SNAC Pantry Anniversary

01/17/2020

Ten years of recovering, repurposing, and serving, but most of all making a difference from Aggie to Aggie.

The Utah State University Student Nutrition Access Center (SNAC Pantry) has made its mark on USU's campus population over the course of the last 10 years. The SNAC Pantry was formed in 2010 as a student-run organization and has continued to be student run for the last decade.

Housed within the Val R. Christensen Service Center, this program helps individuals fulfill one of their most basic needs — hunger. During the 2018-2019 academic year there were 6,329 total visits made to the SNAC Pantry by 1,599 unique individuals. Visits have increased by more than 1,300 from Fall 2018 Semester to Fall 2019 Semester.

Between 2014 and 2015 SNAC user-ship increased five times because of advertising and new volunteer opportunities. However, the main increase derived from access to perishable food with higher nutritional content from Utah State University Dining Services — one of three core donors. The other two essential donors that contribute to the SNAC Pantry are the UCC Urban Community Farm and Cache Valley Food Pantry.

Preliminary data from Utah State's Center for Student Analytics shows that students who utilize the SNAC Pantry are more likely to continue their education compared to similar students who do not visit the SNAC Pantry. This lift is associated with retaining an estimated 18 students, per year, that would otherwise not be expected to stay in college.

Individuals have the ability to access the SNAC Pantry during scheduled hours, no questions asked.

“SNAC honestly has backed me up when I didn't even know I needed it. It is comforting to know that the University is looking out for me and for all students,” said a current student.

Students are utilizing the SNAC Pantry for various reasons: from not having enough money for food, the opportunity to afford other necessities, to obtain healthier food, to reduce food waste, and many others.

Some are even choosing to stay involved after they are no longer in need of assistance. “Now that I am no longer a student, I do not have to rely on SNAC like I used to, but I am able to stay involved by volunteering weekly and ensuring that this effort continues,” said a USU alumus.

The SNAC Pantry is operated by dedicated volunteers, which include students, faculty, staff and community members. There are many ways to give back to the Pantry, such as donating time, food, or organizing a food drive. You can visit https://servicecenter.usu.edu/programs/snac_information for more information on how to get involved.

Sources:
https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/food-insecurity
https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2017/overall/utah/county/cache