

food fuels minds

words and art about food, hunger, struggle, and success

What does food mean to you, in terms of family, culture, identity? In what ways do you struggle to get the food that you and your family need? What are the challenges of affording food, for students in particular? What food support services are available to you?

These are some of the questions discussed at Hudson County Community College in the winter of 2022-23. Students generously shared their perspectives on food, hunger, struggles, and successes in anonymous narratives. Art and design students at the college read these personal stories, and contemplated their own related experiences, to inspire their artworks including paintings, digital art, and typography.

Students developed the phrase *Food Fuels Minds* to emphasize that food feeds the heart and mind as well as the body, and we all have a role in addressing problems of food insecurity in our communities. The phrase also encapsulates the core goals of this project: to better understand, as a community, the complexity of food insecurity, and to spread the word about SNAP and other available food resources.

Here we share the experiences of students living with food insecurity and the work of the student artists. The intent is that everyone who looks at and reads these pages will find something that resonates as familiar, as well as something new and thought-provoking.

More info at sites.rutgers.edu/hccc-food-stories



Money Hungry, Travis Muniz



What other different emotions does food give to a person?

this page: typography, Cesar Mondragon; opposite: **Passing By**, Andre Pacheco





Forgot To Charge, Covadonga Insuasti

Arroz y frijoles, Alexandra Toczynski



Food has always been a source of comfort. A lot of the really important bonding moments with my family are surrounded by food. Having dinner together was something I looked forward to as a kid. It was a time for family. It was a time for reconnection, and that's something that food has been able to provide throughout my entire life, that sense of comfort and family.

Food makes most celebrations, it brings us together. Food is just happiness, you know?

The Greatest Health and Wealth, Wilson Parra





Pofa Buna, Simone Colta

Food is my love language. Did you eat yet? Are you hungry? Food is something that helps us connect with each other. That's the beauty of it.

Tough Choices, Linner Rabadaad



Are you ready to eat?, Eliza Nunez



I eat very little so I can have food for later. I skip lunch in order to make my food last longer.

