



## Grant Package

Auburn University's Auburn Cares Organization  
"Auburn's Fighting Food Insecurity Project"

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## Cover Letter

November 22, 2019

Nathalye Blok  
President  
The Donaldson Foundation  
PO Box 1299, MS 100  
Minneapolis, MN 55440



Dear Nathalye,

Auburn University's Auburn Cares organization shares the Donaldson Foundation's mission of supporting educational goals and strengthening the bonds of our local communities. Auburn Cares, located in Auburn, AL, (a Donaldson Company, Inc. plant community), is a program that is designed to support Auburn University (AU) students throughout their college career to best achieve their academic and co-curricular goals. Our organization works collaboratively with AU students to identify resources and develop personal action plans to help them achieve their educational goals and help them find a home and support within their Auburn community. While Auburn Cares offers many resources to AU students, we are currently seeking outside support for one of our fastest-growing and highly used resources- the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry, which serves hundreds of in-need college students and is expected to double its user-base within the next academic year.

After reviewing the terms of the Donaldson Foundation's grant, we are confident that our organization meets and exceeds the application requirements. We are pleased to provide the Donaldson Foundation with our grant application toward the Foundation's Organizational Grant, Funding Cycle II. The Auburn University Auburn Cares organization is requesting \$4,235.00 in funding from the Donaldson Foundation to support the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry with the "Auburn's Fighting Food Insecurity Project," specifically to better serve the high-influx of underprivileged AU students utilizing the pantry's services for 2020.

Support from your organization would directly promote educational opportunities for underprivileged AU students who otherwise would not have them, and would directly serve college students within the Auburn community, an area in which hundreds of Donaldson Company, Inc. employees reside and work.

We look forward to hearing the results of the Donaldson Foundation's decision for funding and hope that the Auburn community will be a recipient of the Donaldson Foundation's generosity for 2020. If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding our organization, please contact me at (334)-844-1305 or through email at [keh0018@auburn.edu](mailto:keh0018@auburn.edu).

Sincerely,

Katherine Hettinger  
Manager, Auburn Cares  
Enclosed

## **Cover Page and Title**

Organization: Auburn University's Auburn Cares Organization

Funding Agency: The Donaldson Foundation

Grant Name: Organizational Grant

Funding Cycle: Funding Cycle II

Project Title: "Auburn's Fighting Food Insecurity Project"

Amount Requested: \$4,235.00

Grant Submitted by:

Katherine Hettinger  
Manager, Auburn Cares  
keh0018@auburn.edu  
(334)-844-1305

## **Executive Summary**

The Auburn University Auburn Cares organization is requesting \$4,235.00 in funding from the Donaldson Foundation to support the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry with the "Auburn's Fighting Food Insecurity Project," whose goal is to better serve the high-influx of underprivileged AU students utilizing the pantry's services for the 2020 academic year. Support from the Donaldson Foundation will directly assist Auburn Cares in fighting food insecurity on Auburn's campus by supplying the funding to provide food pantry users with a variety of nutritious food options for various diets, a selection of personal hygiene items, and high-quality bags for receiving and carrying pantry items.

## **Statement of Need**

The Auburn University Auburn Cares organization is requesting \$4,235.00 in funding from the Donaldson Foundation to support the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry with the "Auburn's Fighting Food Insecurity Project," which aims to erase food insecurity on Auburn's campus by providing AU students with proper food pantry resources throughout the 2020 academic year. The Auburn University Auburn Cares organization is specifically requesting funds for the following reasons to benefit the users of the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry:

- to increase the number of nutritious food items available in the pantry (high protein, high-calorie, and filling items)
- to increase the amount of food in the stock-pile for students with dietary restrictions, food allergies, and religious restrictions
- to increase the number of personal hygiene items available for users (soap, shampoo, razors, menstrual items, laundry detergents, etc.)
- to purchase high-quality, reusable, and nondescript bags for users to carry food items when picking up donations

The Auburn University Campus Food Pantry's mission, similar to the Donaldson Foundation, is to assist the educational goals of individuals in our community. This project relates explicitly to the advancement of educational goals by supporting AU students through the struggles of food insecurity, which is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as, "Reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet [...] Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake" (Department of Agriculture, 2014).

