

November
2023

Real College CA Student Survey of Basic Needs RB#241

College of the Canyons

Santa Clarita Community College District
26455 Rockwell Canyon Road
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Institutional Research, Planning, and
Institutional Effectiveness

Vida M. Manzo, Ph.D.

Preeti Saxena, Ph.D.

Daylene M. Meuschke, Ed.D.



Table of Contents

Introduction & Background	2
Method.....	2
Results.....	3
Profile of Real College Respondents vs. COC Respondents	3
Food Insecurity.....	4
Housing Insecurity	5
Homelessness.....	6
Summary Findings.....	8
Recommendations	8

Tables

Table 1. Demographics Comparing Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Survey Respondents.....	3
Table 2. Summary of Insecurity Rates Comparing Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Respondents.....	3

Figures

Figure 1. Rates of Self-Reported Food Insecurity for Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC by Race/Ethnicity.....	4
Figure 2. Rates of Self-reported Food Insecurity for Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC by Age Group	4
Figure 3. Rates of Self-Reported Housing Insecurity of Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Respondents by Race/Ethnicity	5
Figure 4. Rates of Self-reported Housing Insecurity for Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC by Age Group .	5
Figure 5. Rates of Self-Reported Homelessness for California Respondents vs. COC by Race/Ethnicity.....	6
Figure 6. Rates of Self-Reported Homelessness among California Respondents vs. COC by Age Group	6
Figure 7. Awareness of On Campus Food Resources among Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Respondents	7

Introduction & Background

The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (The RP Group) partnered with the CEO Affordability, Food & Housing Access Taskforce of the Community College League of California (CCLC) to assist in survey data collection efforts and provide updated data trends regarding California Community College (CCC) students' food and housing security. Each community college assisted in the collection of the data for the Real College California Survey. This statewide survey aims to capture the real experiences of California Community College students with the purpose of creating colleges that better assist students with finishing their educational goals. Additionally, the survey was intended to better understand the challenges students face while attending college and to learn more about how students overcome these barriers. The primary goal was to assess insecurities in food, housing and other basic needs. This report will compare College of the Canyons' rates to that of Statewide Community College respondents as a whole based on key highlights from a webinar of the California results from September 2023.¹

Method

The survey opened on March 17, 2023 and remained open until April 19, 2023. All students actively enrolled in spring 2023 term were sent an online link to the survey either via email, canvas post, blackboard, text and/or email.² Results in the statewide report are presented for 66,741 respondents from 88 California Community Colleges (CCC). The average number of respondents from each college was 758 (*with College of the Canyons response size at 842*). Generally, the demographics of the survey sample paralleled those of the CCC system as a whole, with the exception that survey respondents were more likely to identify as female.

The following presents definitions of the various types of basic needs that were assessed in the survey³:

Food Insecurity: the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner (*within the past 30 days*).

Housing Insecurity: includes a broad set of challenges such as the inability to pay rent, utilities, or the need to move frequently (*within the past 12 months*).

Homelessness: a person does not have a stable place to live. If student responded affirmatively to a question asking if they had been homeless or if they identified living conditions that are considered signs (e.g., couch surfing, living somewhere not meant for habitation) (*within the past 12 months*).

Any Insecurity: this is defined as a respondent having at least one or more of the above-mentioned difficulties.

¹ All results reported for state-wide comparison can also be found in the [Real College Community College 2023 Report](#)

² College of the Canyons administered the surveys via PIO to text and emails.

³ This list is not exhaustive the survey

Results

Profile of Real College Respondents vs. COC Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents among the College of the Canyons population is similar to that of Statewide California Community College respondents (*except where highlighted below*). There was an over-representation of age range category 26-30 years, race category White/Caucasian, and gender; Males and other gender among COC respondents. There was an underrepresentation of age categories 18-20-year-old and older than 30, as well as race category African American/Black and Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, and females respectively, *see Table 1*.

