



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 3, 2020

EARLY DATA SHOWS THAT PROVIDING FOOD FOR STUDENTS IN NEED IS ASSOCIATED WITH HIGHER SEMESTER-TO-SEMESTER PERSISTENCE RATES AND HIGHER COURSE COMPLETION RATES

Data collected on Los Angeles City College Foundation's Food for Thought program shows significant increases in student success measures by students using Food for Thought services compared to the college-wide average.

LOS ANGELES—To help students in need, Los Angeles City College (LACC) and the Los Angeles City College Foundation launched the Food for Thought Program in the Fall Semester 2018. The Food for Thought Pop-Up Food Pantry, designed to look and feel like an outdoor farmer's market, is open to all students twice per week and offers free fresh produce, frozen fish and meats, packaged cereals and snacks, dairy products, and more. The Food for Thought Program also provides meal support for students during midterm and final exam weeks with prepared meals or vouchers for food items at the LACC Cubstore Bookstore.

"Far too often our students worry about where their next meal is coming from, and that's a big problem. When their basic needs are met, however, it should come as no surprise that they can concentrate on their studies. I am very grateful that Los Angeles City College and its Foundation are collaborating with other organizations to help meet their students' food needs so they can achieve their higher education goals. As President for the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board, I am supportive of their outstanding efforts and dedicated to working with my fellow trustees and our state and federal leaders to find real solutions to this nationwide issue," said Andra Hoffman, LACCD Board President.

Thanks to support from the Angell Foundation, the LACC Foundation began collecting data to determine whether a positive correlation exists between use of Food for Thought services and student success measures. The initial data shows a significant increase in semester-to-semester persistence for students who use Food for Thought Program services as compared to the college-wide average. The data also suggests students who use the Food for Thought Program services are able to be more successful despite taking a higher unit load.

"Our Food for Thought Program is an example of how we address a growing student need by leveraging resources and partnerships. Any project I endeavor has to be scalable and replicable. This is a model that can be replicated all or in part by an institution who feels the same urgency I do. After the first year of implementation, we have confirmed what we intuitively knew...by feeding our students, we are helping them achieve academic success," said Dr. Mary Gallagher, President, Los Angeles City College.

Dr. Gallagher will be sharing information about student success through LACC's Food for Thought Program at the California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance 2020 Summit: Advancing Student Success, on February 7, 2020 at the Costa Mesa Hilton in Orange County. The summit brings together over 750 leaders from across California's community college, state university and UC systems. Students, staff, faculty and community partners will explore the efforts of advancing basic needs security in order to address student success on an individual, communal and institutional levels.

At LACC, from Fall 2018 to Spring 2019, students who used Program services persisted at a rate of 86 percent, as compared to the college-wide persistence rate of 56 percent for the same semesters. From Spring 2019 to Fall 2019, students who used Program services persisted at a rate of 79 percent, as compared to the college-wide persistence rate of 55 percent for the same semesters. (Persistence rates

are based on students with graded credit enrollments in both semesters.) With regard to units taken per semester, 62 percent of students using Program services completed 12 or more units during Fall 2019, as compared to only 20 percent of students college-wide.

“For more than 50 years, LACC Foundation has provided vital resources to the students of the College. The Food for Thought program has been instrumental in ensuring that students do not have to contend with issues of food insecurity while also addressing the challenges of reaching their academic and career goals. We are truly appreciative of the support from Angell Foundation and other funders towards this initiative,” stated Robert Schwartz, LACC Foundation Executive Director.

Survey data collected by LACCD indicates that nearly 65 percent of LACC students cannot consistently afford adequate food, and as many as 20 percent experience homelessness. In addition to dealing with the pressure of coursework and exams, these students worry about when and how they might get their next meal. The Food for Thought Program aims to reduce food insecurity as a barrier to student success, and the early data supports that goal.

About Los Angeles City College:

Los Angeles City College is a public, two-year community college located northwest of downtown in a diverse and densely populated area of Los Angeles. The demographics of LACC’s student body reflect the surrounding communities: more than 45 percent are the first in their families to attend college, the majority come from low-income households, and 21 percent speak a language other than English at home. LACC educates and provides targeted services for traditionally underrepresented populations, including economically disadvantaged students, veteran and active-duty students, former foster youth, formerly incarcerated students, undocumented students, single parents, students with disabilities, and students learning English as a second language. LACC’s associate’s degree, career-technical, transfer, and foundational skills programs provide students the means to secure better jobs, higher wages, and a path out of poverty for themselves and their families. Through the education and empowerment of its students, LACC aims to improve the welfare of the communities it serves, close persistent equity gaps, and prepare future community leaders.

About Los Angeles City College Foundation:

The Los Angeles City College Foundation was created in 1968 to develop private support for LACC. It is an independent 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for LACC students; to increase access to education for economically disadvantaged students and underrepresented populations; and to enrich the cultural, economic, and civic life in Los Angeles and beyond. The Foundation accomplishes its goals by supporting LACC’s academic and student services programs; developing and supporting new programmatic initiatives; and providing direct financial support to LACC students in the form of scholarships, textbook vouchers, and emergency funds.

Follow the hashtag #lacccares on Twitter and Instagram.

LACCF Food for Thought Program Contact:

Daren Lynne

Director of Special Projects and Academic Support at the Los Angeles City College Foundation

lynnedn@laccd.edu

323.989.1818

LACC News Media Contact:

Shaena Engle, Public Relations Manager

engles@lacitycollege.edu, 323.953.4000 ext. 2244