How an Affordable Housing Program Supports College Students

May 11, 2022, 1-2pm EST
Housekeeping

Meeting will last 1 hour

Audio is muted - please ask questions through Q&A.

Session is being recorded

Follow-up email after the session will include the recording and resources.
SchoolHouse Connection works to **overcome homelessness through education**. We provide **strategic advocacy and practical assistance** in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarship
- FB Group: facebook.com/groups/SchoolHouseConnection
- Newsletter: schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/
Jillian Sitjar
Senior Higher Education Program Manager
SchoolHouse Connection
Higher Education: Why it Matters for Homeless Youth

- Some form of postsecondary education is necessary for jobs that pay enough to lift out of poverty and afford housing.
- Higher education is also associated with better health and other indicators of well-being.
- The equity gaps laid bare by COVID-19 will only worsen if we are not intentional and proactive about helping marginalized and vulnerable young people successfully make the transition to and through higher education.
- More students aren’t considering postsecondary options and focusing on jobs/basic needs insecurity.
COVID’s Impact on Pursuing Postsecondary Education

- Higher education enrollment fell a further 2.7 percent in the fall of 2021 following a 2.5 percent drop in the preceding fall. Continued enrollment losses in the pandemic represent a total two-year decline of 5.1% or 938,000 students since fall 2019.

- FAFSA numbers were down about 5% for the 2020-2021 school year compared to 2019-2020 school year; the decline is even steeper for lower-income students.

- There’s currently a 12% decrease in FAFSAs renewals this year.

#REALCOLLEGE 2021: BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY DURING THE ONGOING PANDEMIC

MARCH 2021

Entering the fall 2020 term, higher education was reeling from the coronavirus pandemic. Enrollment was down — particularly among students most at risk of basic needs insecurity; fewer students had completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and college retention rates had dropped. Students and faculty were stressed and anxious. And by the end of the term, more than 267,000 Americans died. At the same time, the federal government pumped an unprecedented $6+ billion of emergency aid via the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

This report examines the pandemic’s impact on the #RealCollege students who were able to continue their education in this challenging environment. We assessed students’ basic needs security and their well-being as indicated by their employment status, academic engagement, and mental health.

OUR ELECTRONIC SURVEY WAS COMPLETED BY

NEARLY 200,000 (11% response rate) STUDENTS ATTENDING

202 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN

42 STATES

130 two-year colleges

72 four-year colleges and universities

THESE STUDENTS TOLD US THAT...

NEARLY 3 IN 5 experienced basic needs insecurity

FOOD INSECURITY AFFECTED

39% at two-year institutions

29% at four-year institutions

HOUSING INSECURITY AFFECTED

48% HOMELESSNESS AFFECTED

14%

THE BLACK/WHITE GAP IN BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY WAS

16 percentage points

What do Young People Need to be Successful in School?

Youth with lived experience said:

- Connection to positive, supportive adults
- **Stability** - difficult to meet educational needs when you can't meet basic needs
- Help navigating **financial aid**
- Knowledge of existing **campus support programs and resources** (social media, word of mouth, visibility: posters, flyers)
Affordable Rents for College Students (ARCS)
What is Student Housing Insecurity?

- Rising costs of college
- Barriers for college students to access affordable housing programs
- Impact on most marginalized students
College Housing Northwest (CHNW) and the History of ARCS

- CHNW "50 years of supporting students in housing"
- ARCS Pilot began in Spring 2020
- Coalition to House Students
- Student Housing Insecurity Summit in November 2020
- State ARPA Funding Fall 2021
In 2019, approximately 8,100 students from 14 Oregon community colleges responded to the #RealCollege survey. The results indicate:

- **41%** of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days.
- **52%** of respondents were housing insecure in the previous year.
- **20%** of respondents were homeless in the previous year.
Eligibility: enrolled at least ½ time, referred by partner, good academic standing, general rental criteria

Minimal barriers: no rental history, no income requirements, no deposit, no application fee, reduced utility/WIFI costs, eviction prevention

Personalized support: monthly check ins, emergency grants, access to resources and referrals

50% rental subsidy

How ARCS works?
Collaborative Partnerships

- **Current Partners:** PSU, MHCC, PCC, CCC, NAYA, New Avenues
- **New partnership development:** government, culturally specific nonprofits, funders
- **What we collaborate on:** fundraising, government relations, public relations, new projects, policy advocacy
Challenges and Opportunities

- **Advocacy** - elevating the issue of student housing insecurity, advocating for policy change

- **Increasing capacity** - new properties/projects

- **Fundraising & Sustainability** - developing funding strategy

- **DHS Partnership** - new partnership to help youth transition out of homelessness and achieve education/training goals
ARCS & The Potential of Strong Partnerships
A bit about MHCC

