Address Student Food Insecurity with Meal Plan Donations. Creative funding method and tools.

Presented by:

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Agenda

• About UC Merced
• Basic Needs Security
• iCare - from the start, what does it do, MobileID/Portal, process flow, topology, By the numbers, demo (if time permits)
• Meal Plan Balance Graph/Gauge
• Bits’n’Bites app, logistics
• Next Step and Lesson Learned
• Questions and Comments?
About UC Merced

UC Merced is the 10th campus in the University of California system and the first American research university of the 21st century. Interdisciplinary innovation, diversity, sustainability and personal interactions are the hallmarks of the UC Merced experience.

- 1988 – Authorized by California legislature
- 2004 – Opened for graduate students
- 2005 – Opened for undergraduate students

Fast Facts 2018-19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>7,881</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>8,544</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
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<td>Sacramento Area</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
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<td>San Francisco Bay Area</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>San Joaquin Valley</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other California counties</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
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Basic Needs Security

Basic Needs Security refers to the food, housing, and wellness security of our community.

Our ultimate goal is to remove any barriers to student success, including food challenges, to help students progress and graduate.

The quality of life of our students has a major impact on their sense of belonging, persistence, graduation rate, and overall experience.

2017 UC Merced Survey Report shows 61% undergraduate, and 21% graduate food insecurity rate.

Most campuses have Food Pantry and security resource centers that provides emergency relief, CalFresh Outreach, and nutrition education to help students. But most of the time, it isn’t enough…

2017-18 IMPACT REPORT

Approximately 15% of campuses end the term with unsecured meal points. From more positive, tailored marketing materials to changing the campus culture by educating and training staff on how to support food insecure students, we can push back on stigma and encourage students to effectively utilize supportive services.
May 2016: a freshman, Harrison Tom, donated his meal card to other students studying for finals. He alerted fellow students that he bought 100 vouchers and they could help themselves to free food.

July 2016: CatCard and Dining Services collaborated to understand the initiative, and requirements. Note: each fall, students receive a starting balance of a certain amount. The unused portion of your balance carries over for use during the spring semester. On the last day of the spring semester, any remaining balance is forfeited.

September 2016: the CatCard performed a student focus group, commenced application development in-house, setup the software and hardware requirements.

November 2016: we were ready to demo iCare to the management, Dining Services, and beta test with student focus group. With tweaks and additional functions requested; brochures, website and notifications format updated; our beta testing was successful.

January 2017: CatCard office officially launched iCare web app program. iCare - meal donation program to allow on campus students to donate excess funds to their on campus peers for those who have run out of funds. [Brochure/Plyer](#)
iCare – what does it do?

- iCare offers students immediate, private, and automated access to request meal funds equivalent to a full week of meals accessible from any device, anywhere, anytime.

- iCare is integrated with the campus card systems, and provides cost-saving, tracking, better record keeping, demographics, data analysis, and trends of student donations and requests to management.

- The process of donating and requesting are real-time, convenient, and notifications are sent when a student donates and requests a meal. It has links to other basic security resources available on-campus.

- iCare has built-in safeguards and logics to make sure students do not over-donate, and preventions so students don’t take advantage of the program. Student donation and request must meet requirements, and criteria to qualify to receive meal funds.

- Our students find iCare app user interface useful, secure, fast, and easy to use. Our leadership and management supports the program, and helps with student success.
iCare via Web Portal

(Desktop mode – iCatCard web portal)
iCare via MobileID

(CatCard MobileID mode)

- Availability
- Scalability
- Flexibility
- Privacy
- Secure

Meals to your Peers

Donate Meals
If you have an excess of Meal Plan dollars and would like to help other students, you may donate them here. Meals reside in a pool where anyone with a low balance may pull from. Help make a difference today!

Request Meals
If you have an active Meal Plan and have used up all your Residential Dining Dollars and Cat Dollars, you may request funds here. Requests are equivalent to a full week of meals. Approval will be subject to donation availability.