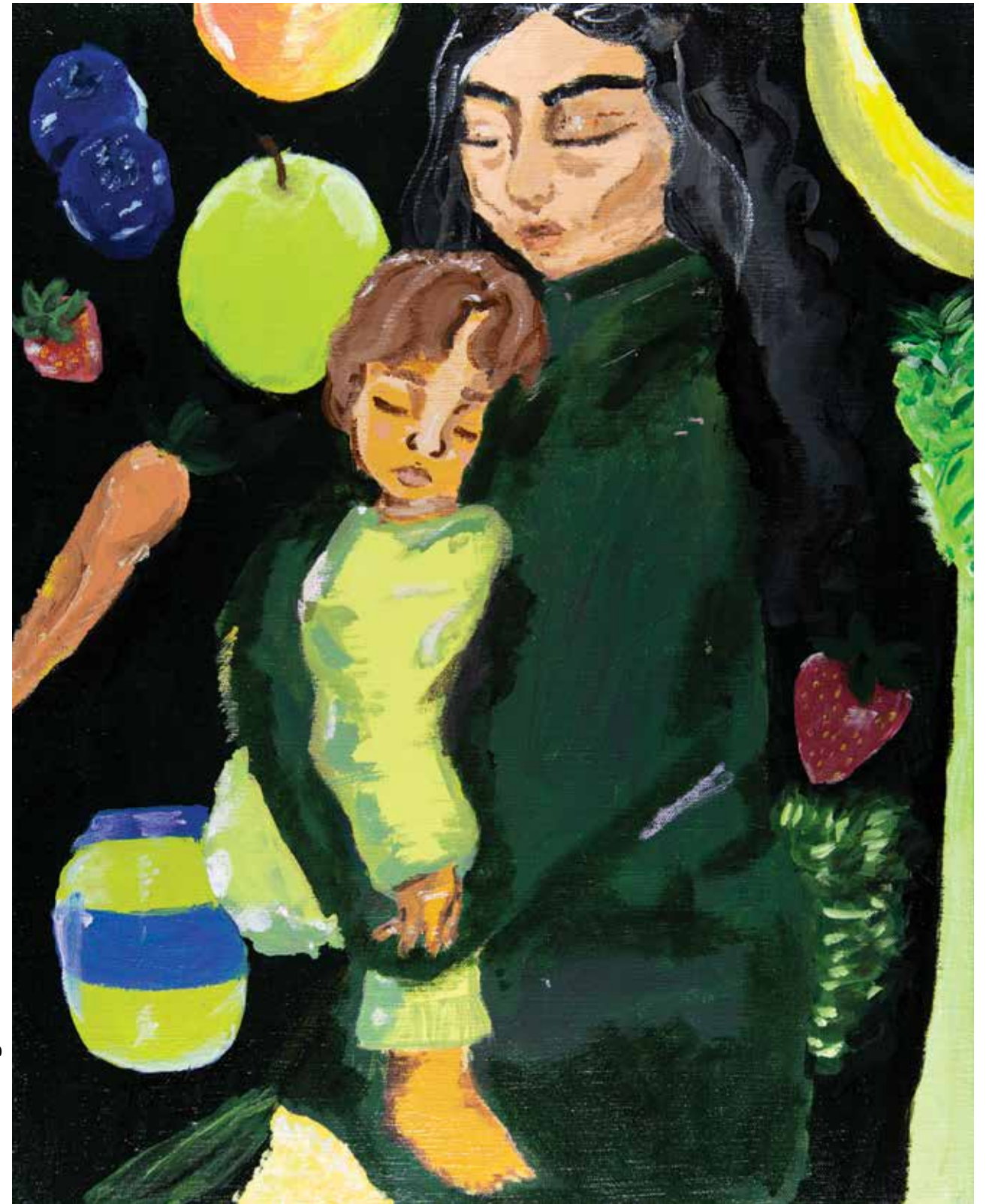
During the week, honestly, I don't eat that well. I eat one meal. Breakfast or lunch or dinner. And that's my meal for the day.

Food Makes The World Go Round, Kendry Hilario



I'll keep looking at the clock, figuring when I can go eat. I'll feel deprived until I have something in my stomach.

