

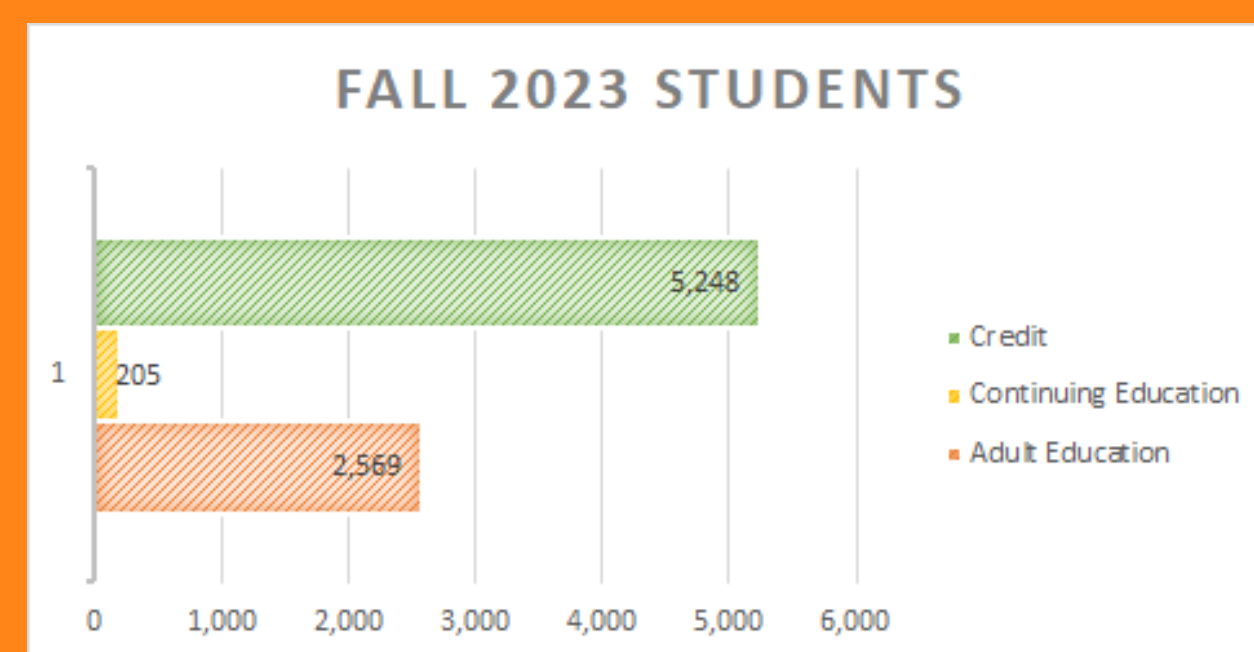
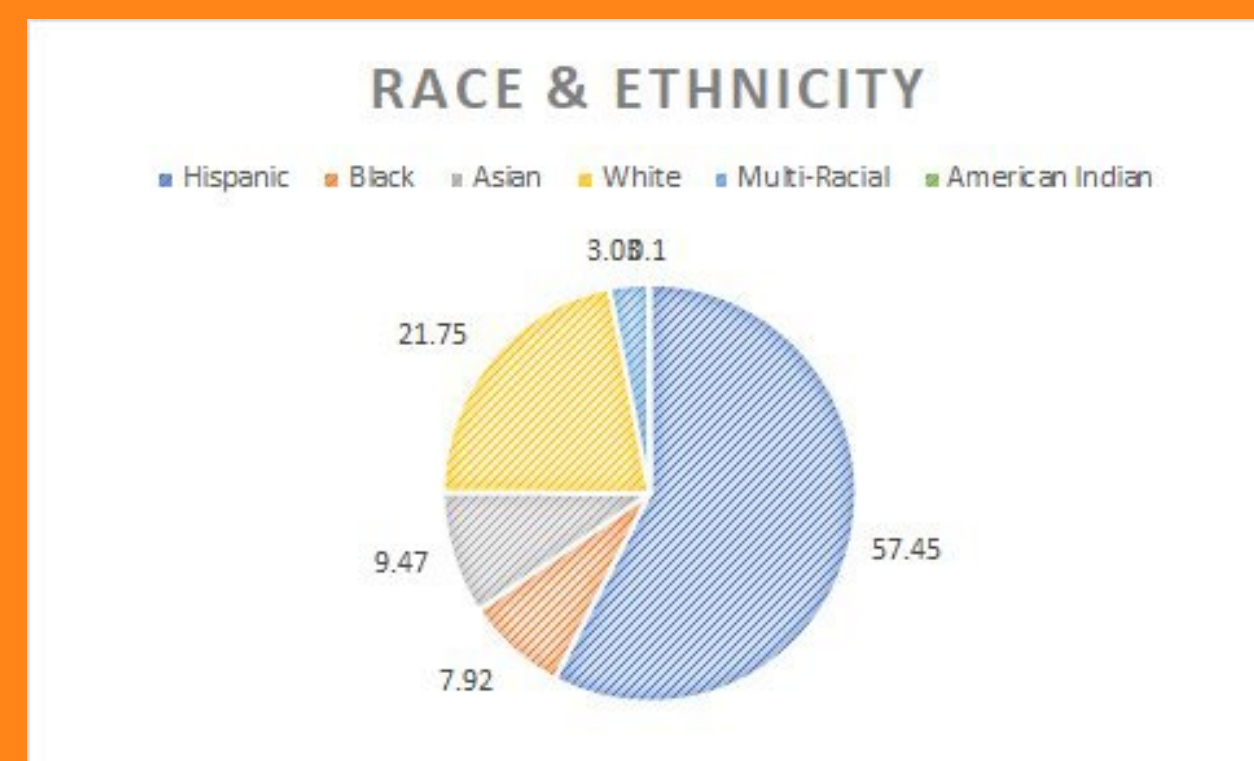
CommuniTea in the Library: Fostering Relationships with Warmth

