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Harry K. Foundation, Food Bank of Delaware mark grand opening of Wesley College food pantry

Dover, Del. (January 22, 2018) – Thanks to a generous donation from the Harry K. Foundation, anti-hunger advocates officially cut the ribbon on the new food pantry at Wesley College this morning.

The food pantry is made possible thanks to continued financial support from the Harry K Foundation. In 2017 alone, the Foundation donated \$144,000 to Food Bank of Delaware anti-hunger programs, including the school pantry and backpack programs. Currently, the Foundation sponsors 32 school pantries, including campus pantries at Wesley College, Delaware State University and Delaware Technical and Community College's Georgetown campus.

Through the program, food insecure Wesley College students will be able to access emergency food and hygiene products by visiting the food pantry. The new pantry will offer a variety of nutritious food products and hygiene items. Students will select food based on their needs. Food for the pantry will be provided by the Food Bank of Delaware and school-wide food drives or community donations.

"College students all over the country are struggling with food insecurity," said Wesley College President Robert E. Clark II. "We are honored to partner with the Harry K. Foundation and Food Bank of Delaware to help address that issue here at Wesley."

Released last year, the National Hunger on Campus survey indicates that based on their survey of almost 3,800 students at 34 community and four-year colleges across 12 states, 22 percent of respondents have the very lowest levels of food insecurity, and 13 percent of students at community colleges are homeless.

"College students are an extension of the younger children who receive food from the Harry K Pantries located in elementary, middle and high schools," said Harry K Foundation Founder Harry Keswani. "Research confirms the important link between good nutrition and the availability of children to concentrate and to learn. For older students, working a job in order to eat is not always an option while pursuing a college education in hopes of ensuring a future without hunger."

"Helping our students succeed is our top priority," said Wesley College Dean of Students Wanda Anderson. "Providing them some of these basic needs is one of the first steps in that journey."

"We know that hunger is present on our college campuses," said Food Bank of Delaware President and CEO Patricia Beebe. "In order for today's college students to be successful they not only need textbooks, educational supplies and quality professors, they need nutritious foods. By providing students the tools needed to thrive in the classroom and ultimately graduate and secure well-paying jobs, we can work to break the cycles of poverty in our community."

The food pantry on the Wesley College campus is a welcomed resource.

“As a United Methodist affiliated college, we follow the social principles of the church and try to help those students with the fewest resources to not only survive but thrive,” said Wesley Chaplin of Spiritual and Community Engagement Bonnie Mullen.

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