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# *Identifying and supporting housing insecure students: A campus-wide approach*



# University of Illinois Chicago

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- Large Research I institution
- Enrollment
  - Fall 2023-33,407
  - AANAPISI and HSI Designation
    - 49% of Undergraduates are Pell Eligible



# Where did we start

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## Institution climate and awareness

- Limited institutional resources
- Rising tuition rates
- Lack of awareness of the issue within the campus community
- Inability to identify students unless they self-disclose

# Housing Grants Fall 2020



Grants for students in housing (\$2500);



Grants for students of concerns (\$13,000);



Grants for housing students experiencing housing insecurities (\$17,000).



Food: Increased the funds for the pantry to increase staffing and foo



A trauma  
informed  
approach is  
understanding  
the emotional,  
physical, and  
social impact of  
trauma on an  
individual



# Housing Insecurity Program

Pilot Program – 10  
undergraduate students

## Program Design

Provide wrap around services and  
education to support students

- Case Management
- Workshops

What we  
hoped to  
answer?

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What is the role of food and housing insecurities on student success, engagement and development?

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What kinds of interventions and prevention efforts reduce the impact?



# Program Goals

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Improve academic outcomes and retention of program participants



Development of a campus wide system of support and resources



Increase awareness of housing insecurity amongst the campus community



Reduce feelings of isolation and stigmatization of housing insecurity

# Workshops

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Career Tips for  
Graduating Seniors

Apartment Hunting  
Do's and  
Don'ts/Understanding  
a Lease

Understanding Your  
Award Letter & Loans

Creating a Support  
Network in College •

Career Services  
Overview, Handshake,  
and Part Time  
Employment

Tools for Life •  
Financial Literacy

# Outcomes

100% of first-year students who participated were retained Fall 2021

75% of them were retained into the Fall 2022 semester as well.

100% of the second-year students and program were retained into the Fall 2021 semester

100% retained Fall 2022 semester or had graduated.



# Themes



students experienced multiple barriers to accessing stable food and housing



food and housing insecurities led to diminished performance in college



living in campus housing allows students to focus on school work and engage in the programming



participating in the program brought an increased awareness of on- and off-campus resources to support students experiencing food and housing insecurities



students applied what they learned from the program to improve their academic and personal lives.

*“The only thing truly that would stand in my way of being 100% confident [about finishing school] is, honestly, not even financial, it's more mental health because for me it can be up and down a lot and can be kind of crippling sometimes. I just hope that I can maintain being healthy and being able to handle like school for the next semesters. I'm about to be a senior so it'll be my last year.”*

*Student Participant*

- Impacts academic performance
- Mental Health
- Students helped their families meet basic needs which diminished their own resources.

# Identified Barriers

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01

students felt embarrassed of their situation, which prevented them from talking to others about their problems and accepting help

02

lack of transportation makes it hard to access food.

03

some students helped their families meet basic needs which diminished their own resources



# Other Themes to Consider

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## Third Major Theme

- Living on campus allowed students to disrupt the disadvantage loop and focus on school

## Fourth Major Theme

- Program increased awareness of campus resources

# Including the campus community





Interview data highlighted the ways in which the program facilitated and promoted student success.



A trauma informed approach is understanding the emotional, physical, and social impact of trauma on the individual,



Including the student voice in program development



Campus supports integral



# Questions?

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