Food insecurity can manifest in many ways, and some characteristics include: worrying about not having enough food to get through the day, heightened anxiety surrounding where meals will come from, inability to pay for balanced meals, reducing meal-size (or skipping meals altogether), and being hungry and not having access to food (Twill, Bergdahl, & Fensler, 2016).

Food insecurity is an educational issue as a recent study on student health has estimated that 39.2% of college students have experienced food insecurity and that nearly 23% of college students have had to skip meals due to financial circumstances (Freudenberg, et al., 2013). Additionally, the issue is becoming increasingly wide-spread in young adults as a 2013 study showed that "thirty-one percent

of adults receiving food from a Feeding America food bank report having had to choose between paying for food and paying for education costs in 2013" (Feeding America, 2014).

Food insecurity comes with many consequences to college students, which include poor physical and mental health status, poor academic performance, and social skill difficulties (Twill, Bergdahl, & Fensler, 2016). Additionally, a 2000 study found that an experience of poverty during young adulthood can negatively affect an individual's lifetime earning potential (Mizell, 2000). Below is a Student Impact Statement from August 2019, provided by Auburn Cares Coordinator, Sarah Grace Walters, describing an AU student's experience with food insecurity:

*"I met with a student yesterday who shared that she has been struggling with food insecurity for a long time and has been too embarrassed to tell anyone. She has been eating one meal a day for the last year and has no food in her apartment. I convinced her to use the Campus Food Pantry yesterday (she is dealing with financial issues.)"*

Auburn Cares is striving to combat food insecurity on Auburn's campus through the use of the Auburn University Food Pantry- a non-profit and donation-based resource that provides AU students experiencing food insecurity with free non-perishable foods and toiletry items. Due to being solely donation-based (and having an increase in student need throughout the past year), the Auburn University Food Pantry has found it challenging to stay stocked with the necessary goods to provide to the needs of the student population at Auburn. Funding requested from the Donaldson Foundation will provide Auburn Cares with the funds to successfully meet the needs of the Auburn student population for the 2020 academic year.

## **Project Description**

The Auburn University Campus Food Pantry is stocked solely on monetary and item donations from the surrounding community. It is important to note that the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry is not a recipient site for local food banks (such as the Food Bank of East Alabama) and does not receive any financial or item support from local food banks. To become a partner with local food banks, the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry would have to financially screen AU students to ensure they meet eligibility requirements for food assistance. The Auburn Cares staff firmly believes that college student's financial situations are unique and challenging, and requiring students to prove financial need would turn many users away. Auburn Cares has created the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry specifically to offer support to all AU students, including those who may not be eligible for local food pantries due to barriers to financial eligibility. College students are shown to be an underserved population by the traditional food pantry system, with many local and community food pantries requiring eligibility protocols, such as requiring an entire household to be served together, or establishment of permanent residence by producing a utility bill (which may be difficult or impossible for students residing in campus housing, living with roommates, or even facing homelessness) (Twill, Bergdahl, & Fensler, 2016).

The Auburn University Campus Food Pantry wants to ensure that all students struggling with food insecurity, no matter how long or short the time period, can have access to the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry whenever they need it. It is through monetary and item donations from the public and from funding agencies, such as the Donaldson Foundation, that we will be able to complete our mission and work to erase food insecurity on Auburn's campus.

With the \$4,235.00 funding assistance from the Donaldson Foundation, we plan to achieve the following four goals for 2020: (further breakdown on each point provided below)

1. increase the number of nutritious food items available in the pantry (high protein, high-calorie, and filling items)
2. increase the amount of food in the stock-pile for students with dietary restrictions, food allergies, and religious restrictions
3. increase the number of personal hygiene items available for users (soap, shampoo, razors, menstrual items, laundry detergents, etc.)
4. purchase high-quality, reusable, and nondescript bags for users to carry food items with when picking up donations

The Auburn University Campus Food Pantry has received an influx of new users throughout 2018, and the organization is seeking assistance to continue providing items to users that need them. In 2018, the organization had approximately 634 visits throughout the academic year. Of this amount, 96 of these student visits were regular, meaning that these students were using the Auburn Food Pantry on a weekly/bi-weekly or monthly basis as their primary resource of food. Sixty-four user visits were unique, meaning these users only visited the Auburn Food pantry once, during times of food insecurity.

