Center for Student Advocacy & Community

You Belong Here



Program Questionnaire FY 24-25 1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, how you accomplish your unit's mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of benefits for students.

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community (CSAC) is the Division of Student Affairs' newest campus department, opening its doors on September 1, 2023. The department was formed after benchmarking Top 50 Institutions, Big XII schools, and identifying programs and services that would help address unmet student needs and improve the overall student experience on campus.

Mission: The Center for Student Advocacy and Community reduces barriers that inhibit academic and personal success by identifying areas of need, providing connection to resources, and supporting student-led programs and initiatives that strengthen our community.

Vision: We envision a future where every student feels like a valued member of the UH community, has their essential needs addressed, and are supported to achieve their academic and personal goals.

With an approach that strongly centers around student success, the CSAC team has been actively working to develop a strong foundation for the department so that we can operationalize our mission and turn our vision into a reality. The mission is operationalized by:

Acting as a hub for campus support services. The CSAC team will build and maintain a support network and create vital partnerships that include campus and community partners to help students successfully navigate their collegiate journey.

Providing services that address essential needs. Examples of the support offered by the center include community food distributions through two Cougar Cupboard locations, availability of hygiene products, and the creation of a comprehensive campus and community resource listings for UH students, faculty, and staff. The list will include health, food source, and social services available for students. Down the road it is the intention of the department to also offer support for students experiencing homelessness and students who are parents and more.

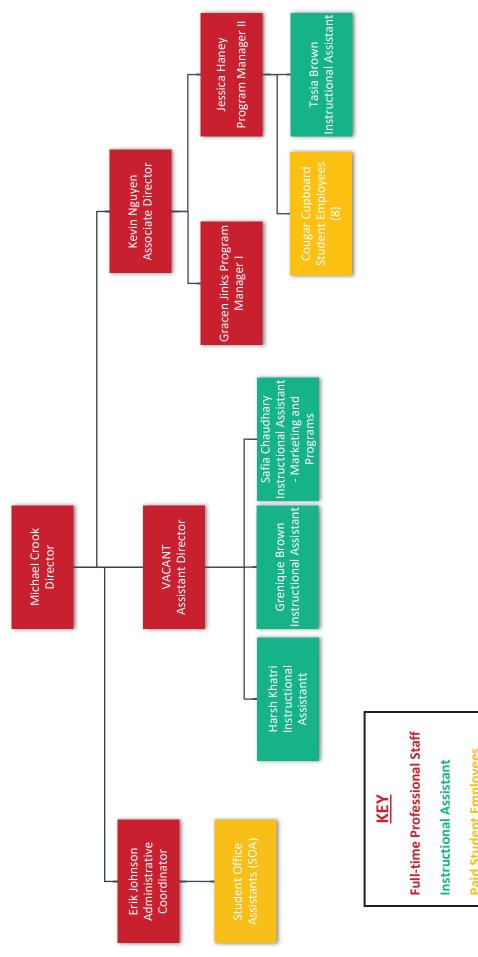
Providing engaging programming that creates a welcoming and supportive campus climate for our entire student body. Examples of events include programming related to cultural celebrations and heritage months, efforts to better serve our students as part of our Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and Minority Serving Institution (MSI) Federal Designations.

Offering educational workshops that promote skillset development, learning in a global environment and community building. Student workshops topics may include, self-advocacy and resiliency, budget friendly nutrition and diet tactics, emotional intelligence, and conflict-resolution skill building. Faculty and staff workshops may include, "supporting today's student", and trauma-informed supportive behaviors in advising and working with students

Although the Center for Student Advocacy and Community is new on campus, the work of the department is already regarded as a necessity for student success. Many students rely on the food provided by the Cougar Cupboard to get through their week and allow them to focus on academics. Student groups find community, support, and representation in the physical space of the center and from our staff. By working to reduce barriers that students face through educational workshops and resource development, CSAC contributes to the culture of care across campus for all students, staff, and faculty.

Provide an organization chart of your unit. Large units may need to have an overview chart and them more specific charts for each program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position (e.g. counselor, advisor, etc.), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students. 7

Center for Student Advocacy and Community Organizational Chart



Paid Student Employees

3. If your unit falls under the Division of student Affairs, list your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2022 – 2023 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they can relate (links below). If your unit does not fall under the division of student affairs, explain, in detail, the strategic plan your unit operated under. Please comment on your success in achieving these strategic initiatives/action steps. If a strategic initiative/ action step changes during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new strategic initiatives/action steps, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these items.

DSA: uh.edu/dsa/about/strategic-planning/2019-2023/

UH Goals: uh.edu/about/mission

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community did not exist in the 2022-2023 academic year. However, goals have been established for this fall and the upcoming spring semesters. The goals are listed and linked to the Division of Student Affairs Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic goals below:

PROGRAMMING

Goal: Create a calendar of programs that includes support for RSOs, and University federal designations (HSI, MSI and AANAPISI)

Action Steps:

- 1) Incorporate federal designation days and cultural heritage months, such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, or other relevant observances, into the calendar
- 2) Regularly update calendar with any changes or cancellations of any programs or events

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.

an Exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

UH Goal 3 - Social Responsibility: Serve as

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

Goal: Meet with Registered Student Organizations to explore opportunities for sustainable programmatic collaborations (e.g. Cougar Closet, SGA, GLOBAL, BSU, Somos UH etc).

