

**Combatting Food Insecurity Through Workforce Education in the Friends of Mascoma
Foundation**

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SOCY 11 - Research Methods

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Literature Review

Food insecurity is a widely researched topic within the field of sociology, especially as it pertains to rural communities. Rural areas experience higher levels of food insecurity than urban areas due to factors including barriers to food access, transportation, and local support systems. There is much empirical evidence that shows increased levels of food insecurity amongst rural populations. Specifically, the prevalence of food insecurity in nonmetropolitan households was measured to be 11.5%, compared to 7.7% in metropolitan households outside central cities (Olsen et al. 2004). These high levels of food insecurity have been explained by various aspects of rural environments, namely the lack of access to grocery stores, transportation, lack of social capital, and lack of access to other resources (Bowen 2022; Jordanova et al. 2024; Dean and Sharkey 2011). Individuals in rural areas face increased distance to grocery stores compared to urban residents (Bowen 2022). It has also been evidenced that current infrastructures already face difficulty overcoming barriers such as limited time, staffing, resources, transportation, and stigma when addressing food insecurity (Jordanova et al. 2024). These barriers show how rural systems may struggle to support food-insecure households.

Workforce instability in rural communities is a significant driving force behind food insecurity. Food insecurity is not just limited to food access, but is also connected to systems of inequality involving labor, income, transportation, and social exclusion (Shostak 2023). This is especially evident in rural communities, where rural households specifically rely on unstable or low-productivity employment, such as low-wage service jobs that lack workforce benefits and labor protections (The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations 2021; Bowen et al. 2022). In the context of the Upper Valley, many stable and higher-paying jobs are associated with the Dartmouth College community, leaving individuals without access to those jobs with fewer employment opportunities and increasing difficulty affording housing and food. This suggests that this rural area in particular lacks access to diverse and stable employment opportunities, which can increase the likelihood of food insecurity.

Employment itself is not a true indicator of workforce stability within households. Rather, it is the type of employment that matters most. The main driving force of workforce instability in rural areas is non-standard employment (Coleman-Jensen 2011). Nonstandard work is more prevalent among nonmetropolitan workers, who have irregular hours, multiple jobs, and seasonal work. These individuals work shorter durations and are more likely to work less than 40 hours per week (Park et al. 2019). This contingent employment and varying hours is not only more chaotic for households, but also debilitating as it results in less pay and limited benefits (McLaughlin, Coleman-Jensen 2009). This lack of resources and stability associated with non-standard employment exacerbates food insecurity in these rural households.

Those who are employed in non-standard conditions typically have less education, lower income, and are overall more vulnerable (Park et al. 2019). Therefore, it becomes clear that without the necessary human capital, rural households are forced into non-standard employment. In the context of this study, human capital encompasses skills, knowledge, education, training, and work experience that influence an individual's employment opportunities (Coleman 1988). Human capital can have a direct impact on food security as well as non-standard employment. Educational attainment is found to be the strongest predictor of earnings and occupational status (Kerckhoff, Raudenbush, Glennie 2001). Additionally, a 2021 study specifically on women showed that other aspects of human capital, including empowerment and education, increased their food security (Wei et al.). Therefore, the lack of access to improving human capital negatively impacts rural communities and can lead to higher reliance on non-standard employment, which ultimately contributes to higher food insecurity. This can lead to the conclusion that workforce education should have a direct impact on food insecurity, as those who

possess higher levels of human capital are more likely to be food secure.