If you have concerns about your ability to access food while on campus please visit our Food Security Resource.
iCare via MobileID - Donate (CatCard MobileID mode)

- Donate easily
- Safeguards
- Requirements validated
- Thank you confirmation

Donate Meals
Thank you for using iCare. Meals you donate will go to students who cannot afford or who have run dry their Meal Plan. Each meal is equivalent to $6 in Meal Plan dollars.
The current Meal Plan pool available is $2,578.00.
You have donated 12 meals so far.
Your Meal Plan balance of $175.00 is below the required threshold of $882.00 required to donate.

If you have concerns about your ability to access food while on campus please visit our Food Security Resource.

Not Qualify

05-APR-19
Back
Donate

Donate Meals
Thank you for using iCare. Meals you donate will go to students who cannot afford or who have run dry their Meal Plan. Each meal is equivalent to $6 in Meal Plan dollars.
The current Meal Plan pool available is $4,206.00.
You have donated 33 meals so far.
You may donate up to 44 meals.

If you have concerns about your ability to access food while on campus please visit our Food Security Resource.

Not Qualify

Qualify

Hello Abraham,

Your donation of meals has been successfully processed.
Thank you for donating part of your meal plan to help hungry students survive these last few weeks of school.

Successfully processed $126.00 for 104111287 on Friday, 04/05/2019, 02:04pm with transaction ID 619360.

Feel free to email icatcard@ucmerced.edu if you have any questions.

Thanks, iCare.
iCare via MobileID - Request

(CatCard MobileID mode)

- Request easily
- Safeguards
- Requirements is validated
- Thank you confirmation

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Request Meals

Thank you for using iCare. With iCare you may request $125 of student-donated money to your Meal Plan balance. This amount is enough for 3 average meals per day for a week. You may request this amount once every week.

To request meals you must meet the following criteria:
- You are a campus resident and have a Meal Plan.
- Your Meal Plan + Cat Dollars balance is less than $80.
- You have not requested meals within the past 7 days.
- You have not requested more than 3 times from iCare this semester.

The current Meal Plan pool available is $2,578.00.
You have requested 0 weeks of meals so far.

You may request meals until the above requirements are met.

Not Qualify

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Request Meals

Thank you for using iCare. With iCare you may request $125 of student-donated money to your Meal Plan balance. This amount is enough for 3 average meals per day for a week. You may request this amount once every week.

To request meals you must meet the following criteria:
- You are a campus resident and have a Meal Plan.
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- You have not requested meals within the past 7 days.
- You have not requested more than 3 times from iCare this semester.

The current Meal Plan pool available is $4,206.00.
You have requested 0 weeks of meals so far.

You may request meals for the next week.

Qualify

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Hello Abraham,

Your redemption of weekly meals has been successfully processed.

These meals have been donated by students like you in an effort to cut down on excess meal plan waste. The meal plan credit you have received should allow a week of average meals with three meals per day.

Successfully processed $125.00 for 104111287 on Friday, 04/05/2019, 02:00pm with transaction ID 610535.

You may request another week of meals after 7 days.

Feel free to email icard@ucmerced.edu if you have any questions.

Thanks,

iCare.
Denied Used Cases

(CatCard MobileID mode)

- **Criteria is Not Met**
- **Pool balance is low**
- **Redirected to Basic Needs Hub**

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Image of a mobile screen displaying a request for meals.

**Request Meals**

Thank you for using iCare. With iCare you may request $125 of student-donated money to your Meal Plan balance. This amount is enough for 3 average meals per day for a week. You may request this amount once every week.

To request meals you must meet the following criteria:
- You are a campus resident and have a Meal Plan.
- Your Meal Plan + Cat Dollars balance is less than $50.
- You have not requested meals within the past 7 days.
- You have not requested more than 3 times from iCare this semester.

The pool balance is currently too low at the moment. Convince some friends to donate or try again later!

The current Meal Plan pool available is $109.00.
You have requested 0 weeks of meals so far.

You may not request meals until the above requirements are met.

If you have concerns about your ability to access food while on campus please visit our Food Security Resource.
iCare Process Flow

Student Receive Notification
MobileID
Web Portal

Donate
Passes Qualification and Safeguards

iCare Creates ISO, transfer $$$ and updates accounts

Donation is based on a $18/day calculation equals (3 meals). Each meal is equivalent to $6 in Meal Plan dollars.

To donate you must: Have an active meal plan and enough funds for yourself to last semester.

