



Food Insecurity Among UC San Diego College Students



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ABSTRACT

Objective: To determine whether undergraduate and graduate students at UC San Diego face barriers to food security on campus.

Methods: The photovoice project was conducted at UC San Diego from April-June of 2019 and enrolled 50 students. Participants provided images and stories to highlight and address food security barriers on campus.

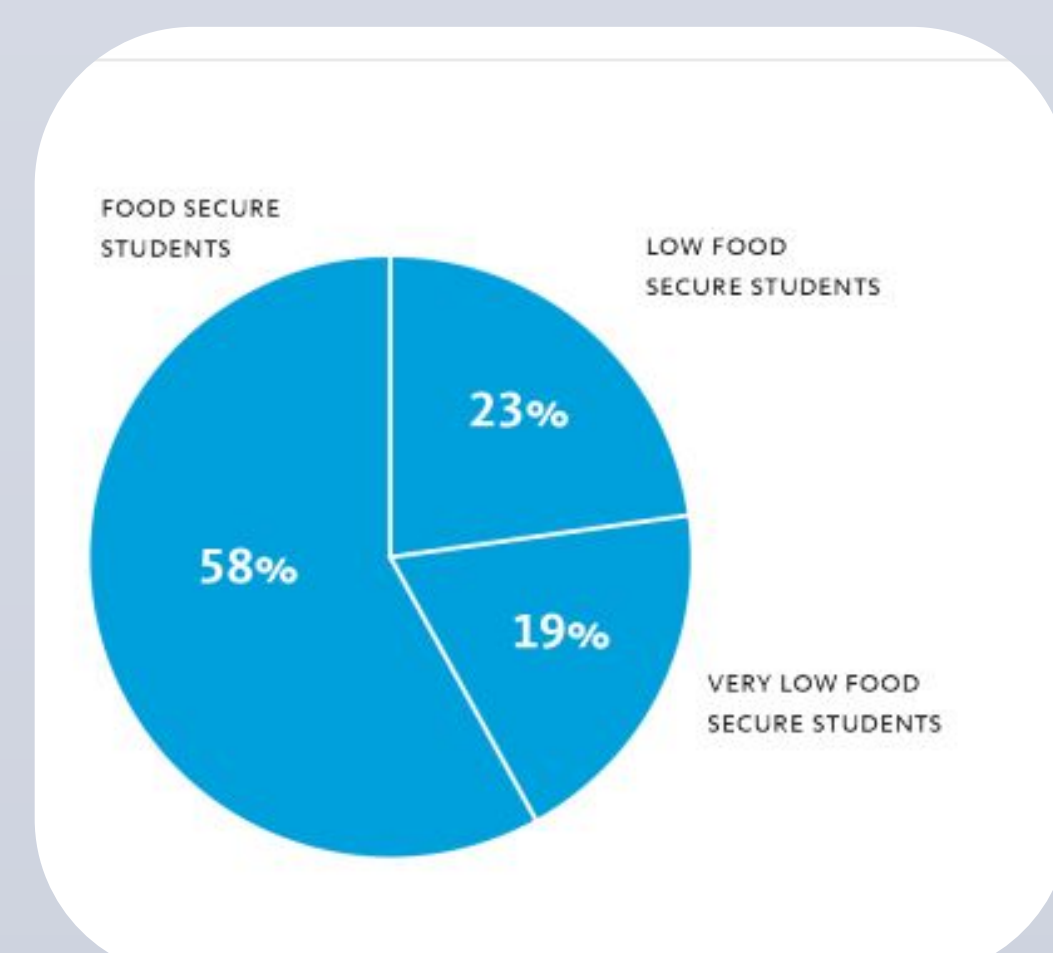
Results: Students encountered three main barriers including healthy food is more expensive/unhealthy food is cheaper, the lack of price labeling in campus dining halls and a lack of transportation.

Conclusions: UC San Diego undergraduate and graduate students face barriers to obtaining food security on campus.

Policy implications: To improve access to healthy and affordable food on campus at UC San Diego, a policy to subsidize healthy food options is being recommended.