While previous literature focuses on the broad links between human capital, nonstandard employment, and food insecurity, a gap still exists regarding the specific aspects of human capital that can be intervened upon to alter nonstandard employment and, therefore, potentially impact food insecurity. Additionally, the majority of the research focuses on urban populations. Rural sociology, which is a relatively new field, possesses a significant gap in the literature surrounding unstable employment, inconsistent work schedules, and a lack of workforce opportunities within rural regions, especially areas like Mascoma Valley. This study aims to understand how workforce education can serve as a path to reducing the Mascoma Valley Region households' reliance on nonstandard employment and, therefore, reduce food insecurity in this region. Aside from the primary focus of workforce education as a means of increasing human capital, it can also be acknowledged that other important factors influence food insecurity. For example, additional hardships such as utility and energy concerns (Bhattacharya 2003), healthcare (Jordanova et al. 2024), and transportation isolation (Bowen 2022) can all be noted as concurrent predictors of food insecurity, which Friends of Mascoma (FOM) can help intervene upon.

Methods: Measures and Research Methods

This study uses a cross-sectional, in-person, paper-and-pencil survey administered during regular pantry hours at the Canaan and Enfield Pantries Friends Feeding Friends (FFF) Pantries. A cross-sectional design ensures that each shopper completes the survey once within the same general time frame. In-person administration guarantees the survey is completed on-site, ensuring that only FFF shoppers are included in the data collected. In-depth interviews would have added to the nuance of the data, but this was not feasible and interfered with privacy concerns. FFF volunteers and staff would also be able to assist shoppers who may have physical limitations, literacy difficulties, or require clarification, allowing for clear and accurate data collection. While a digital or online survey was considered, this was ruled out, as the paper-and-pencil design builds on the FFF's current intake procedure and ensures equal access for all shoppers to complete the survey. This allows multiple shoppers to complete the survey simultaneously, and no one is excluded due to a lack of internet or electronics.

The conceptual model utilized for this study is grounded in how the lack of human capital impacts food insecurity through workforce status. Lack of human capital serves as the independent variable (X), food insecurity as the dependent variable (Y), and non-standard employment as the mediating variable (M) within our conceptual framework. In this study, lack of human capital is operationalized using multi-select and single-select questions regarding participants' previous work experience and education to identify patterns in the educational and workforce-related backgrounds of the food pantry shoppers. Non-standard employment is operationalized by assessing respondents' current work schedules and employment situations, while food insecurity is satisfied by all participants' statuses as current shoppers at the food pantry. Additionally, to ensure that the survey can provide actionable insights for our community partner, there are questions on shoppers' preferences on workforce education opportunities and accessibility to other resources, which may be helpful for food pantry operations.

Building on FFF's existing intake survey of requiring all shoppers to complete annually to verify eligibility, our method expands this survey by including an additional, confidential, optional section that is confidential. The mandatory section would follow the FFF current intake form, requesting demographic and baseline shopper information to determine shopper eligibility. It would include questions concerning the shopper's name, age, address, and household composition.

The optional confidential survey expands on personal shopper information including: education & skills, employment status, workforce education interest, and current resources. Questions would cover information related to their educational attainment, current and past work experience, information on current work situation, household resources, and desired resources. To reduce any burdens associated with completing two surveys during in-person administration, the survey consists of a majority of closed-ended questions written in concise and accessible language, allowing for easier data collection and analysis.

When shoppers arrive at the food pantry, they will be greeted by the FFF volunteers and staff who oversee the survey procedure, who will first provide them with the mandatory survey. After completing it, they will be offered the optional supplemental questionnaire with a manila folder to place it in, along with the information sheet summarizing what the staff will explain verbally. The sheet will outline the study purpose, how the information will be used, and reiterate that participation is independent from their ability to access and utilize FOM's resources (located in the Appendix). Volunteers and staff will remain available throughout the survey to answer questions, assist or provide extra privacy in Brian's office to those who desire it. In total, it should take less than 15 minutes: less than 5 minutes for the mandatory, and less than 10 for the optional. At the end, shoppers submit their surveys into their prospective box. And those who submitted the optional survey will be given an index card to fill out with their name, address, and contact information, to place into a \$50 gift card raffle box incentive.

