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**STOCKTON UNIVERSITY  
ANNUAL REPORT FOR  
FY24 COMPASS FUND PROJECT**

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<b>PROJECT LEADER(S):</b>	Susan Werner and Heather Swenson Brilla
<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	Student Housing Essentials Fund
<b>DATE:</b>	06.14.2024

- *The boxes below expand as needed to accommodate your notes. You may also include/submit appendices or attachments, if needed.*
- *Email a copy of this completed form to the Compass Fund Review Board: [CompassFund@stockton.edu](mailto:CompassFund@stockton.edu).*
- ***This form must be completed and submitted to be considered for a second year of funding, if applicable, or for any future Compass Fund support.***

**Please provide a summary of the project and your experience.**

The project supplied dorm room packages for incoming Stockton students without parental support and who are coming out of disadvantaged situations. To receive the grant for bedding, the students were screened through the Office of Financial Aid and the grant application was forwarded on our behalf. In FY 24, 11 incoming Stockton students who fit the grant criteria received full bedding for their rooms.

The process followed the proposed work flow and was a smooth experience for the staff and students involved.

**Please describe the results of your project and compare them to your original expectations. Elaborate on how well your objectives were met and how they might have changed. Note any particular obstacles that may have prevented your achieving full satisfaction on desired outcomes.**

The results of the project were that 11 students were given the supplies they needed to promote a sense of belonging and welcome when they moved to campus in the fall of 2023. Our original expectations were that closer to the max funding of 50 students would have been supported in the fall and spring semesters.

The challenge to supporting more of the students were the governmental guidelines that define a “student without parental support” and those who qualify for a dependency override. We learned that the situation we expected, students being screened in July and August and receiving their approvals before the semester began, was unrealistic given the constraints of the governmental processes. In the end, many students’ overrides were granted later in the fall when they had already moved into their rooms.

In discussions with the CARES program staff, we learned that there were many students who needed to move onto campus due to a family emergency or to prevent homelessness. These students didn’t qualify

for the Compass funding grant as it was described in our proposal because our project is based on proactive bedding to foster a sense of belonging from the first day and not emergency supplies.

Overall, our systems worked and the collaboration among staff and administrators including the Office of Financial Aid, Residential Life, and the Office of the Dean of Students was seamless.

**Please explain and provide any University Relations & Marketing (URM) coverage of your project (social media posts, press releases, photos, videos, etc.) Include these items as attachments or paste them at the bottom of this document.**

Due to the privacy and discretion afforded the students who received the housing essentials bedding supplies, this program was not promoted through traditional URM channels. Students awarded bedding in this initial year were students who either came from the Foster Youth system, identified as independent per the guidelines of the State of New Jersey and/or FAFSA, or were in otherwise compromised circumstances including homelessness.

**Please list any follow-up actions (publications, presentation venues, etc.)**

As noted above, due to the discretion given to the students eligible for this program, initial awareness building and information sharing of this project in the first year focused first on ensuring our internal partners understood the availability of the resource and secondly, reaching out to prospective donors – both individually and in small groups to inform and potentially secure financial support. Outreach included:

- Presentations: Stockton University Foundation Executive Committee, Stockton University Foundation Board of Directors, Stockton University Board of Trustees Development Committee, Stockton University Student Development Leadership, Young Alumni Club, Alumni Council on Engagement, Student Leaders Training, Student Alumni Association
- Departments: Financial Aid, Residence Life, Dean of Students, Community Engagement, CARES team, Academic Deans
- Individual Donor Outreach by all gift officers
- The fund was offered on all giving forms through the Foundation's giving platform *Give Campus*, as well as match/challenge opportunities during *Ospreys Give Day of Giving & Gratitude*.
- The Alumni Council on Engagement (ACE) and the Student Alumni Association each named the Student Housing Essentials program as a designated program of choice for fundraising efforts.
- Atlantic City Electric designated a portion of their FY24 philanthropic gift as it aligned with their corporate DEI efforts.

**Are you recommending the continuation of this project? If so:**

- **What are the next action steps you foresee or recommend?**
- **What are the expected budget requirements going forward?**
- **Please identify the program, department, or division you should be working with to secure continuation of funding for your project.**

*[Note: continuation proposals must be approved and incorporated into the appropriate budget process. This report will not constitute as a request for permanent funding.]*

Since the creation of the program and the Compass Fund Award, there have been additional challenges brought on by both FAFSA and the state in both identifying the students and the timeliness of the state designation as independent. In addition, the Student Housing Essentials program was originally designed to be proactive in identifying first-year or transfer students who qualified prior to arrival; the CARES program handled the emergent and unexpected emergency situations of all students.

We have further learned through our Financial Aid partners that there are more students in need of this support who are outside of the narrow criteria initially set. That criteria was appropriate creating manageable program guidelines and limited resources, however we look to Year Two to expand the criteria for several reasons.

In addition to the challenges brought on by FAFSA and the state timing, Financial Aid has indicated additional need by students who are coming to Stockton potentially homeless, international students who didn't realize there was no bedding, lower income students who come with minimal resources and are unprepared – and students coming from unhealthy circumstances who are in need.

Additionally, Compass Funding for the CARES program will not be renewed in FY25 thereby creating a gap for current students facing emergent bedding needs or are in at-risk situations with little or no support.

You will see below that the amount spent in FY24 was below the compass fund allocation due to the narrowness of the criteria. With what we now know to be a far greater need for incoming students than we first imagined, as well as a loss of funding for the emergent needs of current students through CARES we look to broaden the criteria and to support both incoming and emergent needs. We would work closely with Jenifer Robin in Financial Aid on the proper identification of incoming students, as well as Student Affairs and Residence Life on the needs of current students.

In addition to it being the right thing to do for this unique group of students, this program aligned with the university's strategic objective around inclusion by making students feel safe and an equal part of student life by supporting this most basic need. Feeling safe and included is a foundation for student success and retention.

Fundraising through the Stockton University Foundation will continue as a source of future funding for this program.

**FINANCES: Based on your proposal, please outline below how the award has been spent.**

	Amount	Notes/Comments
<b>Beginning Budget Balance as of:</b>	\$	
Salary Expenditures		
• TES salaries (613340)	\$ 0	
• Student worker (613345)	\$ 0	
• Grad student worker (613350)	\$ 0	
<b>Total Salary Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	

Non-Salary Expenditures ( <i>supplies, travel, etc.</i> )		
•	\$ 2,310	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
<b>Total Non-Salary Expenditures</b>	\$ 2,310	
<b>Total Salary + Non-Salary Expenditures</b>	\$ 2,310	
<b>Ending Budget Balance as of:</b>	\$ 7,690	

*If your project was approved for multiple fiscal years, please itemize future expenditures.*  
**IMPORTANT:** *Unused funds revert to the general Compass Fund at the end of the fiscal year (June 30<sup>th</sup>).  
Compass funds DO NOT rollover to the next FY.*

Item Description	Expected Amount	Expected Timing for Payment
45 Bedding Bundles @ \$220 each* *approximate – based on need	\$9,900	Primarily August and December, but throughout the year as needed.
<b>Total</b>	\$9,900	