Student organization’s and student leaders within the Center for Community Engagement have stepped up and are still serving those in need of a meal during the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Student Nutrition Access Center (SNAC Pantry) typically serves about 400 individuals per week, but COVID-19 has caused these numbers to change as well as the operations of the SNAC Pantry. During the pandemic, the SNAC Pantry has been seeing 90-180 individuals per week and has halved the weekly pick-up from the Cache Community Food pantry (from 1,500 lbs to 850lbs. Usually the SNAC Pantry runs with the help of around 34 volunteers in order for smooth operations, but during this transition it was heavily led and made possible by one dedicated Americorps Vista, James Wirth.

In total for the 2019-2020 year, the Pantry has served 2,000 individuals with over 9,000 visits to the pantry.

The SNAC Pantry has not been the only on-campus organization fighting hunger amidst COVID-19. Student organizations such as Food Recovery Network and Campus Kitchens also shifted their operations in order to continue recovering food that would otherwise go to waste and then getting it into the hands of those in need.

With Dining Services at minimal capacity, Food Recovery Network shifted to sourcing donations from the campus community and sanitizing every item that came in. In addition, the organization recovered items from Dining Services’ walk-in fridges that were unable to be used due to students moving off-campus so quickly. Items included 200 pounds of shredded cheese, butter, and 150 pounds of peppers, oranges, apples, cucumbers, potatoes, and 150 pounds of assorted bread items baked fresh through USU Dining Services bakery staff member, Ely Ordaz.

Furthermore, Campus Kitchens Project (CKP) shifted from a more simple operation of repackaging hot-line buffet hotel pans of food from Dining Services to the more detailed and timely task of cooking from scratch with donated items. During this past school year, CKP produced 4,955 meals. Organizations to look out for and assist with during the warmer months in Cache Valley are the USU Gleaning team and Utah Conservation Corps Urban Community Farm.

To learn more about food recovery partnership opportunities, visit https://servicecenter.usu.edu/programs/snac.

To donate to SNAC, visit https://www.usu.edu/aggiefunded/snac/.

Summer SNAC Pantry hours and contactless order information visit https://servicecenter.usu.edu/programs/snac.

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