Action Steps:

- 1) Initiate contact with RSO leaders or representatives through email or in-person outreach, introducing the department's interest in connecting and expressing a desire to schedule a meeting.
- 2) Schedule one-on-one or group meetings with RSO leaders to discuss common areas of interest, such as events, projects, or programs where collaboration could be beneficial
- 3) Regularly communicate with the RSOs throughout the planning and execution of collaborative programs, providing support, guidance, and resources as needed

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Develop marketing and awareness efforts around cultural celebration and heritage months

Action Steps:

- 1) Develop a comprehensive strategy that utilizes various channels to raise awareness and celebrate cultural heritage months by creating engaging content highlighting the significance of each heritage month, historical events, and cultural contributions
- 2) Seek opportunities to partner with relevant Registered Student Organizations and cultural clubs to organize and promote events, workshops, and activities related to heritage months
- 3) Establish a system to collect feedback and assess the impact of your marketing and awareness efforts.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

UH Goal 3 - Social Responsibility: Serve as an Exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

Goal: Host a Center "Grand Opening" or "Open-house" to increase awareness

Action Steps:

- 1) Create an inviting atmosphere by decorating the center with marketing and displays that highlight the center's mission and services to all UH students
- 2) Create a broad reaching list of campus partners, campus organizations, and stakeholders to attend
- 3) Provide refreshments and snacks to keep attendees comfortable and encourage attendees to participate in discussions, share their thoughts, and provide ideas about supporting students on campus

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Coordinate MLK Planning Committee and plan MLK Celebration to take place in January.

Action Steps:

- 1) Recruit a diverse committee including faculty, staff, students, and community members, to bring a wide range of perspectives and expertise to the planning process.
- 2) Set a regular meeting schedule for the committee to ensure consistent communication and progress tracking and clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of committee members
- 3) Collaborate with committee members and subcommittees to develop an impactful program and theme for the MLK Celebration

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth. **DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2:** Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and

meeting the needs of our student population through supportive,

UH Goal 3 - Social Responsibility: Serve as an Exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

SERVICES

inclusive environments.

Goal: Create a resource hub that efficiently connects students to campus and community resources to support their needs (online and printed);

Action Steps:

- 1) Identify and catalog available campus and community resources that can address the essential needs of students (encompassing academic support, mental health services, food assistance, financial aid, and career services)
- 2) Create easily accessible and user-friendly forms of information/resources
- 3) Establish a content management plan to ensure that the online resource hub is regularly updated with the latest information on available resources, contact details, and any changes in services

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 3: Foster the holistic wellbeing of all students through coordinated, intentional services and processes.

DSA Strategic Initiative- *Resources 2:* Pursue and develop resources to address identified gaps and needs.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Advance the implementation of the new Cougar Cupboard physical space.

Action Steps:

- 1) Establish consistent contact with the Program Manager in Facilities Services about developments, timeline, and updates about the construction of the new Cougar Cupboard space
- 2) Consider accessibility, traffic flow, room temperature regulations, and the user experience when planning the space layout
- 3) Select appropriate shelving, storage space, refrigeration, and display fixtures to maximize space utilization

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 3: Foster the holistic wellbeing of all students through coordinated, intentional services and processes.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Research current university efforts and gaps around advocacy and community. Benchmark Top 50, Big XII, Association of American Universities (AAU) institutions and their departments or offerings around essential needs and student advocacy and support (e.g. food and housing insecurity, student parent support, etc.)

Action Steps:

- 1) Compile a list of peer institutions that align with the university's profile and are similar in terms of size, demographics, and urban or rural settings
- 2) Analyze the collected data to identify trends, strengths, and gaps in the services offered by the benchmarked institutions
- 3) Compare findings to the university's current efforts and determine where there are adaptations or areas for improvement

DSA Strategic Initiative - Resources 1: Evaluate resources to identify opportunities for efficiency, improvement, and transformation.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Develop CSAC website

Action Steps:

- 1) Work with DSA IT to create a visually appealing and user-friendly layout while also being mindful of branding elements, color schemes, typography, and design to ensure the site is within university standards
- 2) Thoroughly test the website to identify and fix any technical issues, such as broken links, page loading problems, or outdated materials
- 3) Develop a content strategy that outlines what information will be presented on the website

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS

Goal: Determine workshop series offerings that align with the mission and fill gaps in educational offerings

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine which areas or topics are underrepresented or not adequately addressed on campus
- 2) Identify best practices and areas where offerings can stand out
- 3) Develop a curriculum plan that aligns with the center's mission and vision

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

DSA Strategic Initiative- *Resources 2:* Pursue and develop resources to address identified gaps and needs.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Begin writing curriculum for workshops

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine clear learning objectives that participants should know, understand, or be able to do by the end of the proposed workshops
- 2) Design interactive and engaging learning activities that fosters active participation and skill-building
- 3) Develop assessment methods to measure participants' understanding and progress

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Determine spring calendar for educational workshop offerings

Action Steps:

- 1) Create a workshop calendar that fits the academic calendar for the Spring semester keeping in mind of holidays and Spring Break
- 2) Ensure that the workshop calendar offers a variety of topics, formats, and times to cater to different interests, skill levels, and class schedules
- 3) Utilize university website calendar and Get Involved calendar to promote spring calender of workshops offered by CSAC

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

CENTER AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Create a clear mission, vision, goals, job descriptions, and "ways of working" for department staff, instructional assistants, and student office assistants.