A Mother's Hunger, Yeferson Duran





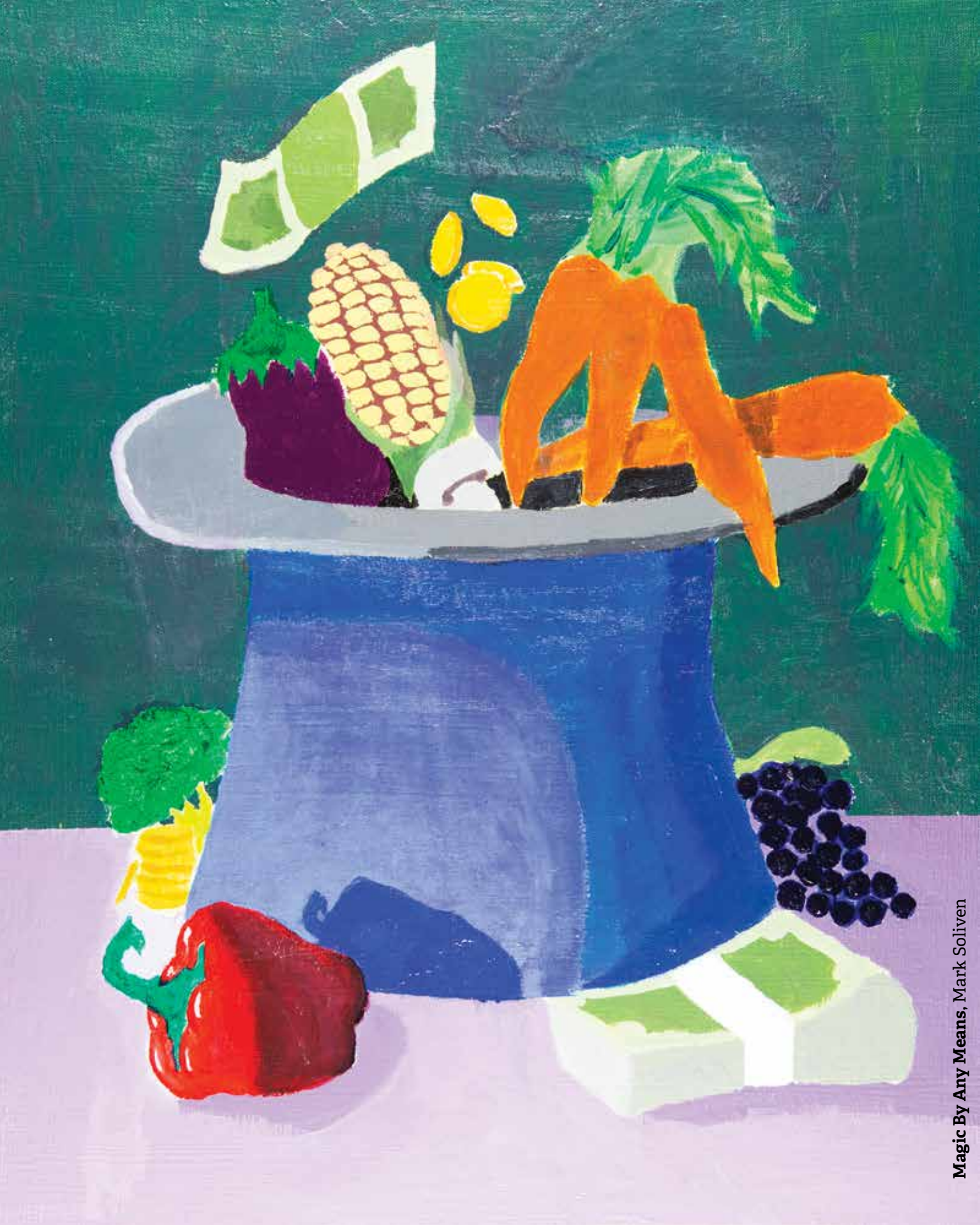
opposite: **Scarcity**, Alicia Ovalle; this page: typography, Nyellie P. Muniz

decline



opposite: **Desperation**, Deryk Rosario; this page: typography, Lesley E. Vazquez

S u r ^v i.
I b a l



Magic By Any Means, Mark Soliven

FOOD FUELS MINDS

SNAP هو برنامج يساعد الأشخاص والأسر المؤهلين للحصول على الطعام يتم وضع الأموال الشهرية على بطاقة EBT والتي يتم قبولها في معظم البقالات و محلات التجزئة وعبر الإنترنت

تحصل الأسر في نيو جيرسي عبر SNAP علي ٩٥ دولار شهريًا على الأقل وتتلقى الكثير من الأسر أكثر من ذلك

للطلاب: SNAP قد يحسن صحتك وأدائك الأكاديمي

لمزيد من المعلومات لمعرفة ما إذا كنت مؤهلاً وللمساعدة في التسجيل ، انتقل إلى sites.rutgers.edu/hccc-food-stories





Caribbean Dinner, Shishona Long

FOOD FUELS MINDS

SNAP es un programa que brinda ayuda a personas y familias para que puedan comprar alimentos. Estos beneficios están disponibles mensualmente a través de una tarjeta EBT, que es similar a una tarjeta de débito. Esta tarjeta EBT se puede usar en casi todos los supermercados, tiendas de comida y algunos sitios de internet.

En New Jersey, familias y personas que participan en **SNAP** reciben un mínimo de \$95 mensuales y muchas familias reciben mucho más.

Estudiantes: los beneficios de **SNAP** pueden resultar en una mejor salud y rendimiento académico.