Table 1. Demographics Comparing Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Survey Respondents

	Statewide College Respondents (N = 66,741)	College of the Canyons		Statewide College Respondents (N = 66,741)	College of the Canyons
Race/Ethnicity			Gender		
African American/Black	6%	3%	Female	64%	55%
Amer. Indian/Alaska Native	1%	3%	Male	31%	38%
Asian	12%	8%	Other	3%	7%
Hispanic/Latinx	46%	24%	Age		
Middle Eastern/Arab	2%	2%	18-20 years	33%	30%
Multi-Ethnicity	6%	8%	21-25 years	22%	24%
Other	2%	1%	26-30 years	13%	21%
Pacific Isl. /Native Hawaiian	1%	<1%	Older than 30 years	32%	25%
White/Caucasian	25%	50%			

*Ns vary for Race, Gender, Age per College of the Canyons varied depending on respondents who chose to provide this information with an N of at least 550 each

Comparison of Insecurities for Real College Respondents vs. COC Respondents

Overall rates of experiencing *any* insecurity were 68%⁴ statewide and 56% (*n* = 473) at College of the Canyons. The various insecurities are discussed in more detail below. Rates of insecurity were greater among the statewide community college respondents as compared to COC respondents on all the primary measures except for Homelessness, *see Table 2*.

Table 2. Summary of Insecurity Rates Comparing Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Respondents

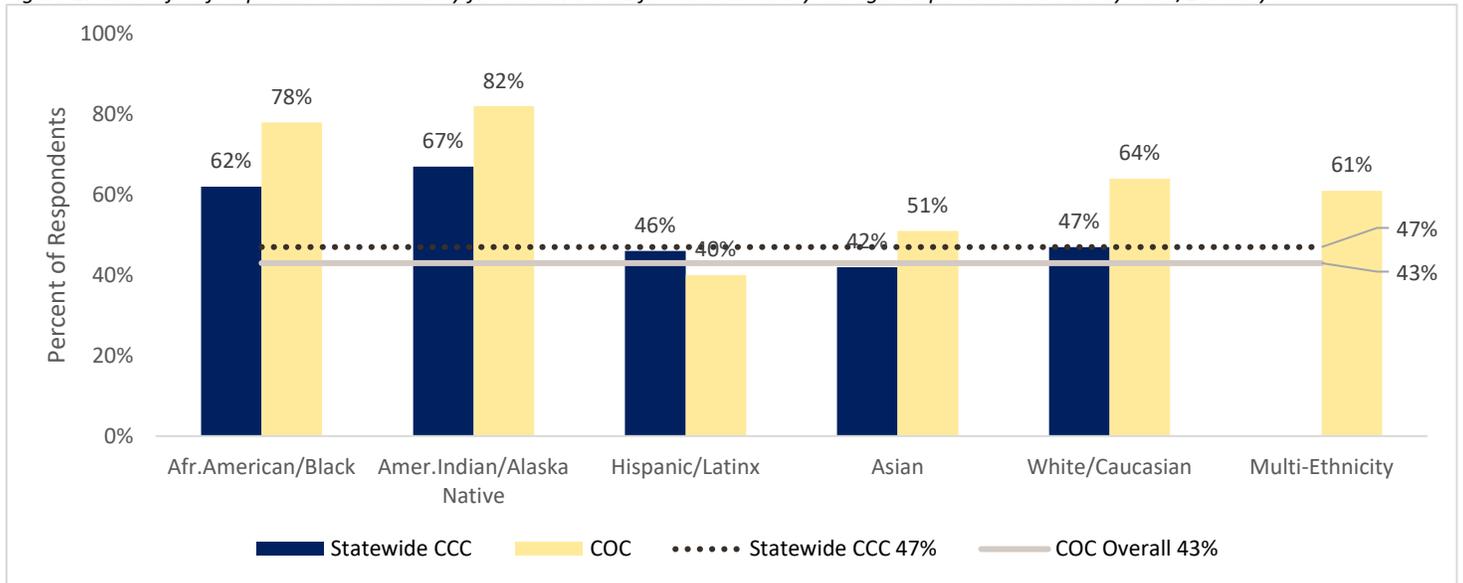
	Statewide Community College Respondents (N = 66,741)	College of the Canyons Respondents (N = 842)
Any Insecurity	68%	56%
Food Insecurity	47%	43%
Housing Insecurity	58%	49%
Homelessness	24%	35%

⁴ The total raw number of respondents per question and/or disaggregation was not always provided within the webinar/statewide report. If the raw values were provided they will be reflected in this report if only rates were provided then that will be displayed in the report.