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine CSAC's core purpose and values emphasizing its contribution to the broader university community
- 2) Outline the department's long-term aspirations and provide a clear picture of the desired future state of the department and its impact on the UH student body
- 3) Align department's goals to the university's strategic priorities and clearly illustrate short- and long-term goals

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.

DSA Strategic Initiative - Division Cohesion 1: Implement staff communication strategies that promote a mutual understanding of who we are and what we do.

DSA Strategic Initiative - Division Cohesion 2: Strengthen staff connections within the division, both professionally and personally.

UH Goal 3 - Social Responsibility: Serve as an Exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

Goal: Develop assessment plan.

Action Steps:

- 1) Meet with campus partners and choose appropriate metric indicators that measure alignment with CSAC's missions, vision, and goals
- 2) Develop a plan and timeline for collecting relevant data and analyzing data to draw meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of the program, initiative, or process being assessed
- 3) Identify actionable recommendations that can be made to improve or enhance the program, initiative, or process

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 4: Enhance assessment of student success by defining measures at the departmental and divisional level with a focus on the impact of our programs and services.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

DSA Strategic Initiative - Resources 1: Evaluate resources to identify opportunities for efficiency, improvement, and transformation.

Goal: Coordinate staff and student focus groups to collect feedback and assess needs. Information will help to refine the direction and strategic plan of the department.

Action Steps:

- 1) Prioritize an action plan that outlines specific steps, responsible individuals, and timeline for addressing feedback and needs
- 2) Set a schedule for the focus groups, choose a convenient location for sessions, and ensure there is sufficent means to record and take notes
- 3) Widely communicate the findings and insights with DSA leadership, administration, and staff

DSA Strategic Initiative - Resources 1: Evaluate resources to identify opportunities for efficiency, improvement, and transformation.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Hire professional staff, instructional assistants, and student staff

Action Steps:

- 1) Clearly define the job roles and outline responsibilities, qualifications, and expectations for professional staff, IAs, and student staff.
- 2) Implement a systematic screening process to review applications and shortlist candidates who meet the necessary requirements
- 3) Conduct structured interviews with a set of standardized interview questions and interview rubric to objectively evaluate candidates

DSA Strategic Initiative - Division Cohesion 2: Strengthen staff connections within the division, both professionally and personally.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Develop a marketing plan, materials, and events to help increase awareness of the center

Action Steps:

- 1) Define specific, measurable, and time-bound marketing goals
- 2) Establish a consistent branding and visual identity for CSAC
- 3) Build an online presence and develop a content strategy that include various types of marketing materials

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

Goal: Design and create a welcoming physical space for guests including painting walls, organizing furniture etc.

Action Steps:

- 1) Have a clear design concept for the space and any renovations or additional furniture that is needed
- 2) Consider the layout, comfort, functionality and aesthetics of the space
- 3) Meet with Creation Station and select color scheme and décor elements that create a warm and inviting atmosphere

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Identify CSAC advisory structure and membership stakeholders for spring development.

Action Steps:

1) Research and benchmark best practices for an advisory board for a Center for Student Advocacy and Community

2) Extend a broad call for applications and nominations which will include Registered Student Organization Leaders, as well as appointed members from Student Government Association, Staff Council, and Faculty Senate.

DSA Strategic Initiative – *Partnerships 1: Educate and empower campus partners to be our advocates.*

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

UH Goal 3 - Social Responsibility: Serve as an Exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

Goal: Build relationships with campus partners which include key student organizations, campus advocacy and community partners, and other institutional relationships.

Action Steps:

- 1) Create a clear mission, vision and goals for the department. Share widely with campus community.
- 2) Research Greater Houston community resources and campus departments who have a common mission or values
- 3) Schedule calls; 1:1 meetings, to learn more about their areas and opportunities for collaboration and sustainable partnerships.

DSA Strategic Initiative- *Student Success* **1:** Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Partnerships 1: Educate and empower campus partners to be our advocates.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Partnerships 3:

Create opportunities for our students by developing initiatives that support our neighboring communities.

UH Goal 3 - Social Responsibility: Serve as an Exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

Goal: Get connected to professional organizations that support our mission and vision, attend professional development opportunities (conferences, webinars), and schedule informational meetings as necessary.

Action Steps:

- 1) Attend conferences, watch webinars
- 2) Share contact information
- 3) Generate ways for information sharing/gathering.

DSA Strategic Initiative: *Division Cohesion 3: Invest in staff success through professional development, recognition, and opportunities for broader participation throughout the division.*

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Spring 2024

Programming

Goal: Set a baseline service for the department in terms of number of students served through essential needs programs (i.e. Cougar Cupboard and Coogs Closet)

Action Steps:

- 1) Develop and assessment plan and collect necessary data
- 2) Analyze data and determine who is using the center and our services in the spring semester.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Resources 1: Evaluate resources to identify opportunities for efficiency, improvement, and transformation.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Support the development and successful execution of department and new student-led community initiatives that address current issues (MLK Day, Black History Month, Women's History Month, Juneteenth, PRIDE Month).

Action Steps:

- 1) Create committees for campus wide events invite student leaders early
- 2) Assign staff lead and gather key representatives
- 3) Have strong marketing campaign
- 4) Develop clear programming goals for each event to measure success; distribute assessments.

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

UH Goal 3 – Social Responsibility: Serve as an exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

Goal: Host campus conversations to promote community-building on campus.