Para mayor información, saber si usted es elegible y/o si necesita ayuda para enviar una solicitud, visite:
sites.rutgers.edu/hccc-food-stories





Dios Taco Park, Francois Rivero

FOOD FUELS MINDS

SNAP

SNAP helps eligible individuals and families to buy groceries. Monthly **SNAP** benefits are put on an EBT card, similar to a debit card, that is accepted in most grocery and food retail stores as well as some online vendors.

New Jersey households on **SNAP** receive at least \$95 per month, and many households receive much more.

Students: **SNAP** may improve your health and your academic performance!

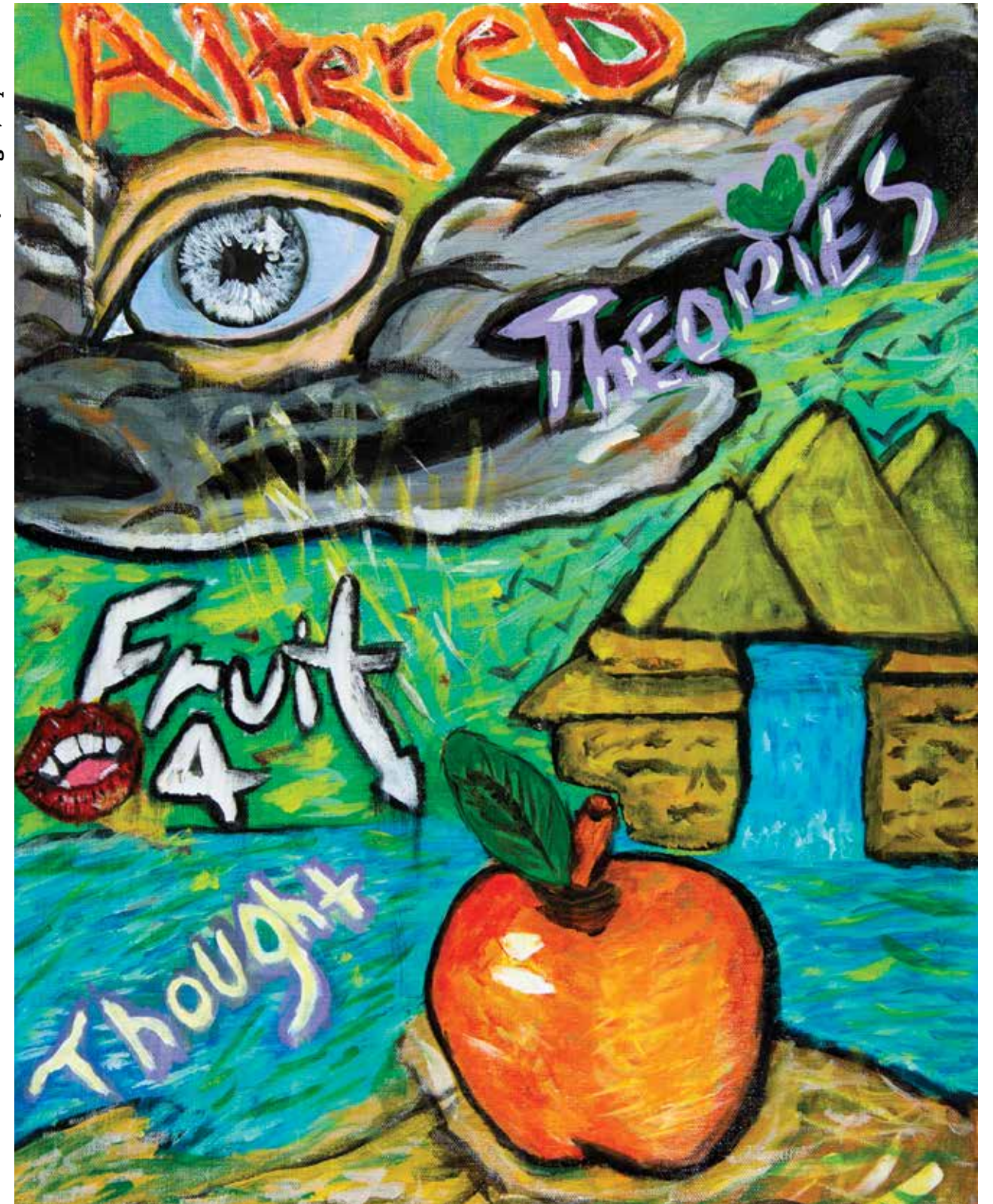
For more information, to find out if you are eligible, and for help enrolling, go to: sites.rutgers.edu/hccc-food-stories



