

Center of Student Advocacy and Community- SFAC (Student Fee Allocation Committee)

HIGHLIGHT SUMMARY - Budget Cycle FY25

- 1. Did you receive any new funding for this year? If so, how is it being used? Present your budget worksheet.**

CSAC (Center for Student Advocacy and Community) is a merger of the Office of Student Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (SDEI) and the Office of Student Advocacy (OSA). SDEI received no new funds for FY24. OSA received \$38000 in one-time SFAC funding for FY24.

Of the 38,000 OSA received from SFAC. 18,000 is being utilized to facilitate the Hawk Pantry and 10,000 is being used for volunteer training, advocacy programming and student engagement.

- 2. Summarize the usage of your services. What areas/programs saw increases or decreases?**

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community to comprised of two branches: Advocacy Services and Community Engagement. Advocacy Services includes Hawk Pantry, Mobile Food Distribution Partnership with The Houston Food Bank, Advocacy Workshops and Volunteer Trainings. Community Engagement includes: First-Gen Scholars programming that houses First-Gen Fridays and the First-Gen Faculty/Staff Network, UHCL (University of Houston Clear Lake) Community Gatherings and UHCL Community Excursions.

Service Number Review

HAWK PANTRY

FY22

Hawk Pantry- Fall 2021 (Aug-Dec)	947
Hawk Pantry - Spring 2022 (Jan-May)	364
Hawk Pantry - Summer 2022 (June-July 10)	41
Hawk Pantry - Total	1352

FY23

Hawk Pantry - Fall 2022 (Aug-Dec)	540
Hawk Pantry - Spring 2023 (Jan-May)	729
Hawk Pantry - Summer 2023 (June-July 10)	414
Hawk Pantry - Total	1683

FY24

Hawk Pantry - Fall 2023 (Aug-Dec)	157+344=501
Hawk Pantry - Spring 2024 (Jan-May)	TBD
Hawk Pantry - Summer 2024 (June-July 10)	TBD
Hawk Pantry - Total	501 and counting

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MOBILE MARKET TRAILER

FY22

FFC Checked-In - Fall 2021 (Aug - Dec)	451
FFC Checked-In - Spring 2022 (Jan - May)	298
FFC Checked-In - Summer 2022 (June - July)	211
FFC -Total	960

FY23

FFC Checked-In - Fall 2022 (Aug - Dec)	446
FFC Checked-In - Spring 2023 (Jan - May)	568
FFC Checked-In - Summer 2023 (June - July)	429
FFC -Total	1443

FY24

FFC Checked-In - Fall 2023 (Aug - Dec)	370
FFC Checked-In - Spring 2024 (Jan - May)	TBD
FFC Checked-In - Summer 2024 (June - July)	TBD
FFC -Total	370 and counting

FIRST GEN FRIDAYS

First Gen Friday Unduplicated Student Check-In FY22	6
First Gen Friday Unduplicated Student Check-In FY23	8
First Gen Friday Unduplicated Student Check-In FY24	20 and counting

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer Registration FY22	83
Volunteer Registration FY23	237
Volunteer Registration FY24	26 and counting

3. Describe the student satisfaction with your services.

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community always takes the student voice into consideration. We make it our mission to increase, expand and change our services based on the advice and recommendation of the UHCL students. Therefore, we find that it is more impactful to include firsthand student testimonials as evidence of the students' satisfaction with our services.

First Gen Student Testimonials

- "I enjoy being involved with First Gen Fridays because I feel included, involved, and that my campus has my best interest at heart."
Tyara Mckenzie, Senior, History
- "I am proud to be a First Gen Hawk because it shows I have what it takes to succeed in areas that are unfamiliar to me and my family."
Sarah Lara, Senior, Art History
- "The most helpful UHCL resources for me has been First Gen Fridays and Dr. Amy Lucas, my Sociology Professor."
Jessica Hernandez, Senior, Sociology

The Hawk Pantry Student Testimonials

- "The Houston Food Bank Market Trailer has been a lifesaver for my family of 5! Some weeks, our budget is incredibly tight, and knowing that it is a Market Trailer week is an enormous relief! We can always count on quality items, and my kids LOVE fresh fruit and vegetables! This weekend, using groceries that we received, we were able to make carrot bread! Thank you to UHCL's Office of Student Advocacy and the Houston Food Bank for not only filling my kids' tummies, but also for giving me these precious moments with my family! We are grateful." Shayla Tyler, Undergrad first year BSW Program (HSH}, first generation college student, mother of three
- "I can have food to eat without any worries of how I'll be able to afford buying groceries. The Hawk Pantry helps me in my current situation with my financial difficulties. Financial aid was able to help with funds for my classes, but not food to eat. Students, including myself, would tremendously be impacted if Hawk Pantry services didn't exist. Students who are struggling financially to support themselves, would not be able to focus on achieving success in their academics and their wellbeing. The Hawk Pantry is important to me because this is a place that supports me in times of need." Joshua Lyman, Undergraduate, Communication, COB
- "It has helped tremendously in many ways, especially if I'm in school need lunch. I know I can pick up a grab and go lunch or get a bit of the goods they have. I currently do not live with my parents, due to me getting married. At times we struggle and when needed, the small things have helped so much. Honestly, some of us would not have lunch or even a small snack to eat. The Hawk Pantry has impacted me in all the positive ways." Ana Martinez, Undergraduate, Graphic Design, HSH
- "It helped me a lot. By this I can save some amount of money. Thank you so much for this program. It helped me a lot. It would be difficult as an international student. We spend a lot of money. The Hawk pantry is very important to me because I can survive easily and no need to spend a lot of money on groceries." Sai Sree Regalla, Graduate, Biotechnology, CSE

4. What has your department done to increase or improve services? Specifically, what did you learn in your assessment that is impacting your services now?