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine frequency, location, format, and topics for conversation
- 2) Have a consistent framework that provides familiarity but also flexibility for the nature of the topic
- 3) Promote open dialogue and assess program afterward

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 5: Enrich the sense of connection, belonging, and shared UH identity among all students.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Improve Resource Accessibility: Increase the accessibility and awareness of available resources

Action Steps:

- 1) Create a comprehensive communication plan to reach more students and educate faculty and staff about our resources
- 2) Create more partnerships on campus

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 3:Foster the holistic well-being of all students through coordinated, intentional services and processes.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Data collection and assessments (potentially institutional-wide?) on campus student needs and areas of concern: Qualtrics. Consistent measurements. Review other essential needs surveys.

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine what data and surveys currently exist related to the mission of our office.
- 2) Add questions to other essential needs surveys if they are already in motion.
- 3) Evaluate data and determine adjustments.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Resources 1: Evaluate resources to identify opportunities for efficiency, improvement, and transformation.

UH Goal 3 – Social Responsibility: Serve as an exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

Goal: Enhance Advocacy Services: Provide advocacy services to more students facing academic or personal challenges and possible external resources for support

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine best method of determining who "underserved" students are at UH.
- 2) Evaluate baseline service data and where the highest need is.
- 3) Do more or refer to campus resources more frequently.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 3: Foster the holistic well-being of all students through coordinated, intentional services and processes.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Launch Advisory Board

Action Steps:

- 1) Schedule a meeting time
- 2) Determine agenda and create mission, purpose, goals, and by-laws and kick-off the meeting

DSA Strategic Initiative – Partnerships 1: Educate and empower campus partners to be our advocates

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Offer 2-3 Workshops: Develop and offer workshops and training sessions related to financial literacy, well-being, and community engagement. Possible series for REDTalks or speaker event

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine the workshops offered
- 2) Book rooms
- 3) Deliver content, assessments and receive feedback

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

DSA Strategic Initiative – Student Success 3: Foster the holistic well-being of all students through coordinated, intentional services and processes.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Create self-advocacy resource for students/student leader resources

Action Steps:

- 1) research best practices
- 2) document into a single location and base it on the need
- 3) determine best method for publication paper, electronic, website etc.

DSA Strategic Initiative - Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Explore opportunities to foster civic engagement and getting students connected to the greater-Houston community.

Action Steps:

- 1) Visit with community resource partners
- 2) Build relationship with Center for Student Involvement and Metropolitan Volunteer Program (MVP)

DSA Strategic Initiative – Partnerships 3: Create opportunities for our students by developing initiatives that support our neighboring communities.

UH Goal 3 – Social Responsibility: Serve as an exemplar for Equitable & Inclusive Community Engagement

Goal: Staff Training: Ensure center staff complete professional development and/or training to enhance their ability to serve students effectively (i.e. Navigate and Campus Solutions). Goal: At least 5 trainings.

Action Steps:

- 1) Assign staff a goal of trainings
- 2) Set deadlines
- 3) Create time for reflection and training application

DSA Strategic Initiative – Division Cohesion 3: Invest in staff success through professional development, recognition, and opportunities for broader participation throughout the division

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

Goal: Establish relationships with key stakeholders and how to work effectively across the division, campus and with CoogsCARE.

Action Steps:

- 1) Determine stakeholders, host meetings and points of collaboration or contacts.
- 2) Follow through and up with deliverables

DSA Strategic Initiative – Partnerships 1: Educate and empower campus partners to be our advocates.

UH Goal 1 – Student Success: Provide a Top Tier, Inclusive Educational Experience to All.

- 4. Please list your 2024-2025 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and if operating under the DSA, cite the specific Division of Student Affairs Values and University of Houston Strategies Goals to which they relate. If your unit does not operate under the DSA, reference the strategic plan your unit operates under. Larger units may wish to group responses by subprograms. Under each strategic initiative, please state the specific action steps (programs, activities, services, policies/procedures, etc.) that you intend to implement to accomplish your stated initiative.
 - i. Articulate how KPIs are tracked and how/when your unit utilizes them to measure progress towards your goals. Are there any deficiencies in your ability to measure your KPIs? If so, explain why.
 - ii. Identify the milestones laid out on the path to achieving the long-term goals you have laid out. How do these milestones contribute to your unit's ability to hold itself accountable to the long-term goals?
 - iii. In your response, identify who (besides the department director) is responsible for each milestone in the plan and for measuring each KPI you have identified.

At the time of this report, the Center for Student Advocacy and Community is in its initial stages of development as it has only been open for 5 weeks. The following are planned priorities for the FY25 year, however, the CSAC team wants to be intentional about including the student voice and their needs in the process of the development of the center. More initiatives will be developed with input from student groups, the CSAC advisory board, and key campus partners throughout the fall and spring semesters.

CSAC Strategic Initiative	Increase the visibility of the unit across campus departments and colleges so all members			
	of the University of Houston community are aware of the services offered.			
DSA Value:	Care, Collaboration, Community, Integrity			
University Goal:	Collaboration			
Status:	FY25			
Action Items:	1) Expand connections to other partners within DSA and beyond			
	2) Work with departments as needed for individual student referrals.			
	3) Participate in collaborative opportunities with campus partners			
	4) Promote #IAMUH to other UH campus sites (i.e., UH Sugar Land)			
Staff Responsible:	Associate Director and Program Manager II and Student Support Staff			
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Provide consistent variety of foods, including milk, bread, and cultural foods on a bi-week			
	basis.			
DSA Value:	Care, Community			
University Goal:	Student Success			
Status:	Beginning in calendar year of 2024 pending opening of new location on campus			
Action Items:	Partner with Houston Food Bank, Second Servings and other discounted food sources to			
	obtain goods			
	Seeking grants to help alleviate costs			
Staff Responsible:	Associate Director and Program Manager II			
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Develop a certificate program that focuses on community building skill sets.			
DSA Value:	Care, Empowerment, Innovation			
University Goal:	Student Success			
Status:	FY25			
Action Items:	Look over assessment data of similar certificate programs on campus to decide			
	curriculum (i.e., Scarlet Seals)			
Staff Responsible:	Assistant Director and Program Manager I			