Methods: Sampling and Recruitment

The target research and recruitment population is shoppers at the FFF Foodbank, which is open to members of the Mascoma Valley Regional School District (MVRSD) and the general Mascoma community. The sample will contain all members of the FFF shopper population. Non-probability sampling will be used in order to survey any community members who engage with FOM and who are the target population for the support this project is trying to provide, and better understand (Dixon, Singleton, Straits, 2022). Everyone in the population is eligible to participate. The first survey will be required of every FFF shopper, and the entire population will also be offered the second survey. This sampling choice is good because it allows the specific persons who use the FFF food pantry to be surveyed. Using this specific population is not a limitation of this research project, because the findings from the research will be targeted toward this same population. The research is not disadvantaged by the limited frame and does not need to be widely generalizable. Our partner will ensure participants engage in the study, as filling out the first survey is a requirement to access the food pantry (for new shopper intake as well as annual renewal), and can then encourage them to partake in the second part. Since anyone who accesses the foodbank is required to provide some information, it is possible to collect at least partial data on 100% of the population. Additionally, to help encourage shoppers to take the optional survey, there is a raffle incentive for a \$50 gift card. The decision to survey the full FFF shopper population rather than a subset maximizes the reliability of findings within this community. Findings are not generalizable beyond the Mascoma Valley FFF population, but generalizability is not the goal, as FOM's interventions will target this same population directly.

Methods: Data Interpretation of the Optional Survey

The data provided by the survey can be interpreted to help shoppers by providing targeted information about their human capital (X) and non-standard employment (M), and how they relate to food insecurity (Y). As this is a cross-sectional survey, the findings may identify correlation among variables but cannot establish causation.

Section 1 operationalizes human capital using two indicators: educational attainment and

industry experience. Educational attainment ranges from “less than high school” to “postgraduate degree,” contextualizing respondents' degree of human capital on a scale, as higher education is linked to higher human capital. Industry experience captures work experience relevant to respondents' background and their connection to the sector's employment status, identifying trends in sectors that are more common and accessible for participants. Together, this data can allow for the examination of how low, moderate and high levels of human capital correlate to employment status, measured in Section 2.

Section 2 operationalizes nonstandard work through identifying current employment status, current work schedule, amount of jobs working, satisfaction with hours, and satisfaction with wages. This allows for the identification of nonstandard work status, as those working less than 20 or more than 40 hours, having multiple jobs, and low satisfaction levels, are most likely to be nonstandard employees. Pairing the results from Section 1 with Section 2 illustrates how differing levels of education and different industries correspond to higher or lower levels of non-standard work, and whether more shoppers have low educational attainment or work in certain fields compared to those who have non-standard work. Shoppers who have both low human capital (from Section 1) and non-standard employment (from Section 2) should be the focus of workforce education intervention efforts.

Section 3 operationalizes workforce-education interest. Although it's not a direct component of our conceptual model, it is essential to translate our findings from Sections 1 and 2 into actionable recommendations/tasks. This section asks respondents about industries they are interested in and beneficial educational resources. Results can be used to identify the most relevant workforce-education opportunities for those with low human capital and non-standard employment, as well as the entire population. This data can inform FOM workforce-education development and describe trends in the population that utilizes FFF. Section 1-3 data will quantitatively display relationships between workforce education and whether it connects to food security. Themes may be identified from the extended responses in addition to the closed-ended responses. A detailed, question-level interpretation guide is in the appendix.

Section 4 operationalizes general co-indicators of food insecurity. This does not relate to our conceptual model, but provides a comprehensive picture of respondents' needs, and potential resources and adjustments to the pantry that FOM can provide.

