school's first Food Pantry Student Assistant. Already, I had seen the tiny pantry and had learned how there wasn't enough donations to support the growing need—and I had plans to change that.

A week later, my school shut down due to CoVid-19. Control of the pantry shifted out of my supervisor's priorities and hands as students were rushed home. When I was finally able to get ahold of my supervisor, I was told that I was no longer needed; the pantry was being managed by someone else. There was nothing for me to do.

I felt frustrated, angry, and disappointed—but most of all, I felt helpless. I knew from my almost-job orientation and my outside research that food insecurity on my campus was affecting marginalized students without a voice. I was also told that many of these students were commuters. This aligns with the information provided by AAC&U (2019). According to this organization, many students facing food insecurity were also facing housing security. These students are from marginalized group, such as LGBT, African Americans, or former foster youth.

A student's job is first and foremost to be a student. Food insecurity jeopardizes this job—how can a student focus on their grade when they haven't eaten a healthy meal in days?

For the half-year I was at school, I witness floods of uneaten food being carelessly discarded. At a "Weigh the Waste" event spanning a lunch period, the amount of food trashed spanned across two long tables. While I do not have the weight for 2019, this event say almost 300 pounds of food being discarded in March 2016 (Chapman n.d.). Many people who eat at the cafeteria have school housing; for first years living on campus, cafeteria access is mandatory. Given that it is often students without housing who suffer from food security, this highlights a stark injustice between those who have food and those who do not. Marginalized individuals aren't just suffering from food insecurity—they are suffering food insecurity in an environment that is more than able to provide for them. I appreciate my school's attempt to bring food waste to students' attention, but what about food insecurity? When will we hear about this?

I hope that we will be able to return to campus next semester, and I hope that my return allows me to regain my position as Food Pantry Student Assistant of Chapman's Food Pantry. The pantry currently assists 65 needy students; it has a lot of room to grow. I want to expand donations by actively soliciting businesses as well as student associations. Many students at Chapman have the resources to help their fellow classmates. I believe that if they know about the issue, they will be more willing to help. I also want to make the pantry healthier. One of the issues with the system was the lack of fresh, healthy food; the freshest item was canned fruit.

While I am restricted by the lack of any temperature controls (E.g., no fridge, no air conditioning), I want to have set dates where fresh foods would be available. These foods would only be limited for roughly 24 hours to prevent degradation. Finally, I want to work with the cafeteria to see if their food waste could be utilized for the food pantry. I am not talking about the half-eaten remains of other students; I want the uneaten breakfast foods, the lunch leftovers. I want the items that were perfect, except uneaten, and I want to give them to the people in need. My plan is ambitious, particularly since many organizations are still recovering from CoVid and since this is my last year of undergraduate. But even if I am just laying the groundwork next semester, I believe that the next person to hold my title can continue my owkr.

AAC&U News 2019. Majority of College Students Experience Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, or Homelessness

Chapman n.d. Accessed at https://www.chapman.edu/campus-services/sustainability/_files/Chapter%207.pdf