

Students Have App-ete for Change

GrubHub is helping to simplify the dining experience at Florida International University

Universities Score Big on Office Supplies

Contract supports a minority-owned business and sustainable products

SPRING 2025

college services



FROM CLASSROOM TO TAPROOM: BREWPUBS POP UP ON CAMPUSES

college services



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BY CHRIS CORUM

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COLLEGE SERVICES

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Presidential Perspective



LANIECE TYREE, MPA, CASP
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NACAS Is Your Gateway to Higher Ed Leadership

As I reflect on the past year for NACAS, I am filled with admiration for the extraordinary people who make this organization a true cornerstone of higher education. NACAS continues to embody a vibrant community of professionals who work tirelessly to support campuses across North America and beyond. Whether ensuring students have access to quality dining options, facilitating efficient transportation, or providing critical resources like textbooks, NACAS members and Business Partners drive student success beyond the classroom. This shared mission makes NACAS a remarkable organization.

Recently, I had the privilege of hearing a heartfelt story from one of our colleagues, Dr. LeVita Y. Bassett, CASP, senior director of auxiliary operations at Howard University in Washington, DC.

"Attending NACAS events, participating in the inaugural cohort of the DIAL (Diversity in Auxiliary Leadership) program, volunteering on the East Board, and earning my CASP certification have been transformative for my career," she says. "These opportunities provided invaluable professional development, expanded my network with industry leaders, and equipped me with the tools to innovate within auxiliary services. Each experience has enhanced my ability to make impactful contributions to my institution and beyond."

Stories like LeVita's remind us of this community's profound impact on its members and their institutions. NACAS is more than an organization; it's a lifeline for auxiliary service professionals striving to create enriching campus experiences.

As we embrace 2025, let us consider how we can deepen our involvement with NACAS through the following opportunities to engage, learn, and grow:

KEY EVENTS IN 2025

- **Senior Executive Summit:** Litchfield, AZ, April 27–30
- **Regional CX Conferences:**
 - NACAS South: Pigeon Forge, TN, March 30–April 2

- NACAS Central: Oakland, MI, June 1–4
- NACAS West: Golden, CO, June 8–10
- NACAS East: Boston, MA, June 22–25
- **Women in Higher Ed Leadership:** Paso Robles, CA, September 14–17
- **C3X Annual Conference & Expo:** Las Vegas, November 16–19

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORKING

- **Webinars and online education:** Access timely topics and expert-led sessions at your convenience.
- **Volunteer opportunities:** Contribute to the NACAS community while building your leadership skills.
- **College Services magazine:** Stay informed with member-driven articles that inspire and educate.
- **NACAS Marketplace:** Explore solutions that enrich campus life.
- **NACAS Lounge:** Join dynamic conversations and exchange ideas with peers in the field.
- **NACAS Career Center:** Connect online with job seekers and employers.
- **CASP:** Congratulate the newest certified professionals.
- **DIAL:** Welcome the second cohort, beginning their transformative journey this year.

Beyond events and certifications, NACAS thrives because of its people. Whether through mentorship, collaboration, or simply sharing insights, each member plays a role in advancing our collective mission. By actively engaging with NACAS, we not only grow individually but also strengthen the entire auxiliary services profession.

The future of NACAS shines because of you. By sharing knowledge, supporting one another, and embracing new opportunities, we will continue shaping the future of auxiliary services. Let's make 2025 a year of growth, leadership, and lasting impact. Thank you for your dedication to NACAS and for helping us create extraordinary campus experiences. ■

CAMPUS LIFE PLUS: Innovation Brew Works

CAL POLY POMONA IS
THE FIRST UNIVERSITY TO HAVE
A BREWERY-RESTAURANT ON CAMPUS

BY JEFF DOVER

COLLEGES AND universities in the United States and Canada are increasingly going beyond traditional academic offerings to introduce unique and unconventional campus services. These range from the practical such as on-campus doggie day cares catering to students with furry companions to the unconventional, including breweries and pubs run by students and supported by academic programs.

These unusual campus services have seen a significant rise in the past 25 years as higher education institutions have become more competitive. Colleges and universities are recognizing that a holistic and enriching campus experience is crucial for attracting and retaining students as well as top talent among the faculty and administration. The rise of experiential learning and the desire to foster a vibrant campus culture have also contributed to this trend.

While the primary motivation behind these services may vary, many higher education institutions are finding they can



A photograph of a modern building at night. The building has a large, illuminated sign on the left side that reads "INNOVATION BREW WORKS" in white capital letters on a yellow background. Below the sign, a small glowing "OPEN" sign is visible. The building's facade is made of dark-colored panels. A golden statue of a person is visible inside the building's glass windows. The sky is dark, and there are some lights on the building's exterior.