Ethical Considerations

Drawing on the Belmont Report's three core principles, respect for persons (the obligation to treat individuals as autonomous agents capable of making their own decisions), beneficence (the duty to maximize benefits and minimize harm to participants), and justice (the fair distribution of research burdens and benefits), this study addresses several ethical considerations. This study raises several ethical considerations related to respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research). To address concerns regarding voluntariness and undue influence, a clear and understandable information sheet is provided. It explains the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and the ability to withdraw at any time without affecting their access to pantry services. Additional accessibility concerns for individuals with limited literacy, English language learners, elderly individuals, and participants with disabilities will be minimized, as the survey uses simple language, can be translated if necessary, and assistance may be provided. Survey responses will not be linked to identifying information, and all collected data will be securely stored in accordance with ASA confidentiality standards.

The study involves minimal risk, but participants may still experience discomfort discussing financial hardship, employment instability, or food insecurity. There is a potential risk

of stigma if participant identities or responses are identified. The survey reduces these risks, as it avoids unnecessarily invasive questions, allows participants to skip questions, and ensures confidentiality for the optional section of the survey. The first section will be mandatory to determine eligibility for pantry use and the second section will be optional and confidential, allowing participants to decide whether they feel comfortable sharing additional information. Separating the survey helps minimize undue influence by ensuring that participants do not feel obligated to answer sensitive questions to continue receiving pantry services.

Finally, the study minimizes concerns of justice with the second section, as participants choose how much information they share. Participants who complete the optional section may also enter a raffle for a gift card incentive. Findings will be shared with Friends Feeding Friends to improve their understanding of workforce instability and food insecurity within the Mascoma Valley community and help strengthen future support programs and services.

Feasibility and Significance

The FOM is a nonprofit organization that supports students and families within the MVRSD through the FFF food pantry goal to improve food insecurity, increase healthy food access, and reduce food waste. Our research expands the current FFF survey's data collection methods to include questions regarding human capital, employment status, workforce education interest, and structural co-indicators of food insecurity. Through close-ended questions, the survey generates standardized, quantifiable data that will allow FOM to analyze multiple associations among these variables, identify patterns of need, and make claims about factors shaping food insecurity. This data will then enable FOM to identify interventions and resources, specifically workforce education. Additionally, our research design is practical as it builds on the FFF store's practice of limiting the number of people inside at one time, reducing strains on workers. The survey method remains consistent with previous forms, ensuring volunteers are familiar with the process and participants engage with an easy and navigable format. Likewise, surveying during operation hours minimizes participant burden while maximizing target population reach by following current pantry shopper rules. A possibility of nonresponse error remains if shoppers decline to participate.

This study contributes to the field of rural sociology by expanding the scholarship on rural community food insecurity, specifically in New Hampshire. Furthermore, it deepens research on food insecurity by examining the relationship between workforce education, nonstandard employment, and food insecurity. This study's findings may illuminate how limited human capital and non-standard employment impact vulnerability to food insecurity. Moreover, our findings may indicate what targeted workforce education initiatives may be used to intervene in employment stability and food security.

This study has practical significance as it directly benefits the MVRSD community by deepening FOM's understanding of the barriers and needs experienced by FFF shoppers. By identifying specific challenges and gaps in opportunities, FOM can highlight critical structural resources (e.g., transportation, electricity, internet access, and childcare) and generate a list of preventative supports that can reduce vulnerability among pantry users. Additionally, findings may help FOM identify gaps in access to workforce opportunities and educational preparation, equipping FOM to design targeted workforce initiatives tailored to FFF members. Furthermore, the study may impact other FOM programs, possibly by guiding ideas for Mini-Grants or expanding areas for scholarships.

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Appendix

Survey Information Sheet

Introduction: You are being asked to take part in a research study. Taking part in research is voluntary.

What does this study involve?

We would like to learn more about your experiences with the Friend Feeding Friends food pantry and any other resources that might be helpful to you. We will ask some questions about your household, work situation, education background, and food access. Participation in the study will take approximately 10 minutes.

Who is eligible to participate?

You must be a current or new Friends Feeding Friends pantry user and over the age of 18 to take part in this study.

Will you be paid to take part in this study?

There is no direct payment for participation. However, participants who complete the optional survey section may enter a raffle for a \$50 gift card.

