

SAN DIEGO  
MESA COLLEGE



# Program Review

**Summary and Reflections with Unit Goals, Action Plans, and Updates**

Student Services - Basic Needs/The Stand

### Executive Summary

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#### **Describe the successes and challenges your unit has faced since the last comprehensive review.**

As the Leading College of Equity and Excellence, San Diego Mesa College continues to create intentional Basic Needs programs and practices in support of student success. This is the first comprehensive program review for The Stand: Dr. Pamela T. Luster Resource Center. Creating brand new programming on a campus comes with many successes and challenges.

Our journey began in 2016 with the development of a direct student support program designed to assist students, particularly those experiencing disproportionate impact, with resources in the form of meals, school supplies, books, bus passes, and printing. Beginning in February 2017, the School of Student Success & Equity began partnership with the Transfer, Career, & Evaluations Department, to secure an innovation grant from the Mesa College Foundation. With the support of the foundation, we opened a very modest food pantry and professional clothing closet that we call The Stand. Lacking permanent funding at that time, The Stand operated solely by means of individual donations.

Although modest and small in the beginning, our intention has always been to meet student where they are. Our principles of engagement include maintaining flexibility in order to meet student's needs and to do so with kindness and compassion in ensuring that everyone who uses the services is able to maintain their dignity. In the early development process we surveyed our students to get both qualitative and quantitative data that was used to inform us of our efforts. We continue to use data effectively to support the work that we do. (Year in Review 16-17, 17-18, 18-19)

Today, The Stand has expanded both in size and scope of services. San Diego Mesa had created an Acting Basic Needs Coordinator in fall 2019 and was therefore prepared to create and onboard the permanent position in the fall 2021, well ahead of the deadline in AB 132 (section 4). Mesa College campus dedicated more than 3600 square feet of space on the campus Quad in the heart of our community to include a larger food pantry, professional clothing closet as well as dedicated workshop space, counseling space, storage and office space. In addition, the college has supported the hiring of a full-time classified position, 3 adjunct counseling positions, and 4 hourly project assistants to support the day to day operations of the space.

Creatively, the food pantry and professional clothing closet are operated on a point system that is monitored by a resource team. Students are allotted 100 points a semester to use on food and toiletries and an additional 8 points are allotted for clothing. Students are provided with a normalized shopping experience. Over the years we have fostered partnerships and secured donations to improve our services. We now have free feminine hygiene products, offer diapers, and carry some non-professional clothing. We also have refrigerated and frozen items, provide microwave capability as well as water for preparing instant soups and pastas.

Our Direct Student Support program has evolved as a means to ensure we are getting our students as much support as we can. Our application moved online with the COVID 19 pandemic in which students can self—refer. Students who fill out the application then get a one on one appointment with a Basic Needs Counselor or Counseling Intern to help assess the student's needs and/or provide minor financial assistance and get them connected to campus or community resources. Such efforts go a long way in helping the struggling student to have a sense of community connection.

During the COVID 19 pandemic we expanded our programming to include workshops to help create community and provide students with a safe place to talk and learn. As we returned to campus, these workshops have morphed to include various other helpful topics which have promoted additional partnerships between student service and instructional programs all designed to support student retention and success. Some are held by The Stand and some are partnered with other departments. Feel, Heal, and Be Real; HeART Circle – included restoration circle and art days; Scholarships workshop – providing students with information about both on and off campus scholarship opportunities; Healthy Eating – providing guidance and recipes for eating healthy; Parent Cafe in partnership with CalWORKs to provide parenting students with a place and space to connect and deal with topics that relate to parenting.

In 2019, The San Diego Mesa College Foundation announced the Resiliency Fund. This fund is meant to provided

## Summary and Reflection

students with access to emergency funding for unexpected expenses that can occur during a semester. The campus agreed to have this fund available through the existing basic needs programming. The Foundation has created an endowment for some of the funds to assist in maintaining this emergency aid program.