## **Specific Project Breakdown**

### **Goals and Measurable Objectives**

#### *Goal #1: Increase the Number of Nutritious Food Items Available in the Pantry*

Currently, the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry is stocked solely through donations from the Auburn community, which means that there are only random assortments of items available at any given time to give out to visitors. This means that the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry has only a random variety of items available at any given time, which means that there is no consistency in nutrition-level and food-quality in items given to users. For example, the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry currently has over 220 cans of Chef Boyardee Ravioli, but only 27 jars of peanut butter in stock, which means that the majority of users are receiving large amounts of Chef Boyardee Ravioli as their primary source of protein.

Due to running entirely on donations, the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry has noticed a great need for additional funding to be used to purchase more nutritious food items that are not being donated on a regular basis.

\*While we will need a supply of these goods on hand in our facility, we would like to request monetary funding that can be used to purchase additional food items on an as-needed basis as we work to determine which of these items are requested the most.

Measurable Objectives:

- have at least a 2-week stock-pile of nutritious (high protein, high-calorie, and filling) items available at all times (and the funds available to purchase specific items as-needed on a case-by-case basis)
- have pantry users complete a post-pick-up survey where they rate the items they received in terms of satisfaction (aiming for 90% overall satisfaction for 2020)
- have an increase in food pantry users compared to the 2019 academic year

*Goal #2: Increase the Amount of Food in the Stock-Pile for Students with Dietary Restrictions, Food Allergies, and Religious Restrictions*

As detailed above, the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry is stocked solely through donations from the Auburn community, which means that there are only random assortments of items available at any given time to give out to visitors. Currently, we have no specific backup items available if a student has a dietary restriction, food allergy, or religious restriction. We are currently only able to provide that student with extra miscellaneous items; however, we would like to have funding to purchase main-meal and protein-heavy alternative options available. For example, we have experienced AU students using our services that follow kosher and halal dietary practices that were unable to eat the main protein we had at that time, which contained pork. Instead of providing those students with a main protein, we had to supplement with additional snacks and additional bags of rice.

\*We would like to request monetary funding that can be used to purchase additional food items on an as-needed basis as we work to determine which of these items are requested the most.

Measurable Objectives:

- have funding to purchase main-meal options available for students with a potential dietary restriction, food allergy, or religious restriction as-needed on a case-by-case basis
- have pantry users complete a post-pick-up survey where they rate the items they received in terms of satisfaction (aiming for 90% overall satisfaction for 2020)
- have an increase in food pantry users compared to the 2019 academic year

*Goal #3: Increase the Number of Personal Hygiene Items Available*

Nearly every student that visits the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry requests personal hygiene items, such as soap, shampoo, razors, menstrual items, and laundry detergent. Due to these items being solely donation-based, we cannot always provide these items to our users, and these products are given out on a first-come, first-serve basis. Our organization acknowledges the need of these items by our students, and we aim to keep a supply of these items in our facility to provide to our users as requested.

\*While we will need a supply of these goods on hand in our facility, we would like to request monetary funding that can be used to purchase additional personal hygiene items on an as-needed basis as we work to determine which of these items are requested the most.