What are the options if you do not want to take part in this study?

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation at any time with no consequences.

Will you benefit from taking part in this study?

There is a chance you could personally benefit from being in this research study. We hope to gather information that may help you and your household in the future by improving understanding of community needs and experiences. The information collected may also help improve future programs, resources, and services offered to community members. Also, participants who complete the survey can enter a raffle to win a \$50 gift card.

What are the risks involved with taking part in this study?

There are no known risks of participation in this study.

How will your privacy be protected?

The information collected for this study will be kept secure and confidential. Participants' identities will not be linked to their survey responses in the final dataset or any reports resulting from this study. If participants choose to enter the raffle incentive, their contact information will be collected separately from their survey responses so that it cannot be connected back to their answers. Only the research team will have access to the data.

Whom should you contact about this study?

If you have questions about this study, you can contact the research director for this study.
Brian Cook - Friends of Mascoma Foundation, ExecutiveDirector@FriendsofMascoma.org

If you are still interested in participating in the study, you may proceed with completing the survey now. Please note that your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose to stop or withdraw at any time without penalty.

Friends of Mascoma Foundation: Friends Feeding Friends Intake Survey
(Mandatory)

This survey includes mandatory information to determine eligibility to use the food pantry:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

ZIP/Postal Code: _____

Age: _____

Total number of members in household: _____

Of the total members in your household,

How many are below the age of 18? _____

How many are above the age of 65? _____

Friends of Mascoma Foundation: Friends Feeding Friends Optional Survey

Your name and address will not be connected with the below information

Section 1: Education/Workforce Skills and Certifications

These questions ask about education level and relevant skills or certifications

1.) Please check your highest educational attainment:

- ☐ less than high school
- ☐ some high school
- ☐ a general equivalency diploma (GED)
- ☐ a high school diploma
- ☐ a vocational, trade, or business school certificate
- ☐ less than two years of college but no formal credential
- ☐ an associate's degree
- ☐ two or more years of college but no degree
- ☐ a bachelor's degree
- ☐ postgraduate degree

If applicable, please specify what your degree/certification is in:

2.) Which of the following industry(s)/field(s) do you have experience in? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Healthcare / Nursing / Caregiving
- ☐ Childcare / Teaching
- ☐ Retail / Customer Service
- ☐ Food Service / Restaurant / Hospitality
- ☐ Agriculture / Farming / Forestry
- ☐ Skilled Trades
- ☐ Manufacturing / Warehouse / Production
- ☐ Transportation / Delivery / Logistics
- ☐ Tourism / Recreation / Ski Industry
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Self-employment
- ☐ Other: _____

Section 2: Current Employment Information

These questions ask about your current employment situation

3.) How would you describe your current employment situation?

- ☐ Full-time
- ☐ Part-time
- ☐ Seasonal or temporary work
- ☐ Unemployed/Looking for work
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Disabled
- ☐ Other: _____

4.) How many hours per week do you usually work?

- ☐ Less than 20 hours
- ☐ 20-29 hours
- ☐ 30-39 hours
- ☐ 40 hours
- ☐ 41 or more hours
- ☐ I am not currently employed

5.) How many jobs are you currently working at?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4+
- ☐ I am not currently employed

6.) Please select your satisfaction with your current work hours:

- ☐ Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat Dissatisfied
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Satisfied
- ☐ Very Satisfied
- ☐ I am not currently employed

7.) Please select your satisfaction with your current wage/salary:

- ☐ Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat Dissatisfied
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Satisfied
- ☐ Very Satisfied
- ☐ I am not currently employed

Section 3: Workforce Education Interest

These questions ask about resources that you may be interested in

8.) Which of the following industries or fields are you interested in working in or learning more about (check all that apply)?