CSAC Strategic Initiative	Apply for grants to support HSI, MSI, AANAPISI Designations.		
DSA Value:	Collaboration, Community, Empowerment		
University Goal:	Student Success		
Status:	FY25		
Action Items:	Research on types of grants available		
	Attend grant writing training and/or workshops		
	Look at similar institutions that have HSI, AANAPISI, and MSI designations in the Big XII,		
	Top 50, and AAUs		
Staff Responsible:	All full-time CSAC staff		
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Improve relationship with Houston Food Bank to provide more comprehensive services.		
DSA Value:	Care, Collaboration, Innovation		
University Goal:	Student Success		
Status:	FY25 and ongoing		
Action Items:	Streamline communications and services with campus partners and outside constituents		
	Site visit to Houston Food Bank and learning more about their Community Assistance		
	Program (CAP)		
Staff Responsible:	Associate Director and Program Manager II		
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Implement support measures for student parent programs		
DSA Value:	Collaboration and Care		
University Goal:	Student Success		
Status:	FY25		
Action Items:	Connect with offices/departments that work with student parents (i.e., WGRC and CLC)		
	Gather data and cross reference other essential needs departments in the U.S. that also		
CL CC D	has student parent programs and services		
Staff Responsible:	Director; Associate Director and Program Manager I		
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Assess available support for students experiencing housing insecurity and explore		
	partnerships to support these students		
DSA Value:	Innovation and Integrity		
University Goal:	Student Success		
Status:	Initiated in FY 24-FY25		
Action Items:	Reaching out to UHD and their Basic Needs Center		
Staff Responsible:	Director and Associate Director		
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Create a student leadership program that promotes peer to peer learning and engagement		
DSA Value:	Community and Empowerment		
University Goal:	Student Success		
Status:	Initiated in FY 24-FY 25		
Action Items:	Collaborating with CSI and other respective departments to recruit student leaders		
	Develop a structured curriculum that covers leadership theories, communication skills,		
	teamwork, problem-solving, and other relevant topics		
Staff Responsible:	Assistant Director, IAs, and Student Support Staff		

CSAC Strategic Initiative	Explore possibilities of on-demand learning opportunities for students
DSA Value:	Community and Empowerment
University Goal:	Student Success
Status:	Initiated in FY 24-FY 25
Action Items:	
Staff Responsible:	Assistant Director
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Create a signature partnership with the student success area to support retention and graduation rates
DSA Value:	Collaboration and Care
University Goal:	Student Success
Status:	Initiated in FY 24-FY 25
Action Items:	
Staff Responsible:	Director
CSAC Strategic Initiative	Determine a format and frequency and host an ongoing "Campus Conversation" series
DSA Value:	Collaboration and Care
University Goal:	Student Success
Status:	Initiated in FY 24-FY 25
Action Items:	
Staff Responsible:	Director

- 5. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the aforementioned strategic initiatives and/or action steps and their importance as compared to others that you might pursue. Where data exists, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and any assessment measures and/or learning outcomes used to evaluate program success. Please provide the method for collecting this data. If your unit holds events, please provide revenue sources breakdown of each revenue stream including but not limited to the number of:
 - i. Tickets sold/number of attendees recorded
 - ii. Merchandise
 - iii. Concessions sold/distributed
 - iv. Revenue generated from these sales

A key performance indicator for the department is the utilization of our programs and services. We track the attendance of all students who attend each of our programs and the utilization of the physical office space and students report why they are visiting the space.

Events: Listed below is data from the WOW Mixers. We listed these events because the events that are similar in nature will be supported by the Center in future years. Attendance is listed below:

Weeks of Welcome Mixer Attendance				
	2019	2021	2022	2023
North African/Middle Eastern		NA	NA	149
First Generation		20	140	125
Black/African American		326	380	511
Hispanic/Latine		143	258	256
Asian-American Pacific Islander and Desi American		74	326	343
LGBTQ+ Ice Cream Social	186	291	291	458
Totals	186	1004	1791	1842

Event did not exist

Not in Get Involved

Cougar Cupboard: For the Cougar Cupboard, the department is able to collect valuable self-reported data through the intake form that students complete in order to register for the program. We are able to obtain information on student needs, such as their access to various resources, household size, financial concerns, and more. Both student data and visit data are stored in excel tracking documents for easy viewing. In addition, surveys are conducted among Cougar Cupboard users 1-2 times per year to determine how students utilize the services, such as which items they prefer, times they use the pantry, other services they use, and to collect student feedback. The most recent survey, from Fall 2022, garnered over 400 respondents. Feedback was used to properly adjust sourcing efforts, pantry hours, and staff training to accommodate current student needs. A portion of the survey is also devoted to qualitative responses to illustrate the impact on individual student experiences.