Measurable Objectives:

- have a large stockpile of personal hygiene items available for pantry users (and the funds available to purchase specific items as-needed on a case-by-case basis)
- have pantry users complete a post-pick-up survey where they rate the personal hygiene items they received in terms of satisfaction (aiming for 90% overall satisfaction for 2020)
- have an increase in food pantry users compared to the 2019 academic year

*Goal #4: Purchase High-Quality, Reusable, and Nondescript Bags*

College students may face the stigma associated with seeking assistance from campus food pantries (Bailey-Davis et al., 2013). The Auburn University Campus Food Pantry has received feedback from students regarding their experience of feeling ashamed to pick up their food bags from the pantry. Below is a Student Impact Statement from August 2019, provided by Auburn Cares Coordinator, Sarah Grace Walters, describing an AU student's experience with feeling ashamed to be seen picking up her food bag:

*"She was so embarrassed about having to use the food pantry that she tried to load all of the food we gave her into her backpack. When it didn't all fit, I gave her folders from my office to cover the food items in the reusable bag we gave her because she was so worried that someone would see that she had a bag of food and know that it came from the Campus Food Pantry. [She was] so worried that others would know she was struggling with food insecurity."*

To help protect the privacy of our users, we would like to begin only using high-quality, reusable, and nondescript bags to provide food to our users. It is our goal to start using bags that can hold large quantities of food (approximately 10+ pounds) without bursting or spilling the contents, that users can bring back each visit to have refilled, and that are nondescript and private. We want users of our pantry to leave our facility confident that the public will not know the contents of the bag they are carrying.

Measurable Objectives:

- have a large stockpile of high-quality, reusable, and nondescript bags available for users to carry their items that protect their privacy
- have repeat pantry users reuse the same bag every visit (aiming for a 70% reuse rate with repeat users)

## **Project Methods**

Auburn Cares uses Foodstar Food Pantry software to track student usage of the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry. The Auburn Cares office implemented Foodstar software on September 15, 2016. We will continue to track student data throughout the 2020 academic year and will be comparing the results to previous years. Upon the start of the 2020 academic year, we will be implementing an online post-pick-up survey through our Foodstar software that will ask all food pantry users to complete a brief survey regarding their experience each visit. This email survey will take only minutes to complete, and students will receive email reminders regarding this survey. While the specifics of this survey are still in the works, we aim to see an increase in user satisfaction

compared to previous years and are striving to maintain a 90% user satisfaction rate throughout the year.

## **Project Evaluation**

The evaluation of the methods will be performed in-house by Auburn Cares staff (Katherine Hettinger and Sarah Grace Walters) through both qualitative and quantitative measures. The assessment will be based on the results of the data pulled from Foodstar software that tracks student usage and overall satisfaction with the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry. We will also be evaluating the success of the project based on an increase in users throughout the 2020 academic year, and additionally, an increase in donations from the public. As we aim to serve more students on Auburn’s campus, we also aim to become more recognized by donors and funders. This project will be considered successful if we see an:

- increase in student usage throughout the year
- increase in student satisfaction (we are aiming for 90%)
- increase in repeat users bringing back their bags for pick-ups (we are seeking for 70% retention)
- increase in donors and funders throughout the year

## **Project Sustainability**

Auburn Cares will sustain the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry throughout the coming years by planning and hosting numerous fundraisers, food-drives, item-drives, and personally connecting with local and national donors and funders. We plan to work more closely with Auburn University students and faculty to network and build closer connections with aspirations to become well-known throughout the Auburn Community.

We aim to have volunteer grant writers and fundraising coordinators on our team to research and connect with local funding agencies to better support our mission.

## **Project Budget**

Organization: Auburn University’s Auburn Cares  
Project Name: “Auburn’s Fighting Food Insecurity Project”  
Period Project: August 19, 2020, to August 17, 2021 (2020 Academic Year)

The Auburn Cares organization is requesting \$4,235.00 from The Donaldson Foundation, to meet the monetary requirements necessary to improve the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry throughout the 2020 academic year. The following budget details items that, based on research, were found to be the best deal in terms of price and overall quality. This rationale explains why some items may be generic versions while others are name brand. The set-pricing estimates for Funding for Food Purchases for Students with Dietary Restrictions, Food Allergies, and Religious

Restrictions and Funding for Personal Hygiene Purchases are based on the experience of similarly sized food pantry budgets.

