Sebastian Cardena (they/them)
Campaign Manager
New York University

- As an FGLI student, I face food insecurity like many of my fellow presenters.
- Even at NYU, I rely on a scholarship to fund most of my expenses, and with many of my friends attending CUNY, I know that’s a privilege in itself.
- Students should not have to rely on external sources just to eat and attend school comfortably.
Victoria Kujawa
(She/Her/Hers)
Engagement Lead
SUNY Fredonia

- The issue of a lack of basic needs on college campuses is important to me because everyone deserves to thrive in college, not just survive.
- Although I have been extremely fortunate, I have friends that struggled throughout college to put food on the table.
- No one deserves to live that way, and my friends’ struggles push me to fight for change.
Jaimee Wieber  
(They/She)  
Policy/Communication Lead  
CUNY College of Staten Island

- This issue is crucial to me as I experienced both housing and food insecurity this semester.
- I rely on my school’s food pantry weekly, and often find the food I receive is insufficient and not sustainable for me as I have several dietary restrictions my school’s pantry does not consider/is not funded to cover.
- I faced many sudden hardships that left me vulnerable and in need of support from my campus. It opened my eyes to the changes needed to improve the conditions of the food pantries available on CUNY campuses.
Someone very close to me had their career, health, and education deeply impacted from their basic needs being neglected. They often had to question whether they wanted to drop out of school just to work to afford a meal and rent.

If all students had these foundational needs met, it would wholistically begin to expand access to higher education, university students’ ability to succeed, and provide an higher quality of life.
This issue is personal to me because my own journey through college is marked by challenges in meeting basic needs.

I had classmates who dropped out because they couldn't afford rent or meals, and it was heartbreaking to see talented individuals leave their dreams behind due to financial constraints.

It's crucial to ensure all students have the support they need to focus on their education and succeed.
Let’s Play a Game!!!

SPENT is an online game about poverty and the challenges it brings forth for each and every person. Throughout the game, players make series of decision which impacts their income.

Let’s try it! https://playspent.org

Each decision represents a different dilemma or problem tied to the health, the level of education, and providing of basic needs for your family members. Sometimes, there is no “good” solution to issue at hand, which for some, might raise the level of frustration.

Thanks to the game’s model, anyone can gain a better understanding of the struggles people with poverty and or housing instability face every day.
NYC Schools are Failing Students

In 2022, 40% of students reported having low or very low food security—or about 110,000 students.

A vast majority of students face various experiences of housing instability and homelessness.
Student Hunger Research

How Many?
According to 2021 survey data, nearly **three in five** students on average experience some form of insecurity related to food or housing alone.

More Challenges...
Students dealing with housing insecurity often face compounding challenges to obtaining basic needs, including **food insecurity**, **transportation issues**, and **unsafe or crowded living conditions**, which affects their ability to **balance academic and work schedules**.

Are there Services?
Many students said existing food pantries and other basic need services have **limited hours and ineffective or confusing communication methods**.

Reform is Needed!!
* In the largest annual assessment of basic needs security amongst college students, results indicate that:
  * 45% of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days
  * 56% of respondents were housing insecure in the previous year
  * 17% of respondents were homeless in the previous year
Of the students who took our survey so far...

- **55.6%** Relied on their school's food pantry for basic grocery needs
- **100%** Of those students felt their pantry did not provide an adequate amount of food
- **55.6%** Could not afford to eat balanced meals within the last two semesters
“I am not bringing in any money at this current moment, and I wait for my parents to send me whatever food they can. My parents are not rolling in money so I am grateful for whatever they give me, but there are many times where I am scraping for food to have anything for dinner. I have been extremely unhappy with my experience so far at the food pantry they offer. I am grateful that it is an option for students, but there is so much more that should be offered.”
- Natalie W. (student at CUNY College of Staten Island)

A common theme appearing in answers to our survey was students experiencing anxiety and depression as a result of the lack of access to basic needs. Furthermore, several students noted they considered dropping out of school to work full-time just to have more security in their housing and access to food and other basic needs.
Our Call to Action

How YOU can join the fight:
1. Share your story!
2. Contact your representatives through our one-click e-blast
3. Organize on campus or in your community to expand student/public resources

What are our calls to action?
1. **PASS THE HUNGER-FREE CAMPUS ACT**
2. **INVEST $2 MILLION INTO EXPANDING CAMPUS FOOD PANTRIES INTO RESOURCE HUBS**
3. **PASS THE NEW DEAL FOR CUNY**

What will this change?
- College accessibility for low-income or marginalized students
- Student graduation and retention rates
- Expanded SNAP and campus food access
- Proper funding and infrastructure for comprehensive and integrated basic needs support
Send a One-Click Email to Support the #StopStarvingSUNY/CUNY Demands!

40% of CUNY students reported having low food security - an estimated 110,000 students

#STOP STARVING CUNY

Our Linktree! ➔