Student Request
Login MobileID or Web Portal

Request Meals
Passes Criteria and Qualification

iCare systems Creates ISO, transfer $$$ to accounts (fund pool and student)

With iCare you may request $125 of student-donated money to your Meal Plan balance. This amount is enough for 3 average meals per day for a week.

iCare Request once every week and no more than 3 times per semester, and Meal Plan + Cat Dollars balance is less than $50.

iCare thank you email.

iCare deducts funds from Pool and transfers $125 to the student meal plan account

iCare thank you email.
By the numbers

In the last 2 years (since launched), iCare has provided a total of **$247,250 excess meal funds** and **39,560 meal swipes** (at $6.25 per meal) to our students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Donation</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Meal Swipes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
<td>$85,789</td>
<td>$85,625</td>
<td>13,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>$23,604</td>
<td>$23,500</td>
<td>3,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>$95,898</td>
<td>$93,000</td>
<td>14,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>$45,200</td>
<td>$45,125</td>
<td>7,220</td>
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</table>

"It just shows students are willing to help other students out." A student who donated once said, "If you have the money, why not use it to benefit other people?"

“The iCare app and program makes it easy and convenient to donate and request”, a feedbacks from students.
Meal Plan Balance Graph/Gauge

Meal plan balance gauge (balance graph) shows and alerts student when in the semester the student is going to run out of meal plan money according to their average daily spending. Sort of like a fuel gauge of a car. Added to our MobileID January 2019.

Based on your current average daily spending of $0 in the last 90 days, you can spend $0.07 per day through the end of the term 10/18/2019 without adding additional funds to your declining meal plan.

The above is an estimate of your food expenses and does not include Cat Dollars. If you have concerns about your ability to access food while on campus please visit our Food Security Resource.
 Bits’ n’ Bites

- Message from Bits’n’Bites uses Twitter
- Sending/receiving notification is immediate and easy
- Lets student know food is available (what, where, until when)
- Approved food safety regulations guidelines by EH&S
- Helps reduce food waste on campus
- Provides another occasional meal opportunity for students

Provides and supports departments and clubs the ability to post any excess food and other items, that can be shared, not thrown away, using a desktop or any smart device via MobileID to post into Twitter.
Bits’ n’ Bites

Integrated with CatCard and Twitter API (in-house develop).
Allow autonomous and managed posting – restricted to only Admins.
Integrated with our iCheck-in attendance tracking.
EH&S guidelines agreement availability via CatCard.
Available anytime and anywhere.

Bits’ n’ Bites
@ucm_bitsnbites
Follow Twitter posts from UCM departments/Clubs for excess food and items using CatCard MobileID.
UC Merced
catcard.ucmerced.edu/mobileid
Students access

1. Log into MobileID via smart device or iCatCard portal.

2. Click on their “Bits'n'Bites” in the bottom right corner.

3. Bits'n'Bites Twitter page will display, click Follow to opt-in to receive post.

4. View recent post.
LOGISTICS – Bits’n’Bites

Administrators access

1. Log into MobileID via smart device or iCatCard portal.

2. Click on their “Bits’n’Bites” in the bottom right corner.

3. Complete the form and information required for the post.

4. Choose an image or use camera to take picture of food/items available.

5. Check the box to agree with terms, then click post.
Next Step and Lesson Learned

UC Merced CatCard team has been pioneering with innovative application, in-house development, automation, and best practices since 2011, to improve student success and engagement.

Continue to innovate, improve, and develop applications focus on solutions and cost-saving. Work with our partners and community in providing comprehensive solutions to prioritize student experience.

Lesson learned is, if resources to manage students’ emergency needs are not put into place in time and appropriately, they may leave school for the semester, and then they might never come back, for an issue or situation that was short term and where solutions could have been easily found or made easily available to them.

As an administrator and representative of the institution, we must find whatever is in our power to help our students stay on course. If that is alleviating student hunger, then we need to continue to be creative and find ways to make an impact.

In addition, with institutional and industry cooperation, like NACCU, we can produce innovations in both technology and business processes to help others.
Questions?

Let’s help our student with engagement, retention, and success.

Thank you for attending my session. Enjoy NACC U 2019!

“Abel” acereno@ucmerced.edu

“64% of respondents agree meal swipes helped them stay in school”

“Our little office…”