Jeannette Bruno and Tineka Scalzo | **WILBUR WRIGHT COLLEGE**
CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO

CONTEXT

- Wright College is a designated Hispanic-Serving Institution and community college in Chicago, Illinois serving around 10,000 students per year.
- The majority of our students are First Generation, 36% are Pell-eligible, about 60% work in addition to taking classes, and many take advantage of the Healthy Food Market on campus.
- We provide ongoing opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to center wellness through rest and connection via naptimes in the library, afternoon tea events, and displays on self-care.
- The library planned a permanent Tea Garden in response to concerns around a sense of belonging identified in campus-wide surveys.
- Our trauma-informed work is connected to City Colleges of Chicago Libraries' Strategic Plan goal: *Create an Exceptional Student Experience.*

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



Employment Status	Fall 2023	
	Unduplicated Headcount	Percent of Total
Full-Time	1,093	20.80%
Part-Time <= 15 hours/week	774	14.70%
Part-Time > 15 hours/week	715	13.60%
Homemaker	34	0.60%
Other	174	3.30%
Unemployed	2,121	40.30%
No/Response/Blank	350	6.70%
Total	5,261	

SURVEY RESULTS

- Student Survey – Noel Levitz

Question	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Most students feel a sense of belonging on campus.	81%	76%	5%
The college shows concern for students as individuals.	86%	74%	12%
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	90%	84%	6%

- Employee Survey – Campus Climate Survey

Section	Question	% Agree
Section 2: Employee Wellbeing	I feel connected to my coworkers and peers at CCC.	65%
	At CCC, I feel welcome.	66%
Section 3: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	At CCC, I feel a sense of community.	56%

Teatimes etc.

Rest is Resistance:
Naptime
in the Library kit
includes:
earplugs
sleepytime tea
lavender seeds
lavender planting instructions
brought to you by:
women's herstory month, the wright college library and
WGSS (women's, gender, and sexuality studies)

March 22/February 23

Naptime in the Library –
An event in the library to promote rest and wellness. In addition to a book display, naptime kits that included tea, earplugs, and lavender seeds were distributed.

April 23

CommuniTea Party for Staff –
An event coordinated with Student Support Services to increase camaraderie and a sense of community among staff across departments.



July-September 23

HOW ARE YOU
STAYING
WELL THIS
SEMESTER?