<b>Budget Items for Auburn University Campus Food Pantry</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total</b>
- Sturdy, reusable nondescript bags for clients to receive pantry items [Purchased through MarcosPromos.com, 60 GSM Economy Grocery Tote]	1000 bags - (\$1.12 per bag, 1000 bags requested)	\$1,120.50
- RXBAR Whole Food Protein Bar as a high-calorie and nutrient-dense meal replacement option [Purchased through RXBar.com, Peanut Butter Chocolate]	4 boxes - (\$25.72 per box of 12, 4 boxes requested)	\$102.88
- Goya Black Beans as a high-calorie and vegetarian/vegan meal option [Purchased through Samsclub]	100 cans - (\$0.63 per can, 100 cans requested)	\$63.05
- 100 cans of Goya Chickpea Beans as a high-calorie and vegetarian/vegan meal option [Purchased through Samsclub]	100 cans - (\$0.67 per can, 100 cans requested)	\$67.00
- 100 jars of Great Value Creamy Peanut Butter as a high-calorie, nutrient-dense, and vegetarian/vegan meal option [Purchased through Walmart, Great Value Creamy Peanut Butter 64 oz]	100 jars - (\$4.68 per jar, 100 jars requested)	\$468.52
- Great Value Premium Fully Cooked Chicken as a high-calorie and nutrient-dense option [Purchased through Walmart, Great Value Premium Fully Cooked Chunk 12.5 oz]	100 cans - (\$2.08 per jar, 100 jars requested)	\$208.55
- Healthy Choice Soup Variety Pack (15 oz., 10 pk per box.) as a high-calorie and convenient option [Purchased through Samsclub, Healthy Choice Soup Variety Pack (15 oz., 10 pk per box.)]	10 boxes - (\$6.68 per box, 10 boxes requested)	\$66.80
- Annie's Organic Chewy Granola Bars – Chocolate Chip (6 bars per box) as a high-calorie and nutrient-dense option [Purchased through Annie's Organic Chewy Granola Bars – Chocolate Chip]	30 boxes - (\$2.98 per box, 30 boxes requested)	\$89.40
- Funding for Food Purchases for Students with Dietary Restrictions,	N/A (Set Monetary Amount)	\$300.00

Food Allergies, and Religious Restrictions		
- Funding for Personal Hygiene Purchases (soap, shampoo, razors, menstrual items, laundry detergent, etc.)	N/A (Set Monetary Amount)	\$700.00
- Irish Spring Original Deodorant Soap (3.7 oz., 20 individually wrapped bars.) [Purchased through Samsclub]	20 boxes - (\$8.94 per box, 20 boxes requested)	\$178.80
- Garnier Fructis Daily Care 2-in-1 Shampoo & Conditioner - 12.5 fl oz [Purchased through Target]	50 bottles - (\$2.99 per bottle, 50 bottles requested)	\$149.50
- Bic Single Blade Shavers, Sensitive 12 (Pack of 2) [Purchased through Walmart]	30 packs (of two) - (\$6.95 per pack (of two), 30 packs requested)	\$208.50
- Tampax Pearl Regular Plastic Tampons, Unscented (200 pack) [Purchased through Walmart]	3 packs requested - (\$37.88 per pack, 3 packs requested)	\$113.64
- Equate Maxi, Super Pads, 288 Ct [Purchased through Walmart]	2 packs requested - (\$18.59 per pack, 2 packs requested)	\$37.18
- Tide Laundry Detergent Liquid, Original Scent, HE Turbo Clean, Pack of 3 Smart Pouches, 48 oz Each, 93 Loads Total [Purchased through Amazon]	20 packs requested - (\$17.99 per pack, 20 packs requested)	\$359.80
<b>Total Requested:</b>		<b>\$4,235.00</b>

## **Organization Info**

Auburn Cares works with students to aid them in the successful navigation of challenging, personal life issues, critical incidents, hardships and emergencies that may impede a student's success and retention at Auburn University. One such resource Auburn Cares offers is The Auburn University Campus Food Pantry, which began in the spring of 2012 as an initiative in Student Affairs. The goal of the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry is to provide non-perishable food items to aid Auburn University students struggling with food insecurity by providing weekly bags of foods to students in need.