Food Insecurity

The overall rate of students across California Community Colleges reporting Food Insecurity was 47% whereas COC's rate was 43%. College of the Canyons' rates were 12% or higher than the overall California rate among African American/Black, American Indian/Alaska Native and White/Caucasian and Multi-Ethnicity students. Additionally, these groups also had higher food insecurity rates among respondents at COC in comparison to their counterparts in the statewide survey, see Figure 1.

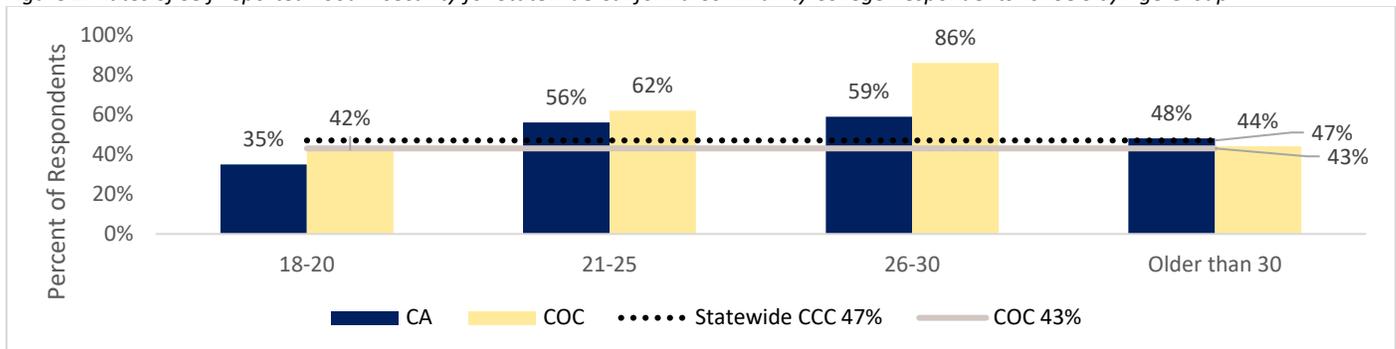
Figure 1. Rates of Self-Reported Food Insecurity for Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC by Race/Ethnicity



*Some Ethnicity rates are not reported due to sample sizes less than 10. Multi-Ethnicity was not provided as a disaggregation in statewide data.

Rates of food insecurity were highest among age groups 26-30 among both the California and COC respondents, see Figure 2.

Figure 2. Rates of Self-reported Food Insecurity for Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC by Age Group

