

HARTNELL COLLEGE

Basic Needs Postsecondary Students Program

ABSTRACT

Hartnell College's Basic Needs Resource Center project will develop and enhance systemic coordination of, and integration with, existing services and improve collaboration among service providers to better connect students with available support and to more efficiently utilize the capacity of the services and support available in the communities where Hartnell's students live. The project will create *a one-stop resource center* enabling students to access both on- and off-campus resources across a wide array of documented need areas, including: housing; food/nutrition; healthcare; mental health/wellbeing; transportation; technology; student and academic support services; financial aid; counseling; and links to other public services such as childcare, legal support and income tax preparation, as needed. The project will accomplish this by creating a sustainable program that includes a One-Stop Resource Center at each of the five Hartnell campus locations; an online resource portal; dedicated basic needs and case management staffing; an extensive public and non-profit partnership network; outreach; professional development; and evaluation.

The proposal is based on an extensive needs assessment which identified the primary gap and weakness in the basic needs services infrastructure as the lack of a centralized place for students to access basic needs information and resources and receive informed support on where and how to access services. The lack of a one-stop resource center makes it challenging for already stressed students to find the help they need.

Students, especially first-generation, underrepresented, and disadvantaged groups, face multiple challenges to make ends meet while pursuing a degree or certificate. Social and economic deprivation, previous traumatic experiences, and/or the complexity of navigating higher education systems can interfere with students' timely access to the resources. Based on a human-centered approach, this one-stop model will seek to consolidate existing campus-level interventions and supports with public benefits, social services, and other comprehensive assistance bundled in a single on-campus location and accessible online.

Hartnell College, an accredited California Community College and Hispanic Serving Institution, serves a large population of low income, underrepresented, educationally disadvantaged students in a 1,000 square mile agricultural region in California's Salinas Valley. The College designed this program in the face of increased student homelessness, food insecurity, and unmet mental health needs that have resulted in a **33 percent decline** in Hartnell enrollment during the pandemic with students stopping out (delaying time to degree/transfer) or dropping out altogether. The pandemic has exacerbated long-term basic needs deficiencies for a vast majority of Hartnell College's students.

The project will address both the **absolute priority** and the **competitive preference priority**.