In the spring of 2021, San Diego Mesa College became a participant in ECMC's Project Success program. These funds provided an additional emergency aid program, coordinated and awarded through The Stand. Students are eligible to receive up to \$500 for unexpected emergency expenses that would negatively impact their academic journey. These funds have a simple application process and a pretty quick turn around for funding. Payment can only be made to a vendor and the expenses can not be reported to financial aid. Making this a true equity program. In The Spring of 2022, college leadership proposed a renaming of The Stand Basic Needs Resource Center to The Stand: The Dr. Pamela T. Luster Resource Center in honor of the retiring president and her dedication to basic needs programming. This included an updated logo. Additionally as part of the rebranding, The San Diego Mesa College Foundation paid to install a donor recognition tree with the names of all those who donated to Basic Needs supports on campus.

Recognizing that we cannot do it all by ourselves, we have been very intentional about developing community partnerships. For example, in 2018 we began partnering with Feeding San Diego and in 2019 we added a partnership with San Diego Food Bank to help provide large scale distributions of fruits and vegetables. Initially these were held as large scale walk through events for the campus community. During COVID, we shifted to a drive thru model, and are now slowly shifting back to the walk thru model.

In 2022, we proudly were accepted into the second cohort of Generation Hope's, Family U program. The team is led by the basic needs coordinator and includes decision makers from key areas on campus including the Director of Facilities and Events, the Director of Financial Aid, Student Services Data Analyst, and our Student Conduct Officer who is also a faculty member. The team has drafted a plan for the college to improve our connection with student parents on campus.

In the 22-23 academic year, The Stand has been working at preparing the campus to offer the Fresh Success Program to our CTE students. This hands-on program will provide greater basic needs supports to students enrolled in CTE courses, receiving Cal-fresh (but not eligible for CalWORKs). We anticipate launching the program in July 2023 with the hope of enrolling 75 students in the program by the beginning of the fall 2023 semester. We will conduct outreach to CTE programs, provide check-ins and supports to assist CTE students in completing their degree attainment and entering the workforce.

Moving forward, it is our intention to continue assessing our students' need through direct conversations and surveys. Additionally, we are constantly looking at ways to expand our partnerships and services to create a service that lets our students know we care about them as humans first. Our intention is to help our students to break through any barriers that exist. This means that while we started with food and clothing in our modest opening, we are continually expanding our support to our students as we pride ourselves on serving the whole student. As the challenges that our students face continues to change and expand, it is our intention to do the same.

### **If applicable, describe any major curricular or service changes your unit has engaged in and the impact of those changes since the last comprehensive review.**

Basic Needs Counselors – One of the biggest shifts in how we provide services to students is that our direct support program is handled by adjunct counselors instead of Classified Professionals. This increase in staffing helps support the growth in the number of students needing basic needs supports.

Workshops – As we returned to campus post COVID, The Stand implemented workshop series to help create community. Some are held by The Stand Staff and some are partnered with other departments such as; HeART Circle, Scholarships, Healthy Eating, and Parent Cafe.

Engaging in Student Parent Work – In 2022 SD Mesa was accepted into the 2nd cohort of Generation Hope's Family U program to create a working plan for the college with a focus on student parents.

Engaging in Fresh Success Program – The Stand began the preliminary work on getting set up as a Fresh Success campus.

## Summary and Reflection

**If applicable, describe the impact of any new resources (human, fiscal, etc) on the unit and/or action plan implementation.**

During the 22-23 Academic year, The Stand: The Dr. Pamela T. Luster Resource Center has welcomed a Student Services Technician, three adjunct counselors, and four Project Assistants and four Veteran Work Study students. This is thanks in large part to HEERF Funding which has supported the adjunct and NANCe positions within The Stand. The impact of staffing has created growth in the services we are able to provide and increases the number of students we are able to serve.

We have added basic office equipment, new furniture, and new tech to the space. This has provided a more welcoming environment allowing us to provide more dignified services.