FY23 Totals:

	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	FY23 Totals
Average visits per week	500 visits per week	700 visits per week	200 visits per week	500 visits per week
Total visits	10,887 visits	10,561 visits	2,369 visits	23,817 visits
LBS of food distributed	100,946 pounds	93,536 pounds	48,483 pounds	242,965 pounds
Door Dash orders filled	278 orders	266 orders	123 orders	667 orders
Volunteer shifts	430 shifts	287 shifts	71 shifts	788 shifts
completed				

Number of new students	1,463 students	759 students	426 students	2,648 students
enrolled into the				
program				
Total students enrolled	4,859 students	5,618 students	6,044 students	6,044 students

Data is collected each visit, since students must record their PeopleSoft ID# and pounds of food taken before leaving each visit. Door Dash orders were filled on a weekly basis for any student who needed groceries delivered, free of charge. Volunteer shifts are tracked through a volunteer sign-in form that is completed at the beginning of each shift.

6. If your unit concluded FY2023 with a Fund 3 addition to Fund Equity in excess of \$5,000, please describe the conditions which cause the addition and provide a line-item identification of the budgetary sources(s) of the addition (I.e., lapsed salary, conference travel, etc.).

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community did not exist last year; however, the budget sheet will reflect a return of \$236,329. \$234,720 is a result of salary savings for a vacant Administrative Coordinator, Assistant Director and Program Manager I positions from the previous budget sources. The remaining \$1,609.00 is for Marketing and Operations.

Because the Center was established so late in the fiscal year, a carryover amount of \$64,500 was approved for the FY24 year to help offset the costs of establishing the physical center and to help purchase marketing and promotional items for the center. These purchases could not have been made earlier because CSAC did not have the new department logo or confirmation on the priorities of the office until late in the fiscal year. These FY23 rollover funds are necessary so that the CSAC team can establish the center and maintain use of FY24 funds for the standard FY24 programs and initiatives. It was also important that CSAC have rollover funds for immediate access so that the department could get a successful start to the semester.

Giveaways and promotional items – CSAC needs a significant number of giveaways to get the center name out there. FY24 budget only allows for maintenance marketing, not an initial boost. It will be difficult to have a successful start to the department without this funding.

Center Physical Upgrades – The new CSAC department is located in the former space where the LGBTQ Resource Center and Women and Gender Resource Center (WGRC) were formerly housed. There are spaces and signage that need to be replaced/updated. CSAC is also establishing the new center's welcoming atmosphere for current and new students. The center is limited by the pricing of facilities charges.

New Center Programming – In additional to giveaways and promotional items, CSAC needs additional *programming* to help a wider scope of student populations based on the reconfiguration of the previous services provided from CDI and LGBTQ. New programming will need higher levels of incentives and contracts to attract students that the Center needs to connect with and broaden the scope of support of essential needs for students.

Facilities and Labor Requests – the physical move of the departments and the subsequent facilities costs took place and were yet to be billed. These costs included but were not limited to office equipment, maintenance repairs, updated installations etc.

Outdoor Marketing and Outreach items: The former pop-up banners, 10x10 tent tops, pull out banners, tablecloths, step and repeats and other items that were used for marketing and outreach for the CDI and LGBTQ resource centers had to be discarded. As a result, CSAC needs a new overhaul of promotional and outreach items.

Employee and Student Staff Uniforms - staff need attire to be able to wear at events and when working on campus. CSAC began during FY24, without department branded department attire, there are no consistent uniforms available for the team, pictures, or other ways for students to identify the department.

WOW Mixer Food – the Mixers that took place in WOW had significant food costs especially with inflation and the growing numbers of attendance from previous years. These events in FY 23 served over 1800 students. Overall survey results indicated that majority of students made a meaningful connection, interacted with student organizations that promote identities similar to their own, and felt a better sense of belonging at these mixers.

7. Recognizing that the potential to generate additional Student Service Fee income for FY2025 base funding is extremely limited and recognizing that it is likely that some units will not be allocated the new base budget and/or one-time funds requested. Please provide a narrative of how your unit would accommodate a reduction of 5.0% in your total FY2025 base Student Service Fee budget request and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.

This is the first year that CSAC will have a budget. The FY25 base budget request is \$654,588. A 5% cut to the budget is \$32,729.40.

In order to prioritize programming for cultural and essential needs programming for student events in programs we have to split the cut between Instructional Assistant employment and also programming dollars.

\$17,340 of the cut would come from reducing an Instructional Assistant position. It will be difficult to let an employed graduate student go and it would negatively impact the bandwidth and output of the center but this is the only way we can reduce the impact on cultural and essential needs programming. Much of the support from our office involves inperson meetings and planning programs and the more diverse our staff the higher impact for connecte

\$15,389.40 would be cut from our programming and services offered by the center, not only from essential needs programming but also cultural programming support and our federal designation efforts. This would mean that there would be less programs and services to assist our already underserved populations and more specifically, this would result in less cultural, essential needs and federal designation programming efforts offered on-campus.

8. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last year (FY2024) SFAC request, their impact on your programs, and your reason for implementing them. SFAC recognizes that some programs did not receive the funds that they requested, that some programs were impacted by additional expenses after the conclusion of the budget cycle, and that some programs may be ahead of or behind their self-generated income projections.

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community opened in FY24 on September 1, 2023.

In order to financially support the crucial initiatives offered by CSAC, the current FY24 base funding of \$516,121 was created from three different sources.

First, the cougar cupboard budget which was previously managed through UH Wellness was moved under the CSAC portfolio. An associated \$89,317 of SFAC dollars was moved from the UH Wellness budget to this current budget.