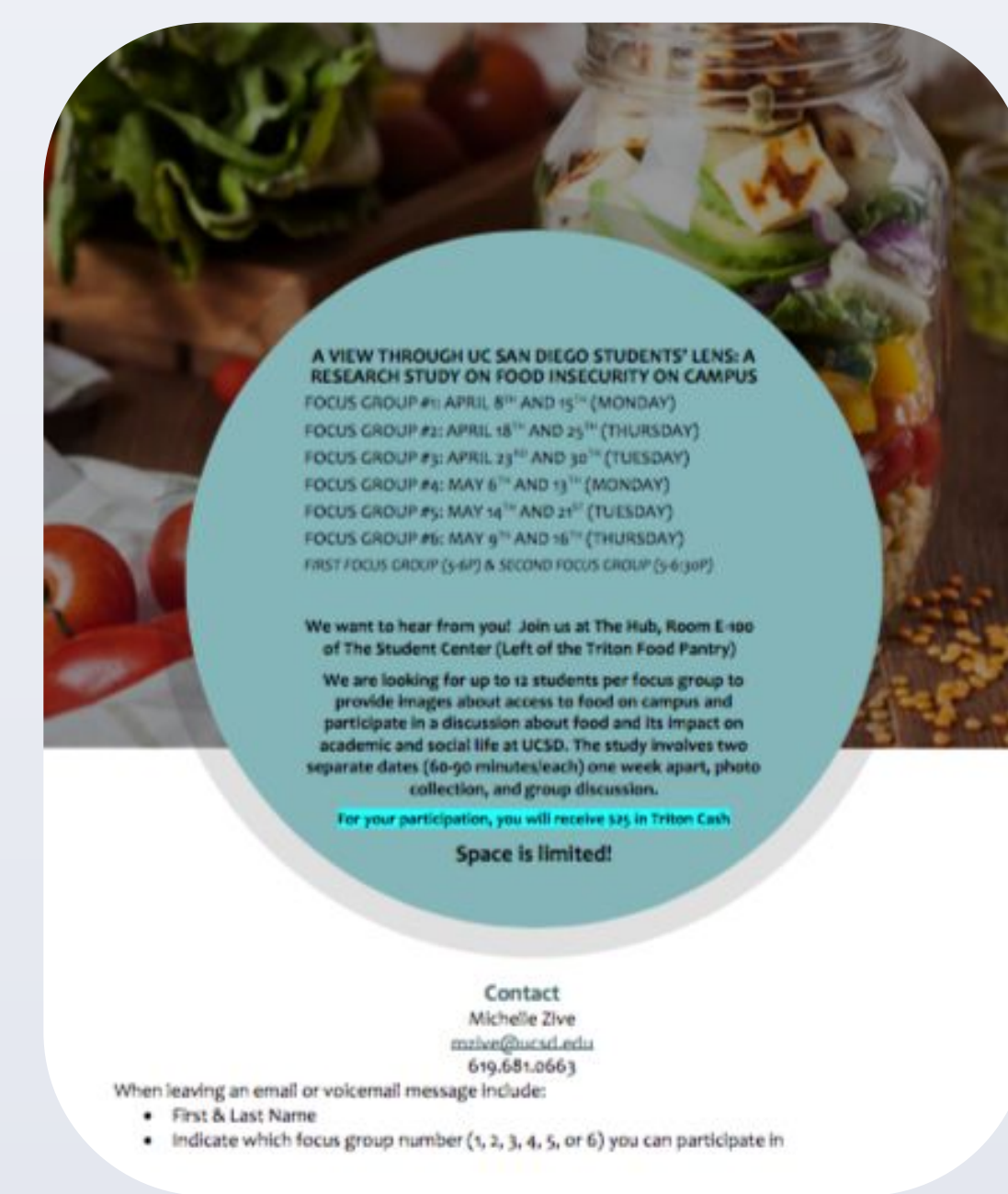
INTRODUCTION

- Food insecurity is defined as the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.
- The national prevalence of food insecurity among college students is 12.7%.
- 42% of UC students have experienced food insecurity in the past year.



METHODS

- BSPH capstone students worked in collaboration with Dr. Zive from the Center for Community Health at UC San Diego.