**If you assess OUTCOMES, please confirm that the outcomes have been reviewed for accuracy. If you do not assess Outcomes, skip this question.**

Reviewed Not Accurate - Support Needed

**Related Documents for Charts and Graphs**

**Executive Summary Complete**

Yes

## Data Reflection

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**Trends observed in program/service area's data.**

As we transition back to pre COVID operations, some trends we see are higher levels of basic needs insecurity including but not limited to housing insecurity, food insecurity, lack of access to technology, transportation and affordable childcare, as well as an increased need for physical and mental health services.

While Pre-COVID number were high, as we have transitioned to a fully open campus, our food pantry services have expanded and direct support services have more than tripled. Reports coming out during the COVID Pandemic foreshadowed the increase in basic needs insecurity that we are anecdotally seeing this semester.

**Describe any equity gaps in the data. Are there differences and/or patterns observed by demographics (e.g.race/ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)**

Within Direct Student Support, there is a significant equity gap for Black/African American students (-7.6%) and Latinx students (-2.6%), however the equity gaps are smaller than the overall college equity gaps for Black/African/American(-9.3%) and Latinx (-7.6%). Additionally there is a large equity gap for students age 30-39 (-20.3%) This is of significant note as the college wide equity gap for this age group is (+2.8%)

Of interest, there is a significant equity gap for low income students (-11.5%) while there is not a campus wide comparison for this gap, it does call for some deeper analysis.

In pantry usage the equity gaps are again seen in Black/African American student (-3.1%) and Latinx (-9.5%).

In market usage there are equity gaps among Black/African America (-1.0%) Latinx (-7.9%) Multi-Ethnicity (-4.1%) and Unreported (-4.5%)

**Describe the discussion(s) that took place about the unit's learning outcomes assessment data.**

The Stand team worked together to develop our outcomes. As this is our very first stand alone Program Review, we focused our goals around our primary mission of providing basic needs supports, Our focus on student parents, and our developing Fresh Success program.

**Related Documents for Charts and Graphs**

## Summary and Reflection

### Data Reflection Complete

Yes

### Practice Reflection

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**Describe current practices your program/service area has engaged in that you believe impact the above data trends and equity gaps.**

Food Resources – Pantry, Markets, Hotspots, Events

Direct Student Support Program – one on one counseling appointment to assess student for basic needs supports

Professional Development – Free clothing, workshops, mentoring

Community Resources – connect students to off campus supports such as; CalFresh, WIC, housing, legal aid, childcare, transportation

Campus Engagement – Markets, workshops, pop-up pantries

It should be noted that according to our own data analysis of participants, students who use The Stand Direct Student Support have higher GPA's, have equal or higher retention rates, and have equal or higher overall success rates. Students who use The Stand Pantry and Professional clothing closet have equal or higher GPA's, have equal or higher retention rates, and have equal or higher overall success rates. Students who use The Stand Markets have equal or higher GPA's, have equal or higher retention rates, and have equal or higher overall success rates.

**What other factors (internal or external) might also impact the above data trends and equity gaps?**

AB 2881 - Could increase the number of students and the amount of support needed.

2023-24 May Revise - Budget cuts could begin to impact services we are able to provide.

The instability of relying on NANCe and Adjuncts could be catastrophic for a department where stability is something already lacking in our students lives. Additionally, the impact of hiring and training on a department that is already stretched to the seems could lead to burnout and turnover, which could have a detrimental impact on program growth.

### Related Documents for Charts and Graphs

### Practice Reflection Complete

Yes

### Mid-Cycle Updates

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**Are there any edits or updates to the Executive Summary above?**

**Are there any edits or updates to the Data Reflection above?**

**Are there any edits or updates to the Practice Reflection above?**

## Summary and Reflection

### Basic Needs Support and Sustainably

**Unit Goal:** Increase Basic Needs support to sustainably provide additional resources and supports to basic needs insecure students.

