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NORWALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION PROVIDES LAPTOPS AND GROCERY STORE GIFT CARDS TO STUDENTS IN NEED

NCC Foundation Executive Director Carrie Bernier has presented students with the first round of laptops purchased through the Foundation's Student Emergency Fund. The drive to raise money for laptops and grocery store gift cards began last week in response to the closure of Norwalk Community College's Campus and the move to online learning for students. Many NCC students do not have computers of their own to participate in online learning. The Foundation wants to provide eligible students with a laptop to ensure that these hardworking students stay in school and finish the spring semester, despite the challenges of the current times. Electronic gift cards for food and household essentials will also be distributed to students through NCC's food pantry. Donations to the Foundation can be made at nccfoundation.org/donate.

Photos and Video available at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1sUC8ETsYrXGZ_dsBCK3VqbuAT0-ZNPsc?usp=sharing

NORWALK, CT, March 25, 2020— With the closure of NCC's campus, many students have found themselves cut off from vital services that were available to them at NCC. These include computer labs, where students without a computer at home would study, and the food pantry. NCC was one of the first colleges in Connecticut to address food insecurity on campus by making an on-site food pantry available to all students. The need was clear, with students at NCC reporting in a survey they "don't have enough money to spend on food" and that they "can't afford to eat balanced meals."

The Foundation's goal is to help NCC students successfully finish their semester of college by providing laptops and grocery store gift cards to eligible students in need. To date, the Foundation has raised more than \$58,000, and also received donated laptops from GE. We treasure our community for its ability to pitch in during times of need to help neighbors. Now is one of those times when we need our community the most. Donations can be made through the foundation website, and the Foundation team is available at nccfoundation@norwalk.edu, or (203) 497-3898 to answer any questions.

Norwalk Community College students who do not have a computer at home face a critical barrier to continuing their education. This week NCC will begin online learning that will continue through the end of the semester. Because of this digital divide, some students face being left behind.

The NCC Foundation is committed to supporting students in our community. Removing barriers to education is central to our mission. Given the rapid changes to accessing classes and what we know right now, we believe we must expand our student emergency fund to include laptop computers for students who do not have a computer at home and provide food for students who will go hungry.

About the Norwalk Community College Foundation

The Norwalk Community College Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that supports expanding access to affordable, quality higher education, the development of a productive workforce, and contributing to the knowledge and well-being of our community by raising funds for Norwalk Community College.

The Foundation works with individuals, major corporations and local organizations to develop new initiatives and educational partnerships to inspire and engage our community to share talents and resources. With assistance from generous donors, the NCC Foundation provides \$3 million annually in scholarships, faculty and program support, and student success initiatives.

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