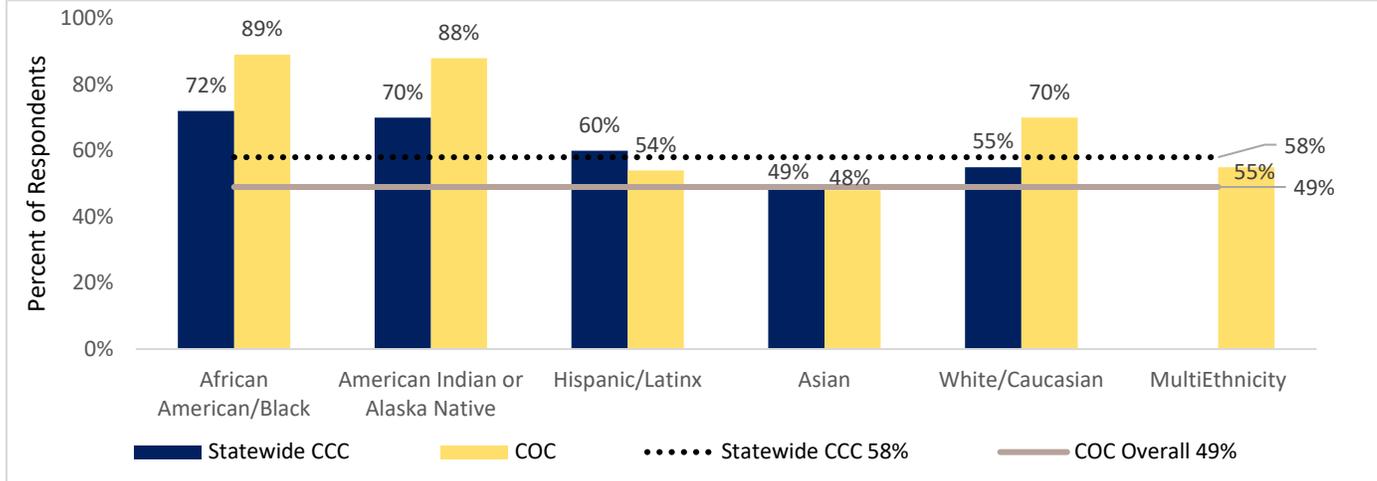


Among the statewide California community college respondents, 45% agreed with this statement “I worried I would run out of food and cannot afford to buy more” and 44% ($n = 375$) of COC respondents agreed with this statement.

Housing Insecurity

The overall rate of students in California reporting Housing Insecurity was 58% compared to COC rate of 49% ($n = 410$). The rates of Housing Insecurity were highest among African American/Black and American Indian/Alaska Native students, see Figure 3.

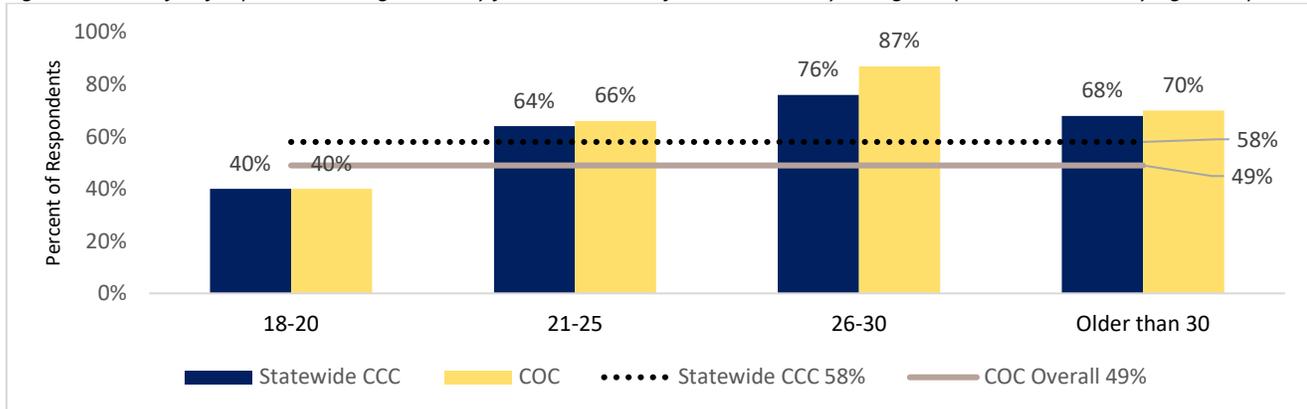
Figure 3. Rates of Self-Reported Housing Insecurity of Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Respondents by Race/Ethnicity



*Some Ethnicity rates are not reported due to sample sizes less than 10. Multi-Ethnicity was not provided as a disaggregation in statewide data.

Rates of housing insecurity were highest among age groups 26-30 years for both the statewide community college respondents and COC respondents, see Figure 4.