In order to be in compliance with the recently passed, Texas Senate Bill 17, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and the LGBTQ Resource Center were required to close down. In an effort to keep the staff and instructional assistants employed during this transition, most of the staff was repositioned within CSAC. 85% of the M&O from the CDI and LGBTQ budgets was given to help support the new initiatives out of CSAC. 15% of the budget was given to the Center for Student Empowerment to increase support for new initiatives for first generation students.

At the time of closing, CDI had two vacant positions, a program manager and an assistant director, which were moved to the Center for Student Empowerment. An amount of \$146,654 and is reflected as a reduction in our budget because those funds were transferred to the Center for Student Empowerment.

Additionally, the LGBTQ Resource Center and Center for Diversity and Inclusion both had office coordinator/administrative coordinators in their office. The newly established CSAC office only required one Administrative Assistant, so the vacant position was moved to the Women and Gender Resource Center since they moved physical locations and no longer had staff support that was previously shared with the LGBTQ Resource Center.

- 9. What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them (e.g. grants, donations, etc.)? If you receive funds from other sources, please briefly describe the source, purpose, and duration of the funding and report the amounts received in the appropriate rows/columns on the SFAC spreadsheet.
 - i. If applicable, what can be done to increase donations, sponsorship sales, and other revenue streams? Please answer each separately.

The Cougar Cupboard has received several mini grants from Coog Moms (most recent in the last fiscal year was \$150 due to limited funds, previously in FY22 the total was \$750 from 2 separate grants). The money was used for supplemental items that were distributed at the Cougar Cupboard. In addition, the one-time gift from Cullen Trust for Higher Education received in 2021 was used like the mini grant to secure additional food items requested by students when the Houston Food Bank was limited in supplies due to the pandemic, but there have been no other monetary funds received from this source. Any remaining funds will continue to be used to buy food and non-food items students need such as hygiene products.

Once the Center for Student Advocacy and Community is established and the team has taken care of the more foundational needs, we will explore grant writing and possible funding through gifts collected from the University's development office. Because we are so new, we don't have adequate data that will allow us to apply for these grants at this time.

To increase donations, the CSAC team is developing a one-sheet informational flyer that can accompany development officers in their visits with alumni and other donors.

Although not direct funding itself, the CSAC team has partnered with the Houston Food Bank to consistently receive direct donations of fresh produce. Also, partnerships are made across campus and student groups to host food drives to increase donations of non-perishable goods. Though these items don't have direct financial value, they help bring awareness and address the food insecurity experienced on campus and reduce the overall use of student fees.

- 10. Does your unit generate revenue? (Please do not address donations in this question) If your unit does not generate revenue, respond "not applicable. If so:
 - i. Provide your unit's P&L statement for the current fiscal year and trailing five-years showing all revenue streams for your unit.
 - ii. Provide line-item data for each revenue stream.
 - iii. For each revenue stream, provide an explanation of the nature of the revenue and briefly articulate the successes and failures for each line item.

This question is not applicable to the Center for Student Advocacy and Community. However, because it is reflected on the budget sheet, CDI previously budgeted for income for department-led trainings and facilitations related to the intercultural development inventory (IDI). However, IDI will no longer be offered by the CSAC team.

- 11. Does your unit raise money from donors and sponsors? If your unit does not receive donations or sponsorships, respond "not applicable." If so:
 - i. Identify key staff members responsible for development and seeking sponsorships.
 - ii. Provide financials for the current fiscal year, as well as the trailing five fiscal years including:
 - a. An analysis of your development activities. Include a breakdown of the nominal quantity of donors donating \$20m+, \$10m+, \$5m+ \$1m+, \$500k+, \$100k+, \$50k+, \$25k+, \$10k+, \$5k+, \$1k+, \$100+. Provide this both in terms of lifetime contributions and annual contributions.
 - b. An analysis of your sponsorship activities. Include a breakdown of total sponsorship dollars and identify your top twenty-five (25) sponsorship deals.
 - c. If applicable, provide a breakdown of each capital project or capital campaign in your unit. Explain how each capital project or campaign aligns with the goals and milestones laid out in your department's strategic plan.

Our team does not have a development officer but we do work in tandem with the Student Affairs Advancement team, and the Division of University Advancement and their donor relations teams (both corporate and individual giving) to raise money for the department.

The Cougar Cupboard began receiving an annual grant from TDECU in FY23. The grant is \$20,000 for the next 6 years, then will increase to \$25,000 in FY30 for the subsequent 5 years. However, rent costs for the new location in University Lofts is earmarked for half of this grant (\$10,000) a significantly reduced rate, offered by Student Housing and Residence Life. The other half will be used for custodial/maintenance/waste disposal costs.

Past years will reflect a \$20,000 sponsorship from Amazon for initiatives that serve and support Hispanic students on campus. There were also donations from the Rainbow Friends from the LGBTQ Resource Center which were private donations that were solicited in support of their department's initiatives.

12. Please describe any services that are similar to yours and/or any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.

Food Pantries:

While other food pantries exist at the university, none are able to sustain the number of students and the amount of support that the Cougar Cupboard can provide. PEEPS Pantry, for example, is a 63-square-foot pantry in Farish Hall. They collaborate strongly with the Cougar Cupboard, but they are only able to provide non-perishables, and do not have the capacity to support a large number of students consistently due to being fueled by donations.

United Campus Ministries has a similar pantry set-up but is limited in the amount of support it can provide.

