

Education & Food Insecurity

WCU & Food Insecurity: Developing and Implementing through Education

Dr. Brian Railsback's (brailsba@email.wcu.edu) English 190 FY Seminar (S16) studied literature that examines economically distressed people in the U.S. (homeless to the lower middle class) and income inequality and empathy as reflected in the four books discussed throughout the course. As an opportunity to do some light primary research in the issues described in the literature, Dr. Railsback's students partnered with United Christian Ministries of Jackson County. Students visited UCM, heard from the director about the clients served there, and did some onsite work. Students designed and implemented three fundraising efforts for UCM. Two of their initiatives raised \$500. The third, a GoFundMe site, will continue to raise funds after the class has ended (students can monitor progress through the class Facebook). Students have written part of an exam and a separate reflection paper on how what they learned about UCM connects with the literature they reviewed – specifically in terms of empathy – and what they learned about themselves in terms of organizing, leading, implementing, and marketing events.

Dr. Railsback stated about the program, “I value high impact practices for students that underscore service, research, and leadership. Out-of-class activities that reinforce in-class theory tend to foster better learning, classroom culture, and another step toward lifelong community engagement for students and the professor.”

For more information see (United Christian Ministries): www.ucmhelp.com

If you would like your community engagement work recognized through the STAR Engagement Projects program, please submit your proposals through the [Community-based Activities Faculty Survey](#) administered annually in the spring semester from early April – late May.