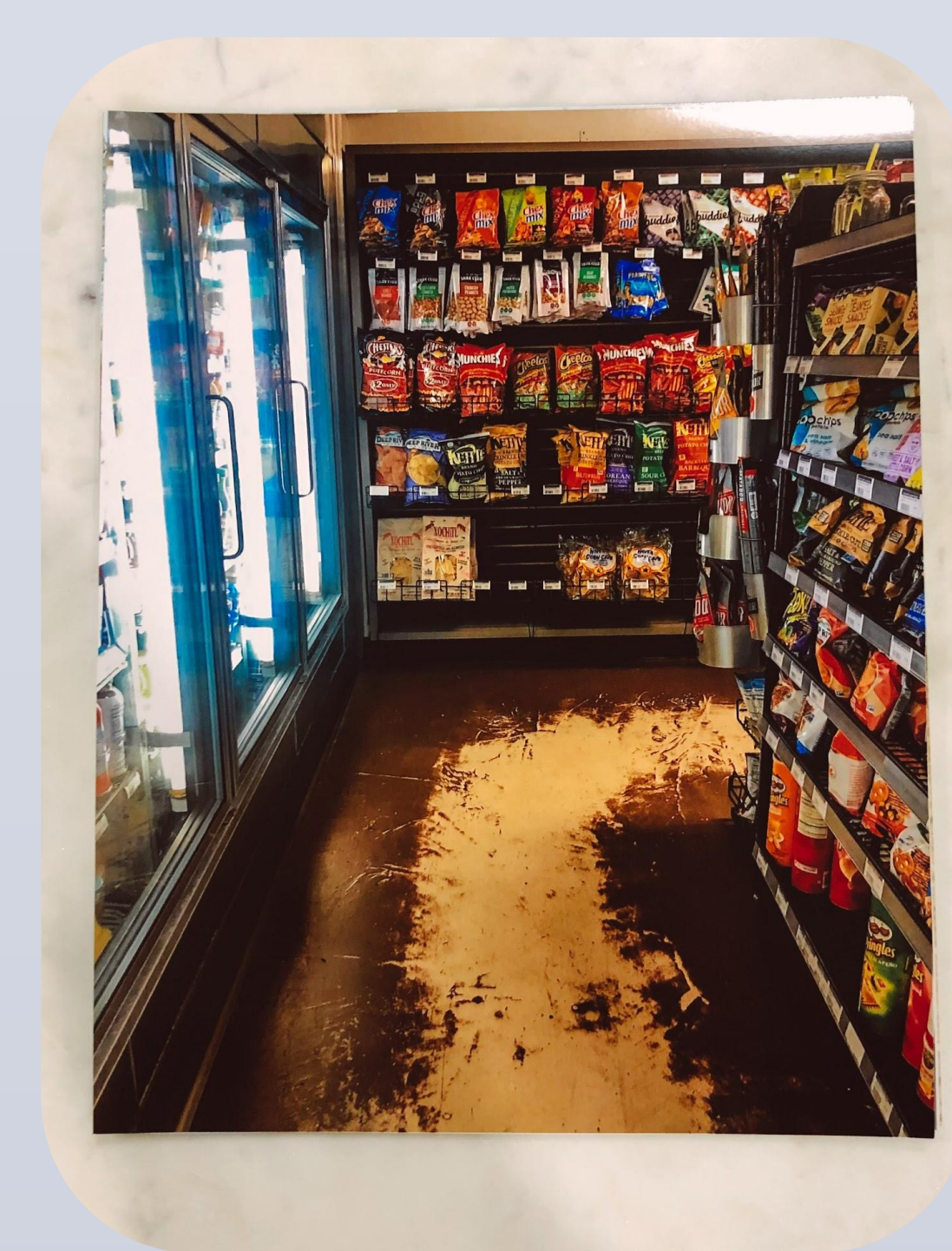


UC San Diego undergraduate and graduate students were recruited via an email flyer.

The 50 student participants enrolled were split into 5 smaller focus groups that each met twice at the Hub.

Meeting one: participants were informed on the project. Meeting two, participants provided images and stories to highlight and address their personal barriers to food security.

- Audio-recording and note-taking facilitated data collection. Qualitative data collected included photos, stories, and discussions. Data was categorized to establish the three most discussed barriers to food security on UC San Diego's campus.



RESULTS

Three main barriers for food security:

1. Healthy food is more expensive and unhealthy food is cheaper
2. Lack of price labeling in campus dining halls
3. Lack of transportation

CONCLUSION

- Focus groups showed students at UC San Diego faced barriers to being food secure.
- We recommend UC San Diego make healthier foods more available and more affordable in campus dining halls and markets.
- Facilitators that can be introduced can be modeled from initiatives at other UC campuses, such as the UCLA pilot shuttle program.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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