Vision 20/20 - Titans Feeding Titans Grant Proposal

Project Title: Titans Feeding Titans Food Pantry

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Abstract

The objective of the Titans Feeding Titans food pantry is to help address the food insecurity that many of our undergraduate students and graduate students are experiencing. The definition of food insecurity is defined as not knowing where their next meal will come from, or how they will get it. The College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA) has reported that food insecurity is rapidly becoming a major barrier for college students and on university campuses. This issue can pose a threat not only to overall student success, but also to student retention and completion of degrees as well. In a survey conducted on campus, 71% of respondents stated a food pantry would be beneficial. These same respondents also stated that they felt addressing food insecurity on campus would relieve student stress as well. Titans Feeding Titans will address a student’s physical and emotional needs.

Narrative

“Campuses across the country are starting to realize that there is a sector of people who don’t know where their next meal is coming from.” Said Nate Smith-Tyge, director of the MSU Student Food Bank. “It’s not only a moral issue but also a curricular and academic issue.” – (Barampour, 2014).
Goals

The mission of Titans Feeding Titans (TFT) is “To provide IU South Bend students with supplemental non-perishable food items in times of need to alleviate hunger.” With an overall vision that “No student attending IU South Bend’s campus should have to endure going without food. Everyone will have access to nutritious and quality food.” – Titans Feeding Titans Research Proposal 2014 (Drake, 2014).

The TFT food pantry was proposed in 2014 by an undergraduate class of Bachelor of Social Work students as a policy research assignment (Drake, 2014). An entire semester was spent studying not only the need for a food pantry on campus but also the impact it would have on the students academically. At the end of the semester, the class presented the proposal to Chancellor Allison, as well as other Directors and faculty and staff, and it was met overall with excitement and approval as a way to help our students. The pantry TFT is developed by students, for students, and will be run by students.

While many students on campus may be faced with food insecurity, many are not eligible for other services that could help them address this issue. Many times in order to receive such services as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), a certain income level, or many times household size must be met in order to receive assistance. Because of these federal guidelines, there are many students that do not qualify for this type of help. While there are some local food pantries that may possibly be able to serve the IUSB community, for those students without reliable transportation, this poses another roadblock. Maintaining TFT on campus will address many of these needs.

With approximately 7,500 students on campus, the number of students that are facing food insecurity issues is likely to be substantial. Our IUSB fast facts (2015) report that approximately $61 million of financial aid is distributed to an estimated 6450 students. This indicates that the income level of many students is low, and the need for assistance exists.

- The average cost for an IUSB student living on campus, including tuition and other fees is $11,556 per academic year (this does not include summer)
- The average cost for an IUSB student living off campus, including tuition and other fees is $9560 per academic year (this does not include summer)
- Average job working part time at $7.25 an hour working approximately 15 hours per week: $1630 in wages per semester
- Considering the total figures given for on campus costs and off campus costs a deficit exists.

$4500 for on campus

$3500 for off campus

While many students will take advantage of the $61 million in financial aid, whether in loans, scholarships, or grants, there are still many that are ineligible for additional funds. These students are many times living in poverty in some cases, forced to choose between books, tuition and food.
The impact that the TFT food pantry will have on students at this time is projected to be positive for those students who take advantage of this service. The overall impact we hope to achieve is to help retain students, as well as reduce their stress which will help them achieve their academic goals.

**How will we assess whether we reach our goals?**

We are collecting data on every person who utilizes the food pantry, and what items are needed. We are logging each individual who requests assistance in order to determine whether most users are in occasional need or if we have some students who experience chronic food insufficiency.

The TFT food pantry has been open for distribution for 2 weeks as of today. In that time period we have distributed approximately $650 worth of food to students on campus. The average visit is estimated at $25 per bag, this works out to 14 students who have already used the pantry within the first few days of being open. If this trend follows, we will end up serving, approximately 30 students a month, at over $1300 worth of food distributed. When estimating the shortfall financially that many students have, this implies an impressive impact.

A consumer card is completed by each user and placed in a closed box so that each person’s privacy is protected. The cards are collected and data entered by Dr. Massat. The consumer cards include a unique identifier for each person, size of household, age, gender, items that they need, and date.

