ABSTRACT
The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated student food insecurity on college campuses, creating difficulties meeting demand. These challenges are heightened by persistent patterns of racial and economic disparities among students and by social stigmas that limit discussions of potential responses. Santa Clara University (SCU), a mid-sized Jesuit institution, has yet to conduct a campus-wide assessment of food insecurity. We recommend that the university immediately increase funding and awareness of food assistance among its student population while striving for food sovereignty by increasing student agency and access.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
1. What are current levels of student food security and are there demographic disparities?
2. What are student perceptions regarding the current campus food system?
3. What lessons can be learned and shared from student food security initiatives that have worked to support students at other Jesuit universities in the US?

METHODS

Shared Results:
- Shared results with food pantries at other Jesuit institutions
- Shared findings with community partner to be implemented at the Bronco Food pantry

Coded Survey
Initial Data Analysis:
- Student Interviews
- Faculty Interviews
- Focus groups
- Designed survey and sent to food pantry staff at 28 universities, 7 responded at the time of this poster.
- Conducted 2 Interviews with Jesuit Institutions

Study Design:
- Implemented the use of Student Surveys assessing food insecurity, student focus groups, surveys assessing food pantries at Jesuit schools and subsequent follow up interviews

Subsequent Data Analysis:
- Shared findings and received feedback from community partner
- Further developed creative solutions to promote food security based on survey and interview responses

RESULTS

Campus-Wide Food Security Assessment: Survey
- We found that about 21% of students self-reported having experienced food insecurity while attending SCU.
- According to our survey, 11% of respondents expressed very low levels of food security, 8% of respondents expressed low levels, and 10% of respondents expressed moderate levels (n=588).

Demographic Disparities
- Ethnicity and self-identified food insecurity were found to be dependent variables.
- Hispanic students are more likely to self-report food insecurity while having attended SCU (p<0.001).
- Students that identified as Black or African American, Latinx, or Pacific Islander were most likely to be food insecure.
- More than 25% of students that self-identified as food insecure were unaware of 1 SCU Food Insecurity Program

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations
- increased and permanent funding to the SCU Food Security Program and Bronco Food Pantry in order to increase support to students in need
- awareness campaign to increase student awareness of food-related assistance available
- educational programs regarding student-food relationships
- re-evaluate current use of meal point system for SCU campus food system
- lower prices in campus dining halls
- increase diversity of foods available and access to culturally-relevant foods

Discussion
- pre- and post-COVID analysis was difficult to pinpoint due to lack of student food security data at SCU prior to this assessment
- major shifts must be made in order to secure food sovereignty for all SCU students

Food Security and Aid Awareness

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REFERENCES