Responding to Disaster: How Santa Rosa Junior College Supported Students After the Severe Wildfires

Strengthening Student Success Conference
October 4, 2018
Garden Grove, California
About SRJC

- 2-year public comprehensive community college located in northern California
- Multi-site, single college district founded in 1918
- Nearly 40,000 students enrolled annually, producing 19,000 FTES
- Approximately 3,000 employees
- On President #5 in 100 years
The Tubbs Fire Alone

Acres Burnt: 36,807
Structures Destroyed: 5,636
Lives Lost: 22

#1 on the Cal Fire List:
*Top 20 Most Destructive California Wildfires*

Map:
SRJC Emergency Response: Quick Facts

Impact

SRJC was closed for two weeks
- All district locations were shut down
- After the fires were no longer an immediate threat, air quality and general disruption of lives and business districtwide prevented an earlier opening
- Many businesses that were not destroyed also were closed

Employees as well as students were severely impacted
- Approximately 100,000 residents in and around Santa Rosa had to evacuate
  - Including 3 of 5 SRJC Vice Presidents
Emergency Surveys: Student, and Employee

Purpose:
• Assess need, and readiness to return
• Provide actionable data

Results:
• 30,000 students surveyed; 54% response rate
  • 23% evacuated their homes; 2%+ reported losing their homes (1 in 40)
• 2,500 employees surveyed; 75% response rate
  • 35% evacuated their homes; 2% reported losing their homes (1 in 45)

Utility:
• Intended purposes, including lists of students needing books, services, etc.
• Documentation for advocacy purposes
• Students felt cared for
Impact

Student mindset after the fires. “I feel... “

Heartbroken

Guilt... in limbo me too

Sad...

Nothing

Sorrow

Confused

I can't concentrate on this stupid paper

Lost

Disorganized

Unmotivated

Confused
Administration

- Emergency Response Center
- Communication
- Staffing
Academic Affairs

• Course Disruption
• Communication with Students
• Returning to the Classroom
Student Services

- Mobilize
- Stabilize
- Strategize
- Energize
Thank you for your support. I lost everything in the fire and I still feel like I have something to hold on to and look forward to (school).

Thank you for asking. It makes me feel more secure.

Still really impressed and thankful that there was actually someone there answering phones.

Thank you for understanding what a lot of us are going through.

I really appreciate the communication from SRJC when we were evacuated and going through a tough time.

Thanks for communicating with us through text, email with up to date info in regards to our classes.

I have really appreciated all the outreach and have felt the love from SRJC.

Muchas gracias por preocuparte por nuestra educación.

Gracias por su apoyo.

Gracias por mantenernos informados.

SRJC Strong. Thank you for all the offerings of support. Makes me proud to be a part of this community.