Figure 4. Rates of Self-reported Housing Insecurity for Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC by Age Group

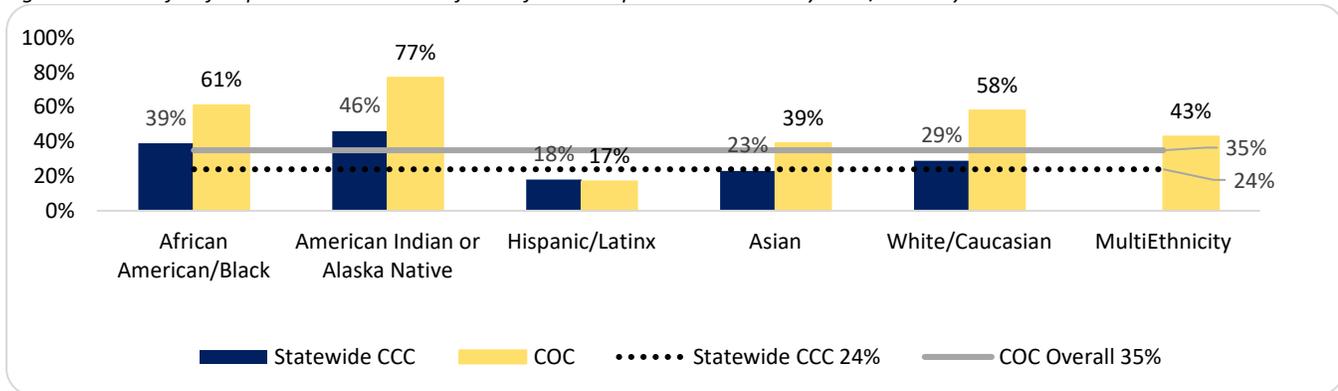


Among statewide community college respondents, 34% indicated they specifically “Had rent/mortgage increases making it difficult to pay” as compared to 29% ($n = 244$) of COC respondents.

Homelessness

The overall rate of students in statewide California community colleges reporting Homelessness was 24%, COC's rate was 35% ($n = 294$). Rates of homelessness for African American/Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, White/Caucasian, and Multi-Ethnic race/ethnicity categories were 8% or higher than the overall rates for COC respondents see Figure 5.

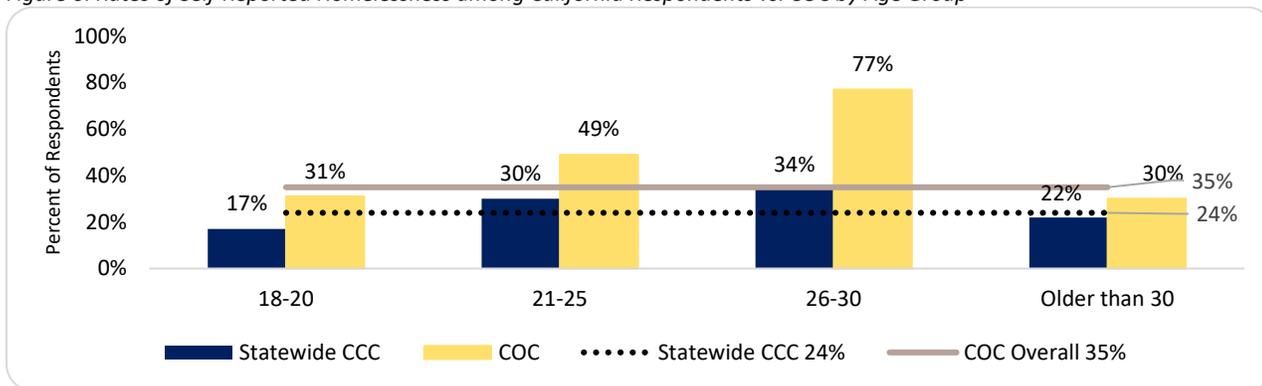
Figure 5. Rates of Self-Reported Homelessness for California Respondents vs. COC by Race/Ethnicity.



*Some Ethnicity rates are not reported due to sample sizes less than 10. Multi-Ethnicity was not provided as a disaggregation in statewide data.