Purchasing food has been really difficult lately. I have had to utilize food pantries.

Seeing the way that inflation has affected the cost of food, it's been really difficult to try and find that balance between getting something that's cheaper and I'm able to afford, or taking that risk and really planning my meal so I can afford to incorporate healthier items into my life.

Fruit 4 Thought, Jaylen Daise



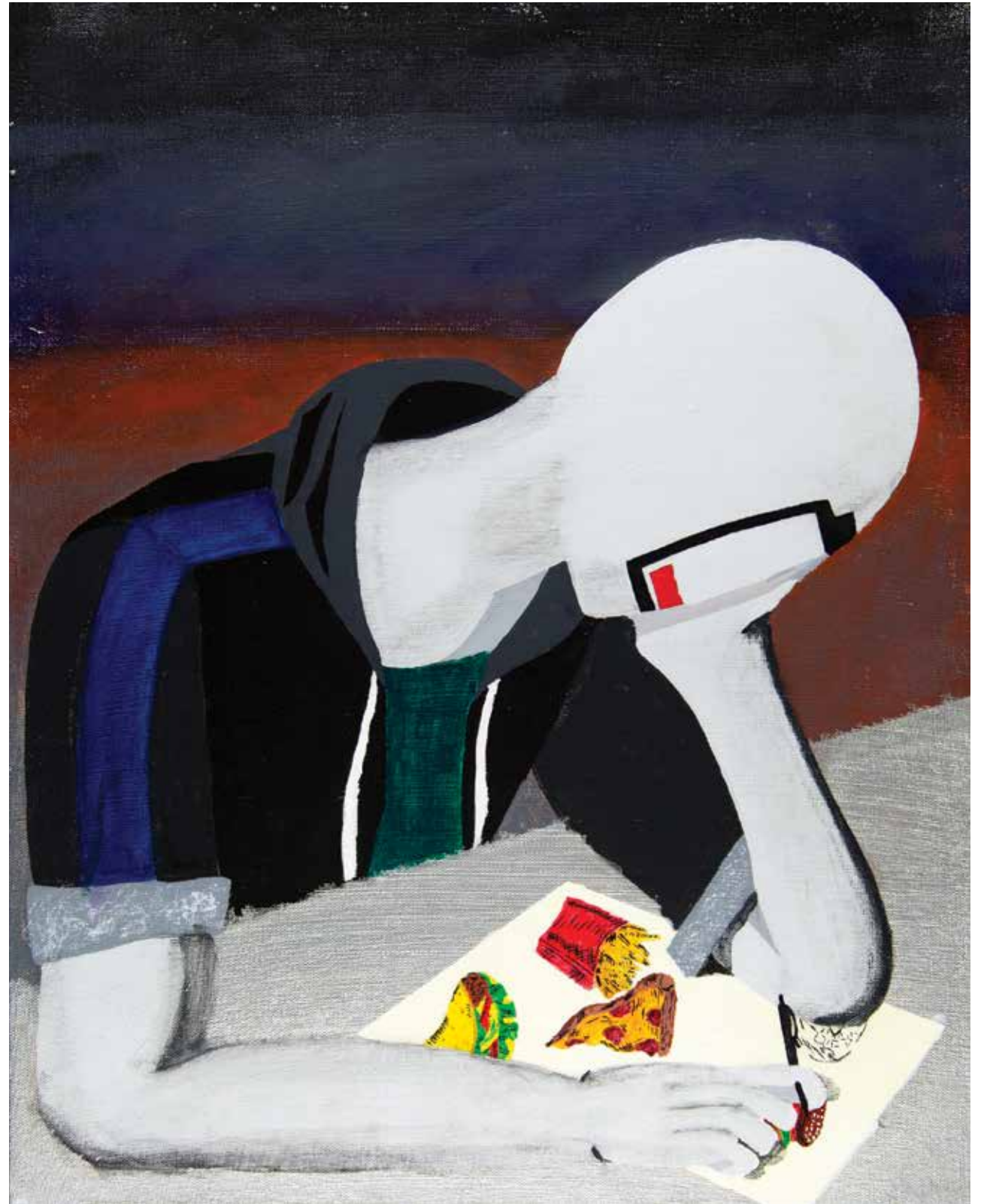


this page: **Untitled**, Gabriel Bauta; opposite: **Untitled**, Afnan Saleh



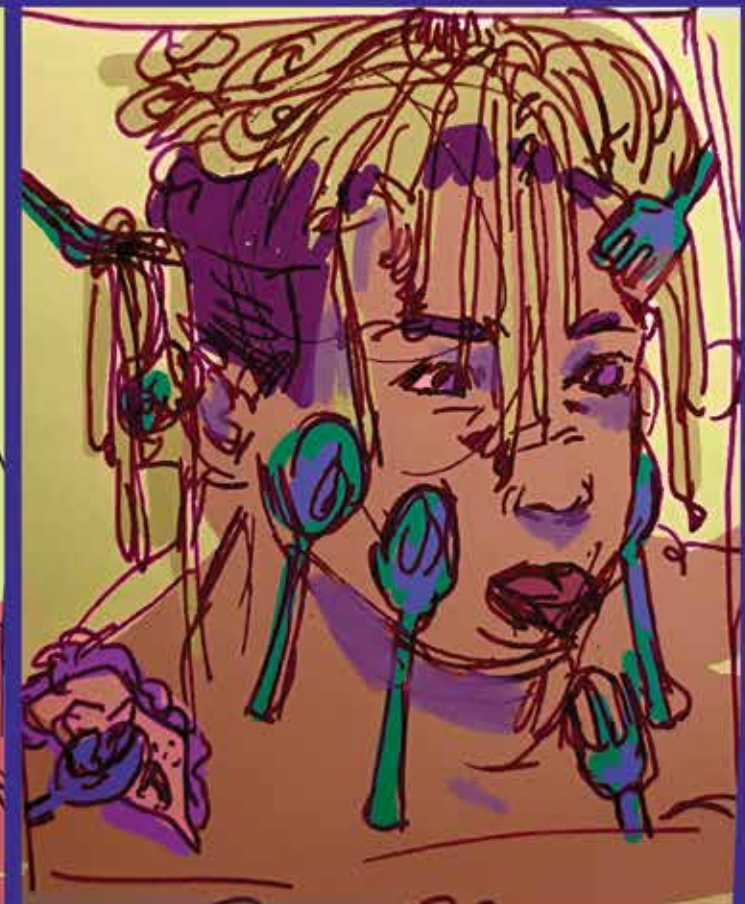
“On the go, I’m having something, but it’s not fulfilling. It feels like I’m missing something, that time to actually say, Ok, I’m enjoying my plate of food, versus, ***I’m just eating because I have to.***”

opposite: typography, Leniel Minalla Rivera; this page: **Bad Habits**, Guillermo Carrion



The application experience was pretty hectic. It's intimidating because you're not sure if they're gonna accept it. It depends on a certain income, on how large the family is, on whether it's a student living with parents or just a single person. It all varies, but I encourage people to apply for SNAP. It took me three months to get it.