**What will be done to reach our goals?**

The TFT food pantry seeks to accomplish our goal of helping to reduce food insecurity and affecting retention and academics by offering free food to those in need. The pantry is currently open 3 days per week. Monday and Friday from 10am -2pm, and Wednesday from 3pm-6pm. By staggering the hours, we hope to be able to serve more students. The TFT pantry is also offering a variety of simple, filling, and nutritious foods for the students to shop from, giving them options from each of our sections, for instance, starches, vegetables, fruits, and cereals, just to name a few. The student is allowed to make their own selection, and dependent on the number of individuals in their household, the number of items they can choose is varied.

Some current partnerships include:

- The TFT food pantry is partnering with the IUSB Bi-Weekly Staff council to hold workshops on how to stretch your food dollar, recipe ideas, and food preparation and storage. These will be held later in the semester, dependent on times and availability. However these workshops will continue in each academic year.
- By offering additional times that TFT is open, with a variety of foods, as well as offering ideas on recipes and preparation, we hope to impact a substantial part of our student population.
- The TFT food pantry is also partnering with IUSB Housing to do a food drive, as well as recruiting volunteers to run the pantry, as well as from other areas on campus as well.
- The Schurz Library has agreed to do another food for fines drive with the proceeds going to TFT.
In addition to working with other departments, we are getting the word out about the pantry with local media coverage, flyers on campus, and continual information on the Daily Titan, as well as other social media.

**Budget**

Currently the TFT food pantry has had one successful community food drive, as well as having received over $500 in cash donations. At this time, the pantry is fully stocked. However, in order to ensure that we are able to be there for IUSB students, we need to continually replenish our stock. This is done with both cash and product donations. We are partnered with the Northern Indiana Food Bank, which will allow us to purchase food at $.09 per pound, which will allow us to maintain a fairly well stocked pantry. However, if our prediction of distribution of $1300 a month holds true, we will need to ensure that we have the products and or cash on hand to meet this need.

The TFT is currently developing another fundraiser, and another food drive for Spring 2016. We also have donation bins throughout the campus.

The budget for the Vision 20/20 grant is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food for pantry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5000.00</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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When estimating the amount of food that we could purchase at $.09 a pound, that is approximately 44,400 pounds of food. This would certainly go a long way in keeping the food pantry stocked. We also hope to include, hygiene and household products, such as laundry soap, toilet paper, and eventually pet food as well.

**Future Goals**

While our location in Student Activity Center RM. 114 is small at this time, it is serving our initial purpose. However the long term goal of TFT is to acquire a larger space, where we can eventually have refrigerated units, so we can offer fresh produce, meats and dairy, and frozen foods. By growing the TFT pantry, the idea is that we will be able to help more students, and to be able to meet a greater need. In doing so, the student is better prepared to address the demands of college. In addition, volunteering at TFT provides a service learning experience for our students. Most of the current volunteers are combing their service to the pantry with a service learning class project. Additional future goals could include visiting other campuses that have food pantries in order to review their procedures, data collection, and assessment.

**Sustainability**

The future of TFT will depend on several things. This first year, we are concentrating on making the campus aware that the pantry is here; it is open, and it is accessible to all. We are also working on taking in more donations, which goes along with achieving continual publicity for the food pantry. In a recent survey sent out to the IUSB community, with over 130 respondents at this time, 80% stated they would use, or probably will use the TFT food pantry at some point this semester. That is a high percentage, but also very encouraging (Drake, 2016).
References


SWK-S 251 Students (2014). Titans feeding Titans Food Pantry Proposal: South Bend: Author. (copies available from Dr. Anne Drake or Dr. Massat)
Addendum to Vision 20/20 Grant for Titans Feeding Titans Food Pantry (TFT)

Fundraising $700-

Different fundraising ideas are being looked at for the upcoming year, however this will take an initial cash investment.

One event that we are planning is to have grocery/tote bags printed with TFT on them to sell not only as a fundraiser on campus, but also in the food pantry as well. An initial set up fee is approximately $250 with a minimum bag order of 300 would cost approximately .98 per bag. This would amount to with shipping etc to approximately $600 alone. Additional funds will be needed for promotional flyers and signage.

Workshops $300-

TFT is partnering with the Bi-weekly staff council in the upcoming academic year to put on several workshops promoting healthy eating on a budget, making meals out of items from the food pantry itself, as well as how to stretch your food dollar. The grant dollars to be used for this will be to supply any foods needed for these demonstrations over the course of the academic year. We may also incur charges due to providing the food to attendees, in other words, supplies such as utensils, paper plates, even drinks if the budget would allow.