*Innovation Brew Works is located
at the Center for Training,
Technology & Incubation in
Innovation Village in Pomona, CA.*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

cover feature



Innovation Brew Works serves as a learn-by-doing brewery laboratory at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.



Innovation Brew Works helps other programs at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. The grist, or spent grain, which is the leftover malt and adjuncts from the brewery process, is fed to the cattle managed by the College of Agriculture.



Established in 2014, Innovation Brew Works in Pomona, CA, is open to members of the public of all ages and is the first brewery in the United States to brew and serve beer on a college campus. The brewpub has inside and outside seating and is dog friendly on the patio.

generate revenue streams. Businesses such as breweries and cafes can contribute to campus finances while affording students entrepreneurial and management experiences. Moreover, these services can enhance the overall campus experience, attracting visitors and supporting the local economy.

As the higher education landscape continues to evolve, more innovative and unexpected services are expected to surface on campuses in the US and Canada. *College Services* is featuring some of these unconventional programs in an occasional series titled "Campus Life Plus."

The inaugural article is a profile of Innovation Brew Works (IBW), a learn-by-doing educational laboratory, microbrewery, and cafe at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly Pomona).

BACKGROUND

The Cal Poly Pomona Foundation, a nonprofit organization that supports programs at the university, included in its portfolio a graduate bookstore with a small cafe on the periphery of the Cal Poly Pomona campus in a 65-acre premier corporate technology park called Innovation Village.

In 2013, Paul Storey, the foundation's director, decided to try a happy hour at the cafe, which was operating at a loss, in an effort to attract tenants to utilize the space at the Center for Training, Technology, & Incubation in the park. The center was built to enable public-private partnerships and germinate entrepreneurial opportunities that have expanded the educational and career opportunities for Cal Poly Pomona's faculty and students.

The City of Pomona, however, denied a beer and wine license for the cafe because it was not consistent with the educational position of the university.

Undaunted, and with a vision of providing educational opportunities to students in the burgeoning brewing industry, Storey and Aaron Patrick Neilson, director of dining services at the foundation (which was renamed Cal Poly Pomona Enterprises in 2024), decided to build an educational brewery.

California is the birthplace of the US craft brewing movement and has been at the forefront of the industry's growth with more than 1,100 craft breweries, according to the California Craft Brewers Association (CCBA), the nonprofit trade association for the industry.

INNOVATION BREW WORKS

The idea of a brewing laboratory and brewpub was developed; however, building them was a challenge. The dean at Collins College of Hospitality Management at Cal Poly Pomona was a friend of Owen Williams, the original brewer for BJ's Restaurants and Brewhouse in Brea, CA, one of the first brewpubs in the United States. Williams, who is also a member of CCBA, later cofounded another brewery, Ritual Brewing Co. in Redlands, CA.

The foundation suggested an educational program to Collins College and then to Cal Poly Pomona's College of the Extended University. As a result, the Assistant Brewer Training Program was launched, with courses that included Beer Appreciation and the Science of Beer. Through this seven-week vocational certificate program, individuals would be trained to become assistant brewers,



Innovation Brew Works (IBW) offers made-to-order pizzas, sandwiches, and salads. People can reserve space at IBW for holiday or work parties.

who are considered apprentices to the head brewer and help with a large part of a brewery's production operations.

The Cal Poly Pomona Foundation cooperated with the campuses to create a place where the students could have a learn-by-doing experience in producing the beer. As luck would have it, they were able to use a project manager who could handle small projects with limited budgets.

Because of these efforts, Innovation Brew Works, located within the cafe, opened in 2014. The venue is a hands-on brewery laboratory for Cal Poly Pomona students, alumni, and the public as well as a popular brewpub that serves food. Williams was instrumental in the development of the brewery. The facility is a 3.5-beer barrel brewhouse with a capacity of 700 to 800 barrels per year. (One barrel equals 31 US gallons.)

CHALLENGES

The challenges weren't over when the facility was constructed. Navigating laws and regulations with respect to a brewery took some time, and there were some setbacks, including obtaining an occupancy permit from the local fire department.

Another challenge was recruiting and retaining a brewer. IBW went through three brewers in three years. Eventually, it landed on Eric Bassett, a graduate of Collins College, who has proved to be a creative and innovative brewmaster and brewery operations manager. He also serves as instructor for the Assistant Brewer Training Program.