It's pretty hard to work around trying to get food. I've really been doing it for my whole life, so it's nothing new. And honestly, even if I apply for SNAP, they're still gonna reject me. So why bother?



Untitled, Aris Schustrin

**Can SNAP
really
provide their
services for
anyone?**

opposite: Leilani Greywolf; this page: Jihad Garvin



If a friend was considering applying for SNAP, I would definitely say go for it if you need it. It's there for a reason.

Don't be ashamed to seek this help. In the long run, it's something that can really benefit you, not only monetarily, but also with the stress of knowing that you have food to eat, knowing that you're able to allocate things differently: your time, your energy, your money into different areas.

It used to be embarrassing to say you had SNAP or WIC but now, I don't think that's the case. I see a lot of people are using food stamps. Now, it's normal.

My advice to other HCCC students who are considering SNAP, first of all, I would motivate them to enroll. The nervousness, it's ok. Everyone's gonna be nervous for something that's really important. If you're nervous, but you feel like it's going to benefit you in the long run, do it. Don't see it as an obstacle. See it as an opportunity.

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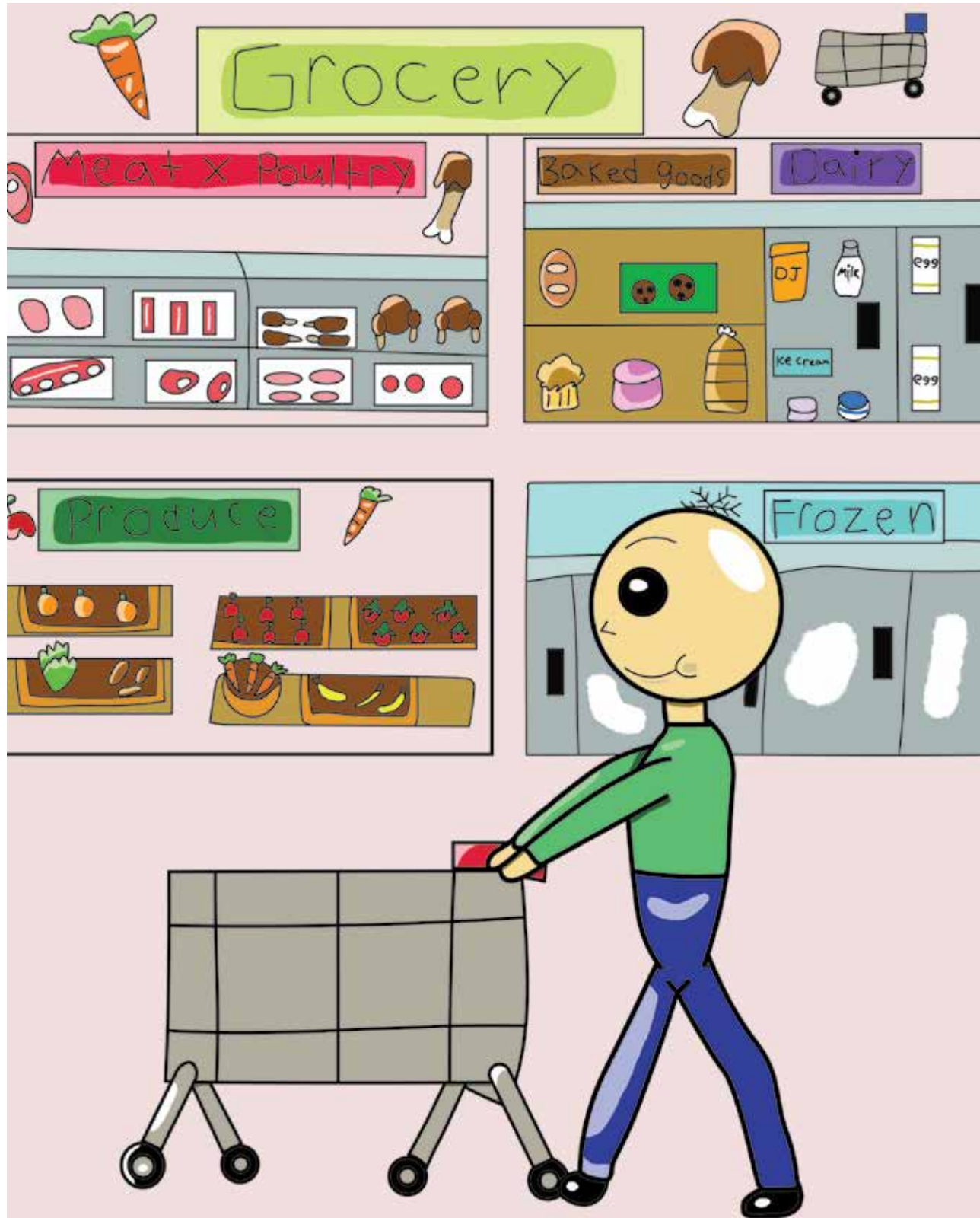
opposite: typography, Halie Cancel; this page: **Intrusive Thoughts**, Gabriel Rodriguez