FY24 is a baseline year for the Center for Student Advocacy and Community. Thus, this question must be answered from the lens of the former departments that make CSAC, OSA and SDEI.

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The department of SDEI was in transition for FY23. Due to staffing shortages and legislative impacts SDEI did not meet assessment goals. Additionally, the sole component that CSAC will retain from SDEI is First-Gen Fridays. CSAC has begun to build out First-Gen Fridays to include wider collaborations and partnerships throughout UHCL, more dynamic/intentional Friday programming and heightened marketing. This has already led to an increase in the First-Gen Friday numbers for FY24 and a sense of student belonging. First Gen Friday numbers for FY24 have already grown by 150%.

OSA assessed all students who contacted their advocacy services. From this assessment, we learned that students were not aware of all that could be obtained from Hawk Pantry. Consequently, OSA began to market and highlight the items that could be found in the pantry by facilitating Hawk Pantry Pop-Ups, disbursing Hawk Pantry Recipe cards, and engaging with campus and community partners. This led to an increase in pantry and Mobile Market Trailer numbers.

5. Describe any new initiatives for the current year.

FY24 is the baseline year for CSAC. We are excited to merge the Advocacy Services with impactful UHCL Community Engagement. The merger of the two branches under one umbrella is a new initiative that requires balance of workforce. Alongside Hawk Pantry, the Mobile Food Distribution, Advocacy workshops and First-Gen Fridays, CSAC welcomes the Faculty/Staff First-Gen Network, Community Gathering opportunities and Community Excursions and the distribution of the Basic Needs Grant.

The Faculty/Staff First-Gen Network is being created to identify those individuals employed by UHCL that have navigated the higher education experience successfully as a First-Gen College student. Once identified, the goal is to partner this network and its experiences with current First-Gen students to increase their retention.

Community Gatherings are programming initiatives intended to create a sense of belonging amongst UHCL students across various cultures. This series can cover topics such as dance, music, cooking, storytelling, and games that provide an opportunity for students to learn about and engage with unfamiliar cultural backgrounds.

Community Excursions Community excursions are facilitated explorative experiences to museums, cultural centers, and other places of interest that celebrate different social communities. These experiences can provide an opportunity for students to explore and learn about diverse cultural backgrounds while also fostering a sense of community, engagement and belonging.

CSAC inherited a \$950,000 Department of Education grant from the Office of Student Advocacy. This grant is intended to meet the basic needs of UHCL students to increase student persistence. UHCL students can now submit a Basic Needs Persistence Grant application via the CSAC webpage. If a student is approved for a Basic Needs Persistence grant, they may be awarded a financial voucher that is directly applied to their student account. Vouchers are awarded for the following assistance: Housing, Grocery, Gas, Utility, Technical, Medical, and Mental Health

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assistance. In FY24, CSAC began disbursing the Basic Needs Grant and has served nine students to date, totaling \$5,300. Also, in compliance with the grant requirement, students receiving the BNG (Basic Needs Grant) must participate in a financial literacy workshop. CSAC's Advocacy Services has partnered with Wells Fargo to facilitate a Financial Literacy workshop for all UHCL students; specifically, BNG recipients.

6. What challenges or opportunities do you foresee for the current year and next year?

With the merger of SDEI and OSA, CSAC can engage UHCL students in many ways. This is a win for the center. Also, where the Office of Student Advocacy was limited in space to engage students, CSAC is provided that space. SDEI struggled with staffing shortages and with the merger of OSA, CSAC has staffing opportunities. This is also a win. The BNG also allows the Advocacy Service team to meet more basic student needs.

However, as Hawk Pantry continues to grow student numbers, there are challenges in funding Hawk Pantry. Hawk Pantry is still awaiting a true home and with that home would come a partnership with the Houston Food Bank to deliver free food to the UHCL campus. Until then, Hawk Pantry is still dependent on donor funding and one-time SFAC requests. Donor funding has almost ceased to the Hawk Pantry. Currently, Hawk Pantry is being sustained by SFAC funds.

7. Did you have funds swept at the end of FV23? If so, how much and why?

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community launched on September 1, 2023, the beginning of FY24. Thus, no funds were swept from CSAC.

However, from the two office that made up CSAC the following funds were swept:

OSA- \$15,103

SDEI- \$143,809

From both offices, most of the funds were taken from a salary lapse. OSA has a lapse in student employment and Program Coordinators salaries. SDEI was short a Director, Assistant Director, Coordinator, and a Department Assistant.

8. Are you requesting new funding? One-time or Base? Present your budget request for next year and rationale.

Yes, CSAC is requesting one-time SFAC funding of 18,000 for the Hawk Pantry. The Hawk Pantry is, solely, funded by food donations and monetary donations. There has been a decline in food donations and donor gifts. The pantry is not base funded and donated funds are continuously under threat of exhaustion. All other UH-system pantries are either base funded or have a sizeable space to receive sponsorship from the Houston Food Bank. The Hawk Pantry's small size does not allow for HFB sponsorship and donations are lacking. Funding is needed to support the Hawk Pantry, until it can be relocated to a larger space to receive sponsorship. A lack of funding will result in a decrease in grocery items provided, a reduction in opening hours, a reduction in the monthly visits allowed, or closure. Use of the Hawk Pantry helps to defray some of the cost's students experience because of the rise in tuition and inflation. CSAC currently makes grocery purchases of \$500 per week or \$2000 per month. The requested \$18,000 funding is for nine

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Hawk Pantry service months. Funding does not include the months of June, July, and December as these are summer and partial student enrollment months.

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