Rates of homelessness were highest among age groups 26-30 for both the California and COC respondents, see Figure 6.

Figure 6. Rates of Self-Reported Homelessness among California Respondents vs. COC by Age Group



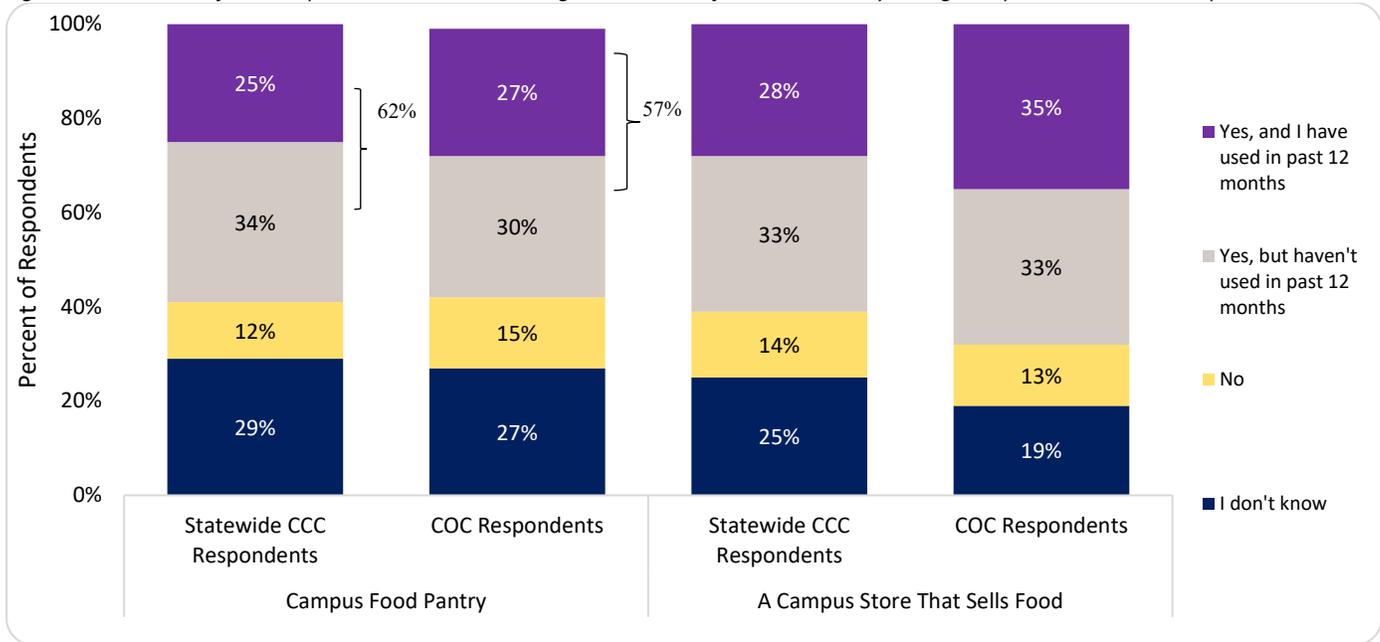
Among statewide California community college respondents, 7% agreed with the statement “Living in a closed area/space with roof but not meant for human habitation” and 14% ($n = 117$) of COC respondents agreed with this statement.

Awareness of On-Campus Food Resources

The rate of awareness among COC respondents regarding an on-campus food pantry (57%) is lower than statewide California community college respondent rate (62%) however, in a COC survey in 2019; awareness of an on-campus food