Enrollment: Pre-pandemic - 24,000, since March of 2020 - 19,000

- 42% of Students Identify as Students of Color
- 41% of Students are Pell Eligible
- 42% of Students are Part Time
Table 1. Percentage of Students with Basic Needs Insecurity During the Pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of basic needs insecurity</th>
<th>Mt. Hood Community College</th>
<th>Peer institutions</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any basic needs insecurity</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food insecurity</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing insecurity</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2020 #RealCollege During the Pandemic Survey
Notes: Some measures were changed from previous #RealCollege surveys and are not directly comparable. Results from any category with fewer than 10 respondents are not shown in the table.
MHCC Focus on Student Basic Needs

- All centered within an Equity Framework
  - Capacity Building
- Resource Allocation
  - Technology Support
  - Childcare and Transportation
  - Utilities
  - Housing
Value of Strategic Partnership

- Uplift needs of students in the region
- Build capacity for policy development
- Share data and best practices
- Braid resources for affordable housing development
- Present a unified front with a demand for regional solutions
- Amplify the experiences of students
Since our founding in 1997, we have impacted more than 30,000 young people as they work to overcome barriers, pursue their goals, and realize their potential.

Our services range from prevention, early intervention, to programs designed to help people transition off the street.

We have over 21 different programs that serve youth as young as 9 years old, and up to 25, throughout the Portland metro, Multnomah and Clackamas Counties.
The Young People We Serve

We serve intersecting populations of youth at-risk of, or experiencing houselessness/housing instability

- Youth ageing out of foster care
- LGBTQIA2S+
- Survivors of sex trafficking or exploitation
- Youth living on the streets or in shelters
- Youth experiencing family conflict and beginning to run away
- Youth who are couch surfing, doubles up or not living with family of origin
- Youth living in unsafe housing (impacted by violence, substance use criminal or gang activity)
- Youth who are still family connected, but whole family is experiencing housing instability
Our Programs and Services

Drop In / Basic Needs
A safe space where youth experiencing homelessness can receive three meals a day, six days a week, as well as access to showers, laundry, clothing, and wrap around services.

Education
Alternative Education Center, GED prep, and testing, college readiness, navigation, scholarships, and retention.

Job Training and Employment
Through our social enterprise portfolio: Ben & Jerry’s ice cream shop and New Avenues INK. And our Promoting Avenues to College program (PAVE).

Supportive Housing
We offer a wide range of site-based, community-based, and culturally specific housing (transitional housing, Rapid Re-housing, Subsidized housing, housing navigation and retention case management).

Counseling
Case management for setting and achieving goals and connecting to services and resources.

Drug and alcohol recovery and mental health supports counseling supports.

LGBTQIA2S+
Sexual & Gender Minority Youth Resource Center and The Living Room. Programs provide a safe, supervised, harassment-free space for sexual and gender minority youth ages 13-23.

Youth Opportunity Center
24/7 Youth Safety and Support Center focused on younger youth experiencing housing instability. Provide basic needs, family counseling, education supports, homeless supports, and crisis shelter.
Foster Care Transition Services
A continuum of life skill coaching, case management, residential treatment, and housing supports for youth aging out of foster care.

Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking intervention
Specialized culturally responsive services for survivors of exploitation and trafficking. Services include outreach, case management, shelter access, housing navigation.

Legal Services
In partnership with Metropolitan Public Defenders provide legal advice and representation including eviction prevention, landlord dispute resolution, expungement, family law.

Outreach & Safe Place
Mobile outreach in community and schools and coordination of trained Safe Place sites to identify at-risk youth and connect to services.
Avenues to College and CHNW Pilot

- Foster care transition pilot- leveraging CHNW subsidy with Chafee and other foster youth focused resources
- Below market rent, subsidy, resident services, wrap around supports
- Housing tied to education engagement
ARCS

- Education and employment critical tools toward future earnings and housing stabilization
- Homelessness crisis—emphasis on housing and services for experience of chronic homelessness
- Aligning eligibility to education and and/or workforce engagement
- Leveraging homelessness response resources and subsidies
- Parallels to supportive housing services model
Youth Impact

- 9 youth housed since 2020
- 56% identify as Black, Indigenous or youth of color
- 10% identify as non binary
- 44% identify as LGBTQIA2s+
- Of the youth exited 100% moved to safe, stable housing
- 100% made progress on education, employment or stability goals
- Success Story
Lessons Learned

- Low barrier
- Relationship matters
- Communication is key
- Center education first or housing needs will take over
ARCS Student Perspective
Eric Tompkins
QUESTIONS
Resources

- Higher Education Page
  - Tips for helping homeless youth succeed - living documents
  - Tips for homeless higher education liaisons
- Higher Education Archived Webinars
- FAFSA Page
SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION SUCCESS FOR YOUTH WITH EXPERIENCE IN FOSTER CARE AND HOMELESSNESS

A BRIEFING ON FOUR FEDERAL PROPOSALS

JOIN US

MAY 11TH
11:30 AM

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GO6nyYGtQiqc41RycYq3Tg
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