



Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

## Triton Food Pantry Opens at UC San Diego

### Walk the Block Party April 18

UC San Diego students, staff and faculty are invited to join in the first annual Walk the Block Party at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Apr. 18, to support the new Triton Food Pantry. Hosted by Housing, Dining and Hospitality, the free event will include a two-mile walk beginning at Reville Plaza that will loop participants around campus. The party will include entertainment and a group yoga session as well as interactive activities to create awareness about food insecurity. Students will have the option to contribute to the Triton Food Pantry with their dining dollars or Triton Cash. For more information or to volunteer, contact Mona Powell at [hdhonthemove@ucsd.edu](mailto:hdhonthemove@ucsd.edu).

Some students may choose to skip a meal occasionally to save money. But when it becomes a necessity, not an option, students at UC San Diego can stop by the Triton Food Pantry to get a free box of cereal, or package of pasta—whatever they need to continue to be successful students. A new service for all undergraduate and graduate students at UC San Diego, the Triton Food Pantry was launched by Associated Students Feb. 5 to provide discreet relief for students.

“Establishing a food pantry on campus will provide needed relief to some students who may not have nutritious and varied food options on a daily basis. It will help ensure the academic success of students of all backgrounds,” said Sharon Van Bruggen, director of University Centers.

No student should ever have to go hungry on campus. The Triton Food Pantry joins a network of resources on campus in place—including need-based aid and emergency loans—for students who may be faced with unforeseen financial circumstances. All registered students with a valid UC San Diego identification card can confidentially pick up a free meal whenever necessary.



During the opening reception the campus community was invited to tour the pantry, the shelves already stocked with nonperishables, including cans of soup, jars of peanut butter, boxes of rice and more. Located adjacent to the Associated Students Soft Reserves at the Original Student Center, the Triton Food Pantry will be operated by two undergraduate student managers as well as numerous volunteers.

The project began last spring when Patricia Mahaffey, dean of Muir College, presented a proposal to Associated Students. After securing backing from the AS Council and initial funding from the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, the project took off.

“After seeing Dean Mahaffey’s proposal to AS Council, members really couldn’t sit still,” said Robby Boparai, president of Associated Students, during the reception. “We decided that we really wanted to tackle this issue. Working with the task force and other partners on campus, we realized we had the resources to implement it right away. The Triton Food Pantry will ensure students are getting the resources they need to be successful.”

The pantry will be stocked with supplies bought in bulk at low cost from the San Diego Food Bank. It also will be supported by donations from students made through the UC San Diego chapter of [Swipes For the Homeless](#)—a nonprofit organization dedicated to alleviating hunger around the world by allowing college students to donate unused dining dollars to other students in need. With more private support, the plan is to expand offerings to include fresh produce and refrigerated options.



The UC San Diego Triton Food Pantry joins a network of other food pantries that have been established at many other University of California campuses in response to the increasingly visible issue of food security at college campuses across the country. According to the 2012 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES), about 25 percent of UC San Diego students report that they “often” or “very often” skip meals in order to save money.

“Our primary focus is to ensure that students aren't going to bed hungry,” said Triton Food Pantry Manager Colin King. “However, we are also working on finding long-term solutions and looking at more institutional changes that can happen to provide students with the resources they need to lessen the impact of food insecurity.”

The establishment of the Triton Food Pantry aligns with the UC Global Food Initiative (#globalfood), a system-wide program designed to harness the University of California’s collective excellence in research, outreach and operations in an effort to put the world on a path to sustainably and nutritiously feed itself.

The Triton Food Pantry is made possible by University Centers, Associated Students, the Council of Deans of Student Affairs, Financial Aid Office, Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and the Center for Student Involvement. For more information and to learn how you can help support the project, contact [foodpantry@ucsd.edu](mailto:foodpantry@ucsd.edu).

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