A third obstacle was the realization that the brewpub did not have a sufficient food program. So, IBW created a made-to-order pizza concept using a ventless impinger oven, which does not require a hood, and later added sandwiches, salads, and desserts.

SUCCESS

To date, the Assistant Brewer Training Program has more than 18 graduates, all of whom have successfully found employment in various breweries and brewpubs. Some have even opened their own breweries and continue to collaborate with Bassett.

Unlike the previous cafe, IBW is profitable, generating about \$1 million in revenue annually. The cost of goods sold is 20% of the revenue, driven by beer sales accounting for 30% of the menu mix.

Beers offered at IBW are based on the heritage and history of Pomona and the surrounding area. For example, beers are named after local heroes such as Storey, who has since retired from the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation. His beer, Storey's Stout, is an American stout. Named for J. Michael Ortiz, the fifth president of Cal Poly Pomona, the Dr. Ortiz Orange is a Belgian-style witbier with Cal Poly orange zest.

PUB SCENE AT CAL POLY POMONA

- **Innovation Brew Works (IBW)**
 - ibrewworks.com
- **IBW's YouTube channel**
 - youtube.com/@InnovationBrewWorks
- **Overview of IBW's beers, its brewing process, and the Assistant Brewer Training Program at Cal Poly Pomona**
 - bit.ly/3Cvcegw
- **KNX 1070 AM interview with IBW brewmaster Eric Bassett**
 - bit.ly/4ghWN9c
- **The Beer Brewing Process with Bassett**
 - **Part 1:** bit.ly/3EFZNWd
 - **Part 2:** bit.ly/42vRgZh
 - **Part 3:** bit.ly/3Ec2lou
- **The Brew Crew on IBW**
 - bit.ly/4hl54KP
- **The Poly Post on IBW**
 - bit.ly/4aFoB61
- **Cal Poly Pomona's Assistant Brewer Training Program**
 - bit.ly/40ArVLe



Innovation Brew Works (IBW) develops customized beers for graduating classes as well as the history of Pomona, CA, and the surrounding area. Brewmaster Eric Bassett has given many beers unusual and comical names. IBW's beers are distributed and served at restaurants on and off campus in the Pomona area.

Customized beers are developed for various college initiatives and events. Bassett has taken a unique spin with beer names such as Class Clown, a glitter hibiscus orange wit, and Pop Quiz, a West Coast IPA. He also creates a barrel-aged beer for each graduating class and releases it just in time for graduation.

A testament to its success, IBW has won several awards, including:

- Grand Prize in Retail Sales-Single Concept by the National Association of College & University Food Services (NACUFS)
- Best New Facility Award by Food Management
- Innovation and Achievement in Auxiliary Services Award and Loyal E. Horton Award, both from NACUFS
- Best Gastro Pub and Favorite Craft/Microbrewery, Happy Hour, and Pizza by San Gabriel Valley's Best Readers' Choice Awards

Several of IBW's beers and ales have won medals in brewing competitions, as well.

IBW is a great example of creative thinking by auxiliary service professionals and demonstrates how the modern college campus is evolving beyond the traditional classroom to become a multifaceted hub of activity and innovation.

As colleges and universities compete for top talent and strive to create a vibrant campus culture, more creative and unexpected offerings are likely to emerge, solidifying the role of higher education institutions as dynamic centers of learning and engagement. ■



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THERESE UMERLIK, senior editor of *College Services*, contributed to this article.





Three Universities Band Together to Secure Supply Deal

FIRST-EVER JOINT CONTRACT RESULTED IN SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS FOR THE PENNSYLVANIA INSTITUTIONS

**BY FARRAH AL-MANSOOR, MEGAN BERRY,
CAITLIN MUTKUS, STEPHEN ORBANEK,
DONNA SCHWEIBENZ, AND JENNIFER MCGEE THELEEN**

IN RECENT years, three of Pennsylvania's state universities—Pennsylvania State University, Temple University, and University of Pittsburgh—have received flat state funding as operating costs have skyrocketed and inflation has increased.

In an effort to keep tuition and costs as low as possible, the procurement departments at the three largest higher education institutions in Pennsylvania, collectively serving nearly 150,000 students, worked together to submit a joint request for proposal (RFP) for office supplies. This is the first time all three universities, which are based in locations across the state, filed an RFP together.

The winning submission came from a partnership between Supra Office Solutions, a more than 10-year-old small business based in Philadelphia, and ODP Business Solutions, a nearly 30-year-old company based in Florida that delivers a comprehensive range of eco-friendly products.