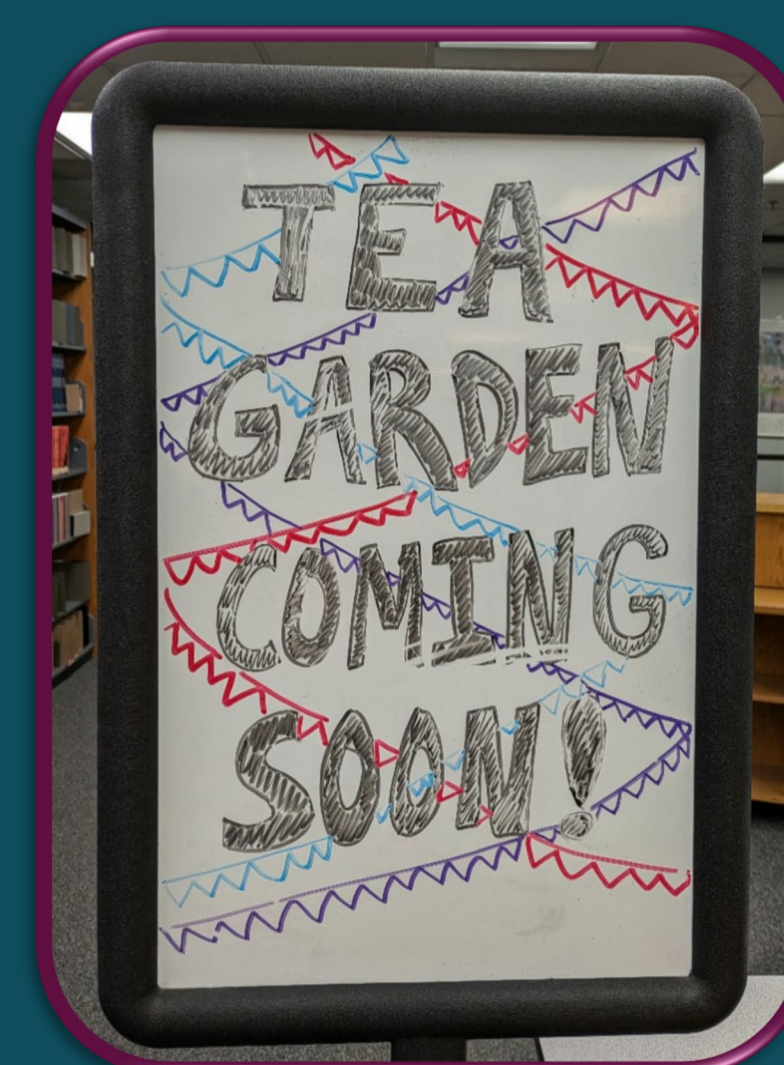
Self-Care Is Healthcare –
A display of books on the topic of self-care where tea, earplugs, condoms, and lavender sachets were distributed.

November 23-March 24

Wellness Center Resources –
A permanent display case housing mental health and well-being brochures curated by the Wellness Center on campus.



September 23-Present



Tea Garden –
A space to house a permanent Tea Garden was identified to be filled with plants, individual seating, and tea to create an environment of calm.

GOALS

- Foster a sense of belonging by providing a low-stakes space for students to connect with other students, faculty, and staff.
- Create a quiet space filled with plants to make the Wright community feel welcome.
- Share tea-making supplies to encourage people to take breaks and find ways to relax.

RESPONSE

- “This is so great for someone like me who works around a lot of noise and activity and experiences anxiety! Quieter space is crucial.” -student
- “I want to thank you thank you thank you for the lovely lavender and tea you put out in the library... What a nice special treat in the middle of a long week, and I am CERTAIN that our students felt the same way.” -faculty member
- “Thank you for giving me tea all the time!” -student

ASSESSMENT PLAN

- Tea Garden Feedback Survey
- Interview follow-up option
- Focus on experience
- Material usage statistics



LOOKING FORWARD

- Partnerships
- CCC-wide library space study
- Cross-departmental collaboration

FURTHER READING

- Black, Lisa, and Zachary Taylor. “Food, Internet, and Shelter: What Emergency Services Did Community College Students Prioritize During the COVID-19 Pandemic?” *Community College Enterprise*, vol. 27, no. 2, Fall 2021, pp. 74–85.
- Broton, Katharine M., et al. “Basic Needs Insecurity and Mental Health: Community College Students' Dual Challenges and Use of Social Support.” *Community College Review*, vol. 50, no. 4, Oct. 2022, pp. 456–82.
- Cox, Angie, and Jaycie Vos. “Virtual Staff Teas: Connecting and Growing.” *College & Research Libraries News*, vol. 83, no. 1, Jan. 2022, pp. 13–15.
- Eldermire, Erin R. B., and Wasima Shinwari. “Brewing Tranquili-Tea: Supporting Student Wellness at an Academic Library.” *College & Research Libraries News*, vol. 83, no. 1, Jan. 2022, pp. 8–12.
- Farrow, Laura. “Talking, Tea, and Tough Topics: Finding Strength and Solidarity Through Community Conversations.” *Alki: The Washington Library Association Journal*, vol. 35, no. 2, July 2019, pp. 7–11.
- Lewin, Katrina. “Relieving Librarian Burnout: Tips & Tricks.” *Public Libraries*, vol. 58, no. 6, Nov. 2019, pp. 46–50.