



Challah for Hunger

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March 15, 2017

Honorable Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

We are alarmed by recent findings that as many as two in three community college students¹ and nearly one-fifth of students at four-year schools are experiencing food insecurity.² As an organization that works directly with college students to fundraise and advocate for solutions to food insecurity nationally and locally, we believe no one should have to sacrifice food for an education.

This is why we urge your office to respond to a request by Senator Debbie Stabenow, Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Patty Murray and Senator Edward Markey for a comprehensive report on food insecurity at American colleges and universities.

Moreover, should your office honor the Senators' request, we offer our insight gained from over a decade of experience working hand-in-hand with campus professionals and student advocates. Our network extends across 80 campuses in 30 states and this year we began building an informal coalition of nonprofit and campus professionals from national organizations, including Swipe Out Hunger and The Campus Kitchens Project, that are also training current students to fundraise and advocate around this issue.

Through a joint initiative with MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, my organization, Challah for Hunger, is training student advocates on nearly 40 public and private campuses to research food insecurity at their schools and educate their peers about this issue. Both our organizations are also in close communication with leading researchers and practitioners in

¹ Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J. & Hernandez, A. (2017). *Hungry, Homeless, and in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin HOPE Lab


² Cady, Dubick and Matthews. *Hunger on Campus: The Challenge of Food Insecurity for College Students*. October 2016.

the field, including Sara Goldrick-Rab, founder of The Wisconsin HOPE Lab, and Clare Cady, Co-Director and Co-Founder of the College & University Food Bank Alliance.

A disturbing finding that our student advocates have reported from interviews with Financial Aid and Student Affairs professionals is that administrations are not strategically communicating to students the existence of emergency grants and loans, meal vouchers, benefits-access programs, or on-campus food pantries. Whether this is due to lack of staff training, inadequate staffing and funding, or simply a lack of data about students in need, there is something deeply wrong in our higher education system when students feel that their administration is not intentional or transparent about resources and support services.

Thank you for your attention to this request. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carly Z".

Carly Zimmerman
CEO Challah for Hunger