



Community^{to} Opportunity

BUILDING COMMUNITY TO EXPAND OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVE

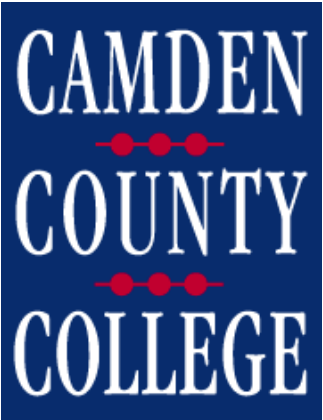
Welcome



Rose Rodriguez
Portfolio Manager for New Jersey
The Tepper Foundation



Community Colleges' Action Plans



- The **Center for Counseling and Wellness** was created at Camden County College this past July 2024 with the hiring of a licensed psychologist and a licensed social worker.
- The Center for Counseling and Wellness provides free, confidential services for students currently enrolled at CCC across the campuses of Blackwood and Camden city. *Services are collaborative, voluntary, inclusive, student-centered, trauma-informed, and honor the student as a whole person.*
- Services include: (1) **counseling sessions** by a licensed mental health provider; (2) **crisis assessment** for students who are in distress and/or dealing with urgent mental health concerns; (3) **case management services** to help connect students to resources available to them at the college and within the community, including community psychiatric care, housing, food pantries, SNAP, Medicaid, childcare, and vocational assistance; (4) **consultation and trainings to faculty and staff** around promoting student mental health and wellness; (5) **outreach programming** on campus to students, and (6) **collaboration with other relevant agencies and organizations** as needed within the college and in our community.
- Actively working on: (1) creating a **multidisciplinary campus BIT/CARE team** to improve our timely response to reports of students in distress, including those who may be at elevated risk of harm to themselves and/or others; (2) working in collaboration with **JED Campus to develop and implement a strategic plan** to ensure our college has the strongest possible mental health safety nets and campus-wide commitment to mental health and well-being; (3) on-boarding of **electronic health records and case management software systems**; (4) partnering with the **Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH) to gather meaningful data** for key stakeholders, and (5) **building a training program** for psychology and social work intern and practicum students to expand the reach of our Center.

Essex County College



Raise Students' Awareness About Available Benefits

- ✓ The survey sent to 4,636 students that qualified for Financial Aid (Pell Eligible)
- ✓ 879 students opened the email
- ✓ 612 students completed the survey
- ✓ There was a total of 334 clicks/visits to the SNAP official link
- ✓ There was a total of 44 clicks/visits to the WIC official link
- ✓ There was a total of 110 clicks/visits to the Medicaid official link



Raise Faculty & Staff Awareness




- ✓ Conducted faculty and staff workshop
- ✓ Developed Promotional Materials
- ✓ Included Basic Needs Services in Course Syllabi and LMS Homepage
- ✓ Presentation at College Convocation
- ✓ Conducted faculty and staff information sessions via Zoom or TEAMS
- ✓ Weekly E-Blast
- ✓ Tabling Events
- ✓ College App

Student Food Insecurities & Basic Needs

- ✓ 382 students served. Distributed 9,400 lbs. of food
- ✓ Conducted Grab-N-Go Events
- ✓ Fresh Produce Distribution
- ✓ Provided Emergency Meal Cards
- ✓ Provided NJ Transit Bus Tickets
- ✓ Emergency Sheltering and Health Care Services

Hudson County Community College

Problem: Many of our students face obstacles on their pathways toward success.

-  ***68.5% of HCCC students experienced food insecurity***
-  ***43% of HCCC students experienced housing insecurity***
-  ***12% of HCCC students experienced homelessness***

Hudson Helps Resource Center launched in April 2021 to provide wraparound, holistic supports to our students at HCCC; however, we found that students were hesitant to utilize our services.

Solution: A student-led advocacy campaign and event centered on basic needs stories titled, “Human Needs are Basic Needs.”

Goal: Reduce stigma around basic needs and promote holistic supports.

Over 80 students submitted various media of art portraying their stories and each student with valid submissions received \$150.

Seven students were also awarded Basic Needs Scholarships between \$500-\$5,000.



Human Needs are Basic Needs Scholarship

Ocean County College



☐ Student Survey:

○ ***December 2024:***

- ***48% of students were unaware OCC has on-campus basic needs resources***
- ***Additional 15% who did know about the resources didn't use them because they didn't know how to or thought they didn't qualify***

☐ We need to increase Awareness

- **Basic Needs Mentors**
- **Trainings for Faculty/ Staff**
- **Campus-wide resource fairs**
- **Publications**
- **Open house-style events in each resource to draw in students and reduce stigma**
- **Focus groups**
- **Consistent messaging: Ex. syllabus statement**



Rowan College at Burlington County



Prior to Community to Opportunity:

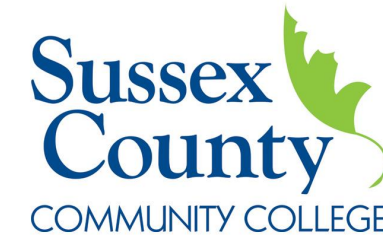
- *Food Pantry*
- *Career Closet*
- *Emergency Fund*
- *Café Cash*
- *Mental Health Support*
- *Support for SNAP benefit applications*
- *Wellness Center*
- *Veterans Center*
- *Zen Den*

BUT.....

- *Limited use of resources*
- *Limited communication channels for changes*
- *Lack of knowledge amongst adjunct faculty*
- *Stigma for accessing resources*



Sussex County Community College



Action Plan: Student Hygiene & Basic Needs Program

Phase 1: Planning & Preparation

1. Conduct a Needs Assessment

- Student surveys and focus groups.
- Analyze data on food/housing insecurity and student feedback.

2. Identify Program Objectives

- Ensure students have free access to hygiene products.
- Create a reliable, stigma-free distribution system.
- Educate students on available resources.

Phase 2: Infrastructure Setup

3. Define Services and Products Offered

- Hygiene kits: soap, deodorant, feminine products, toothpaste, etc.
- Emergency clothing, detergent, body wash, and household items as needed.
- Personal set up in every building.

Phase 3: Monitoring & Growth

4. Evaluate Impact

- Track usage data, student feedback, and academic performance indicators.
- Survey students semesterly.



New Jersey Council of County Colleges



- Tier One:** Develop solutions at the campus level that can inform the efforts of all community colleges
- Tier Two:** Build capacity via professional development and promising practices
- Trauma Informed Campus and Classroom
 - De-escalation for Student Affairs Professionals
 - Mental Health First Aid
- Tier Three:** Strengthen relationships to build on-ramps for individuals reliant on social service supports and create college and career pathways that lead to jobs and careers that provide family-supporting wages
- Tier Four:** Develop policy recommendations that:
- Strengthen students' access and utilization of social services supports;
 - Strengthen partnerships (community colleges, agencies and CBO's); and
 - Support those in poverty and the ALICE population to provide economic mobility equitably.

Panel Discussion

