



## The District Board of Trustees of Valencia College Foundation Report September 14, 2023

### Partnership with Florida Blue Foundation

Last year, Valencia College Foundation received a \$399,745 four-year grant from Florida Blue Foundation to help the college rethink how we support our students who experience food insecurity. Valencia College Foundation was one of 10 organizations in Florida to receive a total of \$3.73 million in grants to expand support for students experiencing food insecurity.

In the past, the college had small food pantry offerings at different scales on our campuses. Thanks to the Florida Blue Foundation, we will celebrate the grand opening of the first of three **VCentials** markets on September 12, 2023, on our West Campus. Pat Geraghty, President and CEO of GuideWell Mutual Holdings Corporation, which comprises Florida Blue and Florida's Blue Cross Blue Shield, Tony Jenkins, Central Florida Region Market President, Florida Blue and Susan Towler, VP, Florida Blue Foundation and Executive Director, Corporate Social Responsibility will be joining college and student leaders and Valencia College Foundation board members for this event.

The name VCentials grew from a desire to find a welcoming approach to service students experiencing food insecurity and their need for essential items, including fresh produce, snacks, meals, toiletries, diapers and formula. The College is partnering with Second Harvest Food Bank to procure food and essential supplies at significantly reduced prices. The long-term goal for VCentials is to be a hub for students to access support for a variety of needs including community and social services, counseling, financial literacy and more. Future locations of VCentials will open on Osceola and East Campuses.