Alabama Campus Coalition for Basic Needs Engage Assessment: Key Findings for the Development of Campus Food Security Coalitions
Abbigail Hickey, MS, RDN1, Alicia Powers, PhD2, Carey Andrzezewski, PhD3, & Onikia Brown, PhD, RDN1
1Auburn University Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Management, 2Hunger Solutions Institute, 3Auburn University Department of Educational Foundation, Leadership, and Technology

**Background**

- 44% of colleges students experience food insecurity (FI).1
- Alabama Campus Coalition for Basic Needs (ACCBN) is a network of campus coalitions at 15, two-year colleges and 10, four-year universities with the mission to address college student food insecurity.

**Research Questions**

- What characteristics of coalition building are present during the process of engaging coalition members?
- What are the experiences of coalition champions in building a campus food security coalition by engaging members of their campus and community?
- What are the experiences of coalition champions in engaging coalition members since the onset of COVID-19?

**Methods**

- Three explanatory, sequential mixed method studies aimed to assess and explore engagement and collaborative efforts of ACCBN campus coalitions.
- A convenience sample of ACCBN coalition champions (leaders) was recruited to participate in a survey and a virtual, semi-structured interview.
- Instrumentation
  - 76-item survey with two validated instruments2,3
  - Interview to explore characteristics of coalition engagement
- Survey results were summarized with descriptive statistics. Emergent coding of transcripts led to themes.

**Results**

- 2022 study with two-year college champions
  - 11 surveys and 15 interviews
- 2019 study with four-year university champions
  - 8 surveys and interviews
- Follow-up study with four-year university champions (ongoing)
  - 2 surveys and interviews

**Themes from Champions at Two-Year Colleges**

- “Many hats” of a Community College staff and faculty
  - Intentionality in bringing together members and resources

**Themes from Champions at Four-Year Universities**

- Role of university administration
- Recruitment of members that were previously addressing FI on campus
- Challenges of engaging members at four-year universities

**Coalition building during COVID-19**

- Challenges with engaging members and adapting to student needs
- Use of technology in coalition building and maintenance.
  - Used Zoom, messaging systems (such as Microsoft Teams), and email to stay in contact during COVID-19
  - Utilized electronic food aid request forms and contactless food pick-up or drop-off.
  - Placed flyers with QR codes around campus with a link to food aid request forms

**Conclusions**

- Strategies and challenges for engaging coalition members is different among two- and four-year colleges and universities.
- COVID-19 created unique challenges however coalitions adapted to meet the needs of students.
- Technology was a vital tool for coalition maintenance and food aid initiatives. Many of these changes continue to be implemented.