

Food Security and Waste Intern  
2017-2018

Based on a 2015 article published by Higher Education Today, “College and university administrators and leaders around the country increasingly are realizing that undergraduate students are among the millions of Americans who experience food insecurity, or a lack of resources to obtain nutritional food. The numbers are striking. [Feeding America](#), a national nonprofit network of food banks that provides food assistance to 46.5 million individuals and 15.5 million households, estimates that nearly half (49.3 percent) of its clients in college must choose between educational expenses (i.e., tuition, books and supplies, rent) and food annually, and that 21 percent did so for a full 12 months.”

Through frequent waste audits of Lehigh’s trash stream, 25% of trash is food waste. An unknown percentage of this food is leftover from events. In response to our food insecurity and waste challenge, the Office of Sustainability is seeking an intern to help measure and reduce food waste and food insecurity. The responsibilities of the interns include but not limited to:

- Launch a text-based notification (i.e., GroupMe, WhatsApp, etc) system for students, faculty and staff to communicate when there is leftover food from events
- Market the pilot to departments and student clubs across campus
- Track the frequency of texts and information in the texts to share with dining services and others
- Create a more comprehensive analysis of food insecurity challenges on campus through tools like surveys and focus groups in collaboration with appropriate departments on campus
- Identify opportunities to further reduce food waste and insecurity on campus