- ☐ Healthcare / Nursing / Caregiving
- ☐ Education / Childcare
- ☐ Retail / Customer Service
- ☐ Food Service / Restaurant / Hospitality
- ☐ Agriculture / Farming / Forestry
- ☐ Skilled Trades
- ☐ Manufacturing / Warehouse / Production
- ☐ Transportation / Delivery / Logistics
- ☐ Tourism / Recreation / Ski Industry
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Self-Employment
- ☐ I am not interested in any additional resources
- ☐ Other: _____

9.) What resources from the following list would you benefit the most from? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Professional certifications
- ☐ Financial assistance with online schooling
- ☐ Technical assistance with online schooling
- ☐ Professional development classes
- ☐ Online tools (such as Microsoft or Google Suite) trainings
- ☐ I would not benefit from any additional resources
- ☐ Other:

Section 4: Current Resources

These questions ask about resources that you may or may not currently have access to

- | | | |
|------|--|-----------|
| 10.) | Do you have a stable place to live? | YES OR NO |
| 11.) | Do you have reliable access to transportation? | YES OR NO |
| 12.) | Do you have electricity? | YES OR NO |
| 13.) | Do you have access to safe drinking water? | YES OR NO |
| 14.) | Do you have heating where you currently live? | YES OR NO |
| 15.) | Do you have air conditioning where you currently live? | YES OR NO |
| 16.) | Do you have regular access to healthcare? | YES OR NO |
| 17.) | Do you have consistent Internet access? | YES OR NO |
| 18.) | <u>If applicable:</u> Do you have access to child care? | YES OR NO |
| 19.) | Do you own a working refrigerator? | YES OR NO |
| 20.) | Do you own a working stove/oven? | YES OR NO |
| 21.) | Are you satisfied with the current food pantry hours? | YES OR NO |

END OF SURVEY – PLEASE TURN IN

Guide to Interpreting Question Responses and Data

The following is a guide that outlines the specific ways that Friends of Mascoma can interpret the responses to the questions and how each section fits into the project's conceptual model.

Mandatory Survey: The mandatory intake survey collects basic identity information.

Optional Survey: The optional survey collects information that is categorized into four distinct sections.

Section 1: Education/Workforce Skills and Certifications looks at respondents' current human capital

- Question 1: Highest educational attainment, with options that range from “less than high school” to “postgraduate degree,” will contextualize the respondent’s degree of human capital by their education level. Our conceptual model proposes that lower attainment signals lower human capital and greater predicted vulnerability to non-standard employment and food insecurity. It will be important to identify those individuals who have high school degrees or less, as these individuals can be identified as having low human capital.
 - The option to specify degree or certification will indicate their type of human capital and how it aligns with locally available employment. Workforce education needs to steer credentials toward viable fields rather than just education.
- Question 2: Industries or fields of experience captures work experience reveals the respondent's employment background and whether their experience sits in sectors associated with stable work or with non-standard, low-wage, or seasonal work. It also shows potential skills, which aligns with workforce education efforts. Individuals who do not have any workforce experience can also be identified as having low human capital.

Section 2: Current Employment Information measures the mediating variable in our model, reliance on non-standard employment and immediate employment status

- Question 3: Classifies their employment and indicates additional identities that would impact their ability to work (i.e., student, retired, disabled). It is important to identify individuals who select “part-time,” “seasonal or temporary work,” “unemployed/looking for work,” as these individuals are likely to be employed in non-standard positions.
- Question 4: Hours per week indicates whether individuals have typical non-standard employment hours (less than 20 or more than 40 hours), and whether they could benefit from resources that add to their working hours, change employment to decrease their working hours, or how much available “working” time they might have for educational opportunities.
- Question 5: Jobs currently working shows if participants have nonstandard work (selecting more than one job). This question helps identify those who could benefit from

finding more stable and higher paying single job work, or need help in finding ways to balance work across multiple jobs.