this page: **Wish Upon Food**, Brian Ixchop; opposite: typography, Maritza Escamilla





Grocery Shopping, Jennifer Hernandez

Clockwise from top left: Rema Damedí, Enrique Bermejo, Michael Herron, Kasey Arriaga

Going off of past experiences working in food service, one of the biggest things that I see is a lot of food waste. So much food is being thrown away, not being utilized. In an ideal world, I would love to see there be no food waste whatsoever. I want to see every single bit of food being utilized.”



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Affordable Affordable

When I think about food, I remember holidays with my family. That's what first comes to mind. Holidays like Christmas or Thanksgiving-I started celebrating once I came to this country at the age of nine.



opposite: **Winter Seasoning**, Lucas Pinheiro; this page: typography, Daniella Franco

Food, this thing that we need to
live, is always, always on your
mind in one way or another. If
you don't know what you're
having for dinner tonight,
how can you
think about
tomorrow?

Student Artists

Kasey Arriaga
Gabriel Bauta
Enrique Bermejo
Halie R. Cancel
Guillermo Carrion
Abner Chavez
Simone Colta
Jaylen Daise
Rema Damedi
Yeferson Duran
Maritza A. Escamilla
Daniella Franco
Jihad Garvin
Leilani Greywolf
Jennifer Hernandez
Michael G. Herron

Kendry Hilario
Covadonga Insuasti
Brian Ixchop
Shishona Long
Cesar G. Mondragon
Nyellie P. Muniz
Travis E. Muniz
Eliza Nunez
Alicia Ovalle
Andre Pacheco
Wilson Parra
Lucas Pinheiro
Linner Rabadad
Roberto Ramirez
Leniel Minalla Rivera
Francois Rivero
Gabriel Rodriguez

Yulemni Rodriguez
Deryk Rosario
Afnan Saleh
Aris Schustrin
Mark Soliven
Alexandra Toczynski
Lesley E. Vazquez

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All artwork and narrative passages are created and contributed by students of Hudson County Community College.

Facilitated by faculty at Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences and Mason Gross School of the Arts, in close collaboration with faculty, students, and administrators at Hudson County Community College.

This project was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

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For their support of the project, we thank Lisa Dougherty, Alison Wakefield, Michelle Vitale, David Clark, John Scanlon, Lisa Pitz, Darice Toon and Advisory Board student members Afnan Saleh, Covadonga Insuasti, Alyssa Carrillo, and Leandra Cancel.

Sincere thanks to all the student artists and art instructors who participated in this project.

We are especially grateful to the HCCC students who shared their experiences of food insecurity.

Printing by CRW Graphics,
Pennsauken NJ

opposite page: typography, Yulemni Rodriguez; back cover: Lesley Vazquez

Food Brings us together

warm feeling of having
everybody around

Trying Something New

That is What I feel that Culture
is being together

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