**Goal Status:** Active

**Beginning Year:** 2022 - 2023

**Projected Completion Year:** 2025 - 2026

#### Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Community - Objective 2: X
- Community - Objective 3: X
- Community - Objective 4: X
- Community - Objective 5: X
- Completion - Objective 3: X
- Completion - Objective 4: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p><b>Action Plan Status:</b> Active</p> <p><b>Action Plan:</b> 1. Pantry/markets (including pantry hot spots) 2. CalFresh Ambassador Program 3. Direct Student Support 4. Emergency Aid –ECMC/Project Success and Resiliency Funds</p> <p><b>Action Plan Cycle:</b> 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	<p><b>Submission Date:</b> 11/30/2023</p> <p><b>Action Plan Update:</b> Pantry Usage has increased - with the complete opening of campus we served 1982 (verified) students in 22-23. Our tentative count for fall 2023 is 2354 students served. CalFresh Ambassador program has maintained out reach efforts. We do not have any good data collection on the number of students who apply and receive CalFresh benefits, however our team of four ambassadors has been consistent with outreach. Direct Student Support - for the 22-23 Academic year we served 533 students through our direct aid program. Emergency Aid ECMC/Project Success - for the 22-23 academic year we supported 21 students with Emergency Aid through all resources available. in the fall of 23 we have had more resources available for emergency aid</p> <p><b>Update Year:</b> 2023 - 2024</p> <p><b>Action Plan Progress:</b> On Track</p>

### Student Parents Support

**Unit Goal:** Develop spaces, programming, and resources to specifically target student parents on campus.

**Goal Status:** Active

**Beginning Year:** 2022 - 2023

**Projected Completion Year:** 2025 - 2026

#### Mapping

## Summary and Reflection

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Community - Objective 2: X
- Community - Objective 3: X
- Community - Objective 4: X
- Community - Objective 5: X
- Completion - Objective 3: X
- Completion - Objective 4: X

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p><b>Action Plan Status:</b> Active</p> <p><b>Action Plan:</b> 1. Working with Family U – Develop and sustain practices on campus that relate with Data, Policy, People, and Culture on campus. 2. Expanding existing spaces and places on campus for student parents 3. Engage the campus community in discussions about student parents using data that is being and has been being collected since spring 2021</p> <p><b>Action Plan Cycle:</b> 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	<p><b>Submission Date:</b> 11/30/2023</p> <p><b>Action Plan Update:</b> 1. Working with Family U - We are finishing up our second year of the cohort program and have been able to implement many of the details from our work plan. of note is the addition of student parent data to The Stand data dashboards. 2. Expanding existing spaces - We are in progress of remodeling a space on campus to serve as the family resource center as well as expanding the number of bathrooms with changing tables, and finally purchasing inviting child size furniture for community space. 3. Our team has presented at convocation in Spring 2023 and Fall 2023. We had our campus visit with a presentation to the campus community. We presented at the fall 2023 campus board meeting. We are working with the LOFT professional development team to implement training components to new faculty institute and the new classified institute in the spring of 2024.</p> <p><b>Update Year:</b> 2023 - 2024</p> <p><b>Action Plan Progress:</b> On Track</p>

## Fresh Success Program

**Unit Goal:** Create and develop Fresh Success program on campus with the intention of enrolling 75 students.

**Goal Status:** Active

**Beginning Year:** 2022 - 2023

**Projected Completion Year:** 2025 - 2026

### Mapping

Mesa College Strategic Plan: Roadmap to Mesa2030: (X - Highlight the X to Align)

- Community - Objective 2: X
- Community - Objective 3: X
- Community - Objective 4: X
- Community - Objective 5: X
- Completion - Objective 3: X
- Completion - Objective 4: X

## Summary and Reflection

Action Plans	Action Plan Update
<p><b>Action Plan Status:</b> Active</p> <p><b>Action Plan:</b> 1. Assign Staff to support Fresh Success Program 2. Working with the CCC Foundation - Attend trainings</p> <p><b>Action Plan Cycle:</b> 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024, 2024 - 2025, 2025 - 2026</p>	<p><b>Submission Date:</b> 11/30/2023</p> <p><b>Action Plan Update:</b> 1. Staff has been assigned 2. training have been attended. 3. While we intended to launch in the fall of 2023, because of barriers with completing various paperwork to launch the program. We anticipate a soft launch in spring 2024</p> <p><b>Update Year:</b> 2023 - 2024</p> <p><b>Action Plan Progress:</b> Barriers Encountered</p>