- Question 6: Satisfaction with current work hours indicates if respondents want change in their working hours, and comparing with Question 4 could indicate if people generally are more satisfied with their hours if they work less than or more than 40 hours per week. Satisfaction with lower hours distinguishes voluntary part-time work from involuntary underemployment.
- Question 7: Satisfaction with current wage/salary indicates if respondents' nonstandard work is providing them an unsatisfactory income. High dissatisfaction with income indicates that a respondent would benefit from intervention and education that would target a higher paying, more stable employment condition.

*Results from sections 1 and 2 should be combined to identify those with low human capital AND non-standard employment. These individuals are those that are most in need of intervention and should be prioritized, even though workforce education may help all individuals in the population.

Section 3: Workforce Education Interest collects information on what resources respondents may be interested in. Its results should be cross-referenced with sections 1 and 2 to determine the interests of shoppers who should be prioritized due to low human capital and non-standard employment. Results can also be helpful for developing workforce education that all of the shoppers would like.

- Question 8: Industries or fields participants are interested in working in or learning more about should be compared against the respondent's current field and experience (Section 1) and within the context of the workforce landscape in the Mascoma area. If they align, workforce education could take the form of methods for current career advancement, and gaining raise-earning and promotable skills. If they differ, workforce education could take the form of industry information resources, beginner certificate and skill building workshops, assessments of employability in different fields. Indicating what jobs in different industries align with a respondent's desire for hours and income could support them in a job transition they benefit the most from.
- Question 9: Resources the respondent would benefit most from, names the specific types of workforce education interventions respondents are interested in. This lets Friends of Mascoma match program offerings to expressed demand rather than assuming. The more respondents who select an option, the more offerings of that or a similar resource could be offered.

Section 4: Current Resources captures concurrent resources related to food insecurity outside of our conceptual model, and gives more information to Friends of Mascoma about additional resources their shoppers have, lack, or could be targeted through future interventions. Answers to some of these questions may also provide insight to changes the FFF pantries can make. This

section distinguishes longer-term workforce interventions that may help shoppers from those that address their immediate material needs.

- Question 10: Having a stable place to live indicates if housing resources are needed, which should be intervened upon before employment status, in order to fulfill basic and immediate shopper needs.
- Question 11: Having reliable access to transportation indicates a barrier to accessing work (and the food pantry) and could indicate how access to workforce education measures may be restricted by distance
- Question 12: Access to electricity indicates issues with a respondent's ability to work from home or conduct certain tasks at home, and what kinds of food they can prepare themselves.
- Question 13: Access to safe drinking water indicates lacking a basic home resource the pantry itself could help target
- Question 14: Access to heating indicates a home resource that may seriously restrict shoppers' ability to work, especially in cold times of the year.
- Question 15: Access to air conditioning indicates a home resource that may seriously restrict shoppers' ability to work, especially in hot times of the year.
- Question 16: Regular access to healthcare indicates a level of precarity for a shopper that could be impacted (positively or negatively) by changes to their income, employment type, and the hours they work.
- Question 17: No consistent Internet access indicates issues with a respondent's ability to search for work or resources themselves or to practice online skills themselves.
- Question 18: Access to child care indicates a significant time commitment and burden that some shoppers may deal with, impacting their available hours to work or receive workforce education. Friends of Mascoma could connect them to childcare related resources.
- Question 19: Access to a working refrigerator indicates what kinds of foods shoppers are able to store.
- Question 20: Access to a working stove/oven indicates what kinds of foods shoppers are able to prepare.
- Question 21: Satisfaction with food pantry hours gives feedback on the pantry as a resource, and might indicate potential changes Friends of Mascoma could make.

AI Use Statements

Addy Domian

- **I did not use generative AI for this assignment.**

Angelina Carrasco

- **I did not use generative AI for this assignment.**

Kayanne Pickett

- **I did not use generative AI for this assignment.**

Nathan Hill

- **I did not use generative AI for this assignment.**

Sarah Slowikowski

- **I did not use generative AI for this assignment.**