

Cover Sheet

University or college name: University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

Group, club, or organization name: Swipes for the Homeless at UCLA

Group, club, or organization web site (if applicable): www.swipesforthehomeless.org

Contact person's name, email address, and phone number:

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Name and contact information for a college or university official: Melissa Veluz Abraham,
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***Dear Sir/Madam, If there is any further information you would like to review and read, please feel free to reach out to us at any point. Also, we invite you to view our website: <http://swipesforthehomeless.org/>

Thank you

- **Your mission or purpose**

“Swipes for the Homeless” was founded as a university-recognized student group at UCLA in September 2009 by UCLA sophomore Bryan Pezeshki. Pezeshki asked students to go directly into university dining halls, “swipe” meals to go, which he and a few friends would then deliver to the local homeless population. In December 2009, he was joined by Thach “Tak” Nguyen, a student government council member, whose office combined efforts with Bryan to expand upon the scope and impact of Swipes for the Homeless. They institutionalized the program and established an agreement with dining services to allow students to donate their meal swipes. The meal swipes are then transferred into non-perishable goods and delivered to the local homeless population. In its first year, Swipes for the Homeless at UCLA collected over 10,000 pounds of food and in its past two years has reached over 30,000 pounds, while becoming one of the most recognized groups on the public university campus.

This quickly led to its expansion onto several college campuses worldwide, amongst those being USC, UC and University of Paris in France. In April of 2012, after a nationwide search and vetting of thousands of applicants, President Obama recognized our organization as one of five “Champions of Change,” personally inviting our group to the White House to honor us for our impact on the community. “Swipes” has since become a state-certified 501(c)3 non-profit organization with the aim of spreading its impact on to every campus in the world.

- **Your organizational structure**

At our UCLA chapter, we have the following structure

- President
 - Oversees the rest of the Board
 - Internal Vice President
 - Responsible for work streams of the Board and “Swipes” related issues amongst the organization
 - External Vice President
 - Responsible for being the group’s liaison to other entities both at UCLA and in the broader local, state, and national level community
 - Moral Director
 - Special Events Director
 - Responsible for ad-hoc events such as fraternity vs. sorority canned food drives, awareness raising concerts, homelessness-teach ins and workshops
 - Finance Director
 - General members (~6)
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General members assist directors where they apply to be part of a specific committee or rotate through the positions during any given academic year.

All ~12 members assist with our marquee event, the meal swipe collection drives at the end of each quarter/semester

- **Motivation for promoting philanthropic practice and awareness on your campus**

The numbers say it all: The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that 636,017 people experienced homelessness in the United States on a given night last year. 1.5 million Americans experienced homelessness during the recession over the past two years. According to the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, there's a definite increase in the number of homeless students nationwide. There are no firm numbers; college students, facing increasing fees and already strapped for cash, frequently hide hunger and homelessness to fit in. 10% of Homeless in LA are college educated, while nationally it is only 2%. 1 in 5 Americans struggle with hunger. The list could go on. But, to quote President Obama, "if you are not an idealist in your youth, there is something wrong with you." So a group of students at UCLA decided to do something about it and make tangible change by bringing a simple, yet novel idea to fruition. And it is in this simplicity that we find our drive and remain amazed by how such a simple idea could go so far as to helping destitute populations far and wide, and how much more potential still exists.

- **Strategy and activities**

In April of 2012, after a nationwide search and vetting of thousands of applicants, Obama recognized our organization as one of five Campus Champions of Change, personally inviting "Swipes" to the White House to honor us for our impact on the community. Swipes for the Homeless has now expanded onto numerous college campuses worldwide, among them: being USC, UC Irvine, University of Texas-San Marcos, and University of Paris in France. Swipes has since become a state-certified 501c3 non-profit organization and continues to grow -- we are currently in talks with over a dozen other potential chapters.

Due to this growth, Swipes has established a National Board made up of six recent college grads who oversee different facets of the organization's growth, while building a bond with and supporting individual chapters. As Director of Media, I've overseen the re-branding and online development of the organization. With these fresh tools and the help of marketing pros, Swipes is hoping to share our successes with the world to empower other communities to join us!

Our new branding and messaging illustrates how multidimensional and diverse the meaning of donating a swipe really is. To some, it means healthy meals and nutrition. To others, it means helping shed light on the invisible. Warmth, community, family, and service, to name a few, are words used just as often as food and water by our volunteers to describe what they're donating. We want to continue to grow on this while introducing other ways for people to "swipe." For example, imagine if people had a discount card you "swipe" for deals at local merchants you already shop at -- each time you "swipe," the merchant donates a \$1 (or a portion) to "Swipes".

We've got plenty of ideas -- and with help to get the word out, we're determined to make it all happen! Obama loves us, we're energized, but like any initiative hoping to go full-blown organization on a national-level, we could use help. We don't run on monetary donations, thus

lack the funds to help promote ourselves to further our impact and grow. With the help of Phil & Company, we hope to mobilize campuses and individuals all over the country to fight hunger and homelessness by using resources they already have and taking actions they're already taking anyway!

- **Results**

We measure success both internally and externally. Internally, we do this by increasing our presence on more and more college chapters. We plan on being present at 5 new colleges each year with the aim of equipping even more young Americans to help out in their local communities. Similarly on the internal level we also set bench marks for the amount of food we collect and donate; these numbers have seen 10-15% growth since our inception in 2009 and although different campuses measure meal plans in unique ways, so far we have seen increases across all our chapters.

Externally, we have an idealist view on decreasing the number and size of the homeless population in each region where our chapters are. We closely monitor government data on how the homeless population in each city or region is developing and aim at addresses those numbers to the best of our ability. Lastly, we also try to educate our members and the community at large about such populations and how we can help them in various ways.

Finally, to date, we have collected, and donated, over 55,000 meal swipes to homeless organizations, charities, causes and individuals in the past 4 years

- **Budget for your philanthropy-related activities**

Outreach and marketing: \$2,000

Operational costs (retreats, website development, mailing costs): \$1,000

Event costs (fundraising concerts, seminars, educational forums, food drives): \$2,000

Travel: \$1,000

Total: \$6,000

- **Sustainability plan**

We are wholly dependent on donations - both from individuals as well as institutions. We also pursue grants and awards by various national foundations, very similar to The Sillerman Prize. Donations are solicited through UCLA's alumni network as well as personal networks and warm leads.

- **Lessons learned**

It may sound clichéd but “never take no for an answer.” No idea is a bad idea, and the worst that someone can say to you is no. Swipes for the Homeless has learned this time and again as we work with dining authorities to approve our swipes drives and have them work with us to donate food to the homeless multiple times a year, that would otherwise go uncollected and not accounted for.