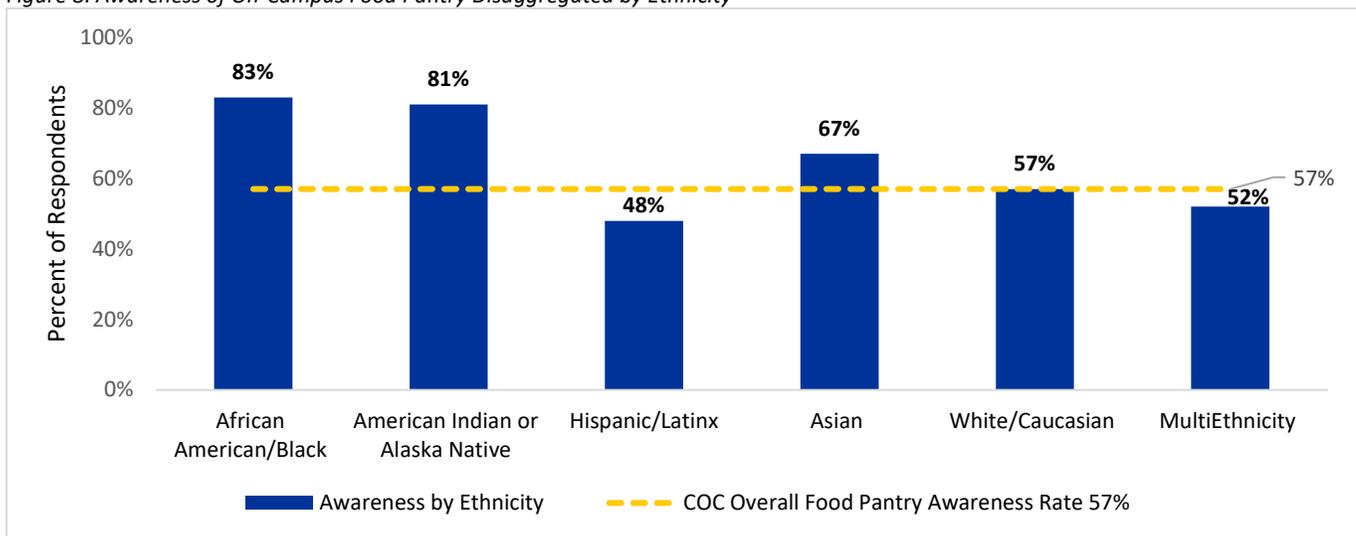
pantry was only 22%.⁵ Thus, awareness of the on-campus food pantry has grown by 35 percentage points over the last four years.

Figure 7. Awareness of On Campus Food Resources among Statewide California Community College Respondents vs. COC Respondents



When disaggregated by demographics, students aged 26 and older were less likely to be aware of the on-campus food pantry (50%) than the overall COC awareness rate (57%). Further, students who were Hispanic/Latinx or Multi-ethnicity also had rates of awareness lower than the overall rate of 57% (48% and 52%, respectively). See figure below.

Figure 8. Awareness of On-Campus Food Pantry Disaggregated by Ethnicity



⁵ Basic Needs Center Survey Report 2019 Numbered Report [322](#)

Summary Findings

- Overall, College of the Canyons had lower rates of Housing Insecurity and Food Insecurity but a higher rate of homelessness in comparison to the statewide community college survey respondents.
- Disaggregating by Ethnicity, for all three of the primary basic needs (Food, Housing, and Homelessness) African American/Black, Native American/Alaska Native, and White/Caucasian students indicated higher than overall rates of insecurity.
- Students ages 26-30 have the highest rates of insecurity across all three primary basic needs across the state.
- Rates of students being aware of a food pantry, and using it, were slightly higher among the California survey respondents (62%) as compared to COC survey respondents (57%).

Implications

The Institutional Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness office collects information on how data and research conducted assist the campus community in making evidence-based decisions. In light of this, we ask that requestors, and/ or members of any department/area that utilize the data, provide action implications for each report. Using the following [Action Implication Form](#), please report actions and/or decisions that emerge from the data and findings presented in this report.

Once completed, action implications will be made available upon request.

Recommendations

Upon review of the results of the request the following recommendations can be explored:

- Continued support for our disproportionately impacted groups (eg., African American/Black, Native American/Alaska Native) and connecting them to basic needs.
- Consider providing additional support to our older “nontraditional” and adult re-entry age group students.
- Consider all methods of increasing awareness about the Basic Needs Center as a food and resource pantry.