Auburn Cares, and the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry, are managed by Katherine Hettinger, Manager, and Sarah Grace Walters, Coordinator, whose professional biographies are listed below:

Katherine Hettinger  
 Manager, Auburn Cares  
[keh0018@auburn.edu](mailto:keh0018@auburn.edu)  
 334.844.1305

Katherine is an Illinois native. She received her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Illinois and her Master's Degree in Community Counseling from Kent State University. Katherine is a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Alabama. Her clinical experience includes work with juvenile sex offenders and at-risk youth and families. Prior to her tenure in Student Affairs, she spent three years working in the Psychology Department at Auburn University. She joined Student Affairs in the fall of 2011, where she manages the 24/7 on-call Critical Incident Response Team and works with students and families in crisis.

Sarah Grace Walters

Coordinator, Auburn Cares

[sgw0002@auburn.edu](mailto:sgw0002@auburn.edu)

334.844.1305

Sarah Grace grew up in Florida. She received her Bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies from Auburn University and her Master's and Education Specialist degrees in Mental Health Counseling from Florida State University. Her clinical experience includes working with children who experienced abuse and adults and adolescents with eating disorders. Prior to joining the Auburn Cares team in 2017, Sarah Grace worked as a Case Manager for two years at Florida State University. She now serves the students of Auburn by advocating for students in crisis and connecting them with appropriate resources. Sarah Grace conducts the outreach for the Auburn Cares office, as well as manages the daily operations of the Auburn University Campus Food Pantry.

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**AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES

*Hunger Solutions Institute*

February 14, 2020

Nathalye Blok  
President  
The Donaldson Foundation  
PO Box 1299, MS 100  
Minneapolis, MN 55440

Dear Natalye,

The Hunger Solutions Institute at Auburn University enthusiastically supports Auburn Cares' grant proposal, *Auburn's Fighting Food Insecurity Project*, to the Donaldson Foundation. This proposal will support Auburn Cares in better serving the high influx of AU students utilizing the Campus Food Pantry services for the 2020 academic year.

As the managing director at the Hunger Solutions Institute, I not only support Auburn University in addressing hunger of students and the local community, I also support more than 300 universities in prioritizing food and nutrition security as a central part of their mission. HSI serves as secretariat for Presidents United to Solve Hunger, a consortium of more than 115 universities from around the world that share the collective mission to end hunger and poverty, both locally and globally. HSI also serves as secretariat for Universities Fighting World Hunger, a growing, global network of more than 300 universities working in partnership to amplify the voice of the rising generation – a voice calling for a world free from hunger and malnutrition. Lastly, HSI facilitates End Child Hunger in Alabama, a public movement addressing the critical issues of hunger and food insecurity facing Alabama's children and youth. Because of these efforts, HSI serves as a leader of campus and local food and nutrition security efforts.

Auburn Cares has been instrumental in addressing food and nutrition security needs of Auburn University students. Not only does Auburn Cares provide access to the Campus Food Pantry, but HSI and Auburn Cares team to facilitate additional collaborative campus activities to combat food and nutrition insecurity. Throughout our collaboration, it is obvious Auburn Cares always seeks ways to improve their services and further support student success.

This particular proposal is just one demonstration of Auburn Cares' culture of continued improvement and excellence. With a request for funding to

- increase the number of *nutritious* food items available in the pantry,
- increase the amount of food available for students with *dietary restrictions, food allergies, and religious restrictions*,
- increase the number of *personal hygiene* items available

- purchase high-quality, reusable, and *nondescript* bags,

one can notice the level of excellence Auburn Cares seeks for its Campus Food Pantry. I commend these continued advancements in service and will support Auburn Cares as they implement these new advances and contemplate others to address campus food security needs.

It is my pleasure to recommend with the highest regard the Auburn Cares' grant proposal, *Auburn's Fighting Food Insecurity Project*, for funding by the Donaldson Foundation. The goals of Auburn Cares and this particular proposal are consistent with the mission and interest of the Donaldson Foundation. Additionally, Auburn Cares has the support of many campus partners to utilize this grant and continue expanding the Campus Food Pantry's support of Auburn University student success.

Sincerely,



Alicia Powers, PhD  
Managing Director