The Graduate College of Social Work has a small kitchen area with free food for its students, but it is only for students at that college.

A number of campus departments offer programming or small-scale services to help address food insecurity on campus. One example is the AD Bruce Religion Center offers once a week free lunch to students, faculty and staff.

Supply "Closets":

The Women and Gender Resource Center offers an assortment of supplies to help support student needs. With personal hygiene products and toiletries, they also offer baby wipes and diaper bags to UH Community members who are parents.

Career Closet is offered by the Career Center and they provide a low-cost rental service for interview specific clothing.

Cougar Closet is not a University Department, but a student organization that offers new or gently used casual clothes to students. It is a resource that CSAC would like to support and create a more sustainable partnership with in the future.

Programming:

The Council for Cultural Activities (CCA) offers cultural programming and co-programming support for cultural student organizations and RSOs who are doing cultural programming. CSAC offers referral services to these organizations and partnerships in co-programming with the student organizations whose mission or programming efforts support community building, the HSI, MSI, or AANAPISI federal designations.

The Children's Learning Center (CLC) currently provides support for student parents who use the CLC but because they are at capacity, they are not able to support all UH student parents across campus (only those who have children in the CLC). CSAC plans to support and develop resources for this important student demographic that is not served by the CLC.

- 13. What percentage of department M&O is allocated to marketing?
 - a. Please detail your comprehensive marketing strategy towards the student body including metrics used to measure the effectiveness of the marketing strategy.
 - b. How much revenue is allocated towards the marketing strategy?

The Center for Student Advocacy and Community did not have a budget last year. This year's marketing and outreach budget will be disproportionately high in comparison to future years because we need to do additional marketing efforts to help establish the center on campus. Each program will have a designated marketing budget that includes multiple mediums for students to learn about our efforts. Our mixed-marketing strategy includes:

- Creating attractive designs that are student-friendly and always include a "call to action."
- A compilation of digital efforts (i.e., social media, website, campus digital screens)
- Print (i.e., handbills, posters, banners, A-frames and day-of event signage in the student center)
- In-person outreach (i.e., tabling, personal invites) and we will have department branded tablecloths, tents and popup banners.
- Highlight in monthly newsletters and email campaigns when applicable
- A minimum of two weeks in advance of posting. Some events will include save the dates or advance awareness campaigns.
- At events, we will frequently offer attendance incentives such as free food, t-shirts, giveaways or drawings.

Although we don't have current data for the new department, in the past, the CSAC team has used metrics such as attendance, and surveys that ask, "how did you hear about our event/the center?", and focus groups on our marketing efforts to gather feedback on the design and clarity of messaging. We have also used information from other surveys like the Weeks of Welcome (WOW) survey to determine how to best reach students.

For much of the Cougar Cupboard, word of mouth and social media is the primary form of marketing. Because of the nature of the food pantry, not much marketing is needed beyond that – otherwise we would have even more students but not have the services to match the use needs.

This year, because we are a new center on campus, we plan to spend about 10% of our total maintenance and operations on marketing and outreach efforts (about \$21,000). This will include the purchasing of new print material handbills, pop-up banners, table cloths, step and repeats, t-shirts for the #IAMUH Campaign and for general center awareness and daily operations but we will also need to purchase event specific materials and pay for other items like newsletter subscription services, tabling efforts and building an attractive center, which serves as marketing itself. Next year (FY25) we estimate that we will be closer to \$12,000 for marketing and promotion.

CSAC does not generate revenue so it is not used for marketing.

14. If any of your funding from the student service fee goes to your general operating fund, please detail where any student service fees you received went and what they were spent on as well as future intentions if granted. Otherwise please respond "not applicable".

Not Applicable.

- 15. How does your unit contribute to campus culture and improve the student experience? How is the effectiveness of these contributions measured by your unit if at all? What else can your unit do going forward to continue to improve your contribution to the student experience?
 - a. Does your unit contribute to turning students into Coogs for Life?

Our office contributes to the campus culture in a number of ways. First, all efforts of the department revolve around the student experience. The number one priority is developing support and resources that address essential student needs. This allows students to get food or personal hygiene products that can sometimes serve as a distraction or barrier to student success. The Cougar Cupboard's intake survey asks students if they have ever considered leaving the university due to financial stress, and 35% of users have responded "yes". Without the safety net provided by the Cougar Cupboard, it is very possible this 35% of students in this population may not finish their degrees, meaning they could never become "Coogs for Life". One survey found that 92% of respondents agreed that using the Cougar Cupboard had reduced both their financial stress and overall stress. In the same survey, 87.4% of respondents reported that their academic performance had improved, and 91% felt that their health had improved since using the Cougar Cupboard. In addition to these statistics, student testimonials can be powerful and provide helpful data. Testimonials that collected from the surveys support the idea of the Cougar Cupboard improving the student experience as well as their mental and physical health and even cultivating a sense of community.

On the community side of the department, CSAC offers programming that helps students find a sense of belonging and connectedness on campus. To measure the center's effectiveness in this area, CSAC will plan to distribute post-event surveys which will ask attendees to self-report how the event impacted their:

- 1) sense of connectedness to campus,
- 2) ability to focus on personal and academic goals,
- 3) the effectiveness of addressing essential needs, and
- 4) if and to what degree that this event helped remove an obstacle or barrier they were facing.

We also offer significant volunteer opportunities through the Cougar Cupboard, and other programming efforts that allow students to give back to the UH community and see themselves as a part of an interconnected community.