



Student Government Association

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **DENVER**

Menstrual Products in CU Denver Restrooms Proposal

Esther Bellinsky and Frida Silva

Background

In light of recent initiatives of the CU Denver administration to create a ten year plan for student health and wellness, as well as the university's staunch commitment to diversity and equality on campus it is essential that female, and transgender health and wellness receive significant consideration when determining the budget for such an important initiative.

Additionally, recognizing the 2008-2020 CU Denver Strategic Plan, and in particular, taking into account Objective 5.3.3 and Objective 5.3.4 which focus on facilitating effective interactions among units focused on health and educational disparities as well as, pioneering strategies to eliminate geographic and ethnic health care disparities; improve the prevention, cure, and the amelioration of disease; and develop systems to enhance health and wellness.

Proposal

We call on the administration to create a recurring line item per fiscal year in the university's budget to provide free menstrual products to CU Denver students, staff and faculty. Thereby eliminating a portion of the financial burden our students face and ensure the health, wellness and essential needs of our CU Denver students, staff and faculty are met.

Objectives

The objective of this proposal is to reach 100% availability of free period products in all CU Denver student buildings and bathrooms. Through this proposal we aim to increase the availability of menstrual hygiene products to menstruating female and transgender students on our campus. Thereby increasing overall student wellness and health, as well decreasing the amount of time students are forced to miss from class as a result of their menstrual cycle.

Program Structure

Menstrual product dispensers will be placed in the women's, all-gender, and family restrooms at all the CU Denver buildings: Student Commons, North Classroom, Lola and Rob Salazar Wellness Center, Lawrence St, CU Building, and the Business. The dispensers will be restructured to dispense menstrual products for free.

Calculations and Funding Request

The calculated annual cost to provide menstrual products in CU Denver bathrooms is approximately \$12,158 a year.

This number was calculated using the equation provided below.

- Taking the approximate estimates of how many people utilize the CU Denver buildings (not including the North Classroom-for which we currently do not have estimates) on any given day according to estimated foot traffic and building occupancy numbers. (4,080 people a day)
- Assumed 55% of those people have uteri according to CU Denver student demographics. (2,244 people)
- Found that approximately 20% of the 2,244 people are not menstruating because they're post-menopausal, pregnant, on certain forms of birth control, etc. (bringing the number of people accessing the CU Denver buildings who could be menstruating on a given day in the school year to 1,795.
- Average menstrual cycle is 5 days (5/30 days in a month = 16.6% of people with uteri menstruating on any given day)
- $1,795 \times .166 =$ approximately 298 individuals menstruating in the CU Denver buildings on any given day during school year.
- While tampons prices vary, basic paper applicator tampons can generally be bought for \$0.12 each. I assumed each person would take 2 tampons (given that some may take more, some may take none, and some people may just take them to have as needed) so we multiplied $298 \times .24$ which equals \$71.52
- Assumed ~85 days in each semester (after subtracting weekends and breaks) so 170 days in the academic year total.
- I multiplied $170 \times$ price per day in the school year ($\$71.52$) = \$12,158
- The cost of providing free menstrual products in CU Denver building bathrooms would equal about \$12,158 a year.

Outcome

We foresee that the success of this initiative will create tri-institutional change on the Auraria campus that will encourage the installment of similar programs to ensure readily accessible menstrual products in campus restrooms. Together with this initiative, we require that an educational campaign be conducted to better educate and inform the Auraria campus about those who menstruate, the necessities that arises from menstruating, the financial burdens menstruating low-income individuals face, the impacts on wellbeing, and the stigmas around menstruating and menstrual products. The overarching objective of this project is to meet a need by providing a necessity to students, faculty, staff, and community members who use CU Denver facilities.