The joint RFP of more than \$5.3 million in annual estimated spending for office supplies has generated significant savings among the three schools.

The contract has been with ODP Business Solutions, previously Office Depot Business Solutions, and Supra Office Solutions, a tier one supplier. Supra, which is a direct supplier for ODP, worked with University of Pittsburgh for its previous contract.

By combining forces, the universities are expected to save up to an additional 7%, which equates to more than \$400,000 annually, in addition to school-specific savings and other contract-related benefits, showcasing how a successful collaboration can have a powerful impact on cost-savings initiatives.

"One thing that all of Pennsylvania's state-related universities have in common is a commitment to working to keep tuition costs as low as possible. We owe that to our students, and we owe that to our legislators who support us each year through

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK/WILLIAM POTTER

feature



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK/JASMIN KAM

the state appropriation,” says Ken Kaiser, senior vice president and chief operating officer at Temple University.

“What we have seen in recent years is near unprecedented levels of inflation, so we must be creative and proactive when it comes to identifying any opportunity that might help us cut costs and better support our students. That was part of the impetus behind this collaboration.”

The initiative began after the universities’ three contracts expired, which occurred around the same time. Temple’s Purchasing Department, at that time, reached out to the two other universities. A series of meetings among officials at the universities helped to establish unified requirements for customer service, deliveries, products, sustainability, and catalog compatibility for online ordering. After months of planning and creating a core list of hundreds

of products, the RFP was published, attracting attention from suppliers nationwide.

Penn State Chief Procurement Officer Duane Elmore highlights the benefits of the collaboration.

“Temple, Pitt, and Penn State demonstrate how innovative partnerships can effectively address rising costs while contributing to local economic growth,” Elmore says. “The joint RFP sets a new model for our three universities to work together toward common goals.”

To help identify the best supplier, a joint committee of representatives from each university created a detailed scoring matrix. Following a series of presentations and negotiations, the committee was impressed by ODP and Supra’s commitment to meeting each university’s specific needs.



"TEMPLE, PITT, AND PENN STATE DEMONSTRATE HOW INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS CAN EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS RISING COSTS WHILE CONTRIBUTING TO LOCAL ECONOMIC GROWTH. THE JOINT RFP SETS A NEW MODEL FOR OUR THREE UNIVERSITIES TO WORK TOGETHER TOWARD COMMON GOALS."

— PENN STATE CHIEF PROCUREMENT OFFICER DUANE ELMORE

University of Pittsburgh, in particular, welcomed the selection of ODP and Supra because it has contracted with the two companies for more than 10 years.

"The partnership between ODP and Supra has a proven track record in meeting the specific office supply needs of institutions in higher education at very competitive pricing, including a number of sustainability programs that support university-specific goals," says Maureen Beal, associate vice chancellor for financial operations at Pitt.

"University of Pittsburgh first contracted with ODP and Supra for office supplies in 2013. We have been fortunate to see their capabilities grow since such as implementation of state-of-the-art technologies to address the unique needs of urban or large campuses."

Derrick Suswell, president and chief operating officer of Supra, adds, "Since 2013, with Pitt as our anchor account, we were able to hire locally within the Pittsburgh market, acquire another business in the life sciences industry, survive COVID-19, and build a brand-new 70,000-square-foot warehouse and office tower, to mention a few milestones."

ODP and Supra scored high after a thorough evaluation. Their proposal also included a tailored approach for each university. Some highlights included dedicated account managers for each school; a focus on sustainability, with catalogs that provide sustainable products and programs such as one that reduces the number of cardboard boxes delivered to campus; and benefits for students, including internships and support for student-led initiatives.

Bryan Wight, senior vice president of sales at ODP Business Solutions, offers his insight into ODP and Supra's partnership.

"Through our program, now in its 25th year, we are able to service educational institutions like Penn State, University of Pittsburgh, and Temple by partnering with suppliers such as Supra Office Solutions," Wight says.

Suswell adds, "ODP has been a rock-solid partner, and when ODP informed us about the new bid, which would now include Temple University, local to our headquarters in Philadelphia, and Penn State, we were very excited to win this award. The chance to expand our relationship with two more Pennsylvania universities means the world to us here at Supra."

The joint contract award illustrates the commitment these universities have to spending with small and local businesses such as Supra. The five-year contract went into effect July 1, 2024.

"We believe University of Pittsburgh, Penn State, and Temple University are being intentional about supporting small businesses that are local within the state of Pennsylvania, and we are extremely grateful for that," Suswell adds.

"We will never cease in striving to provide our customers with service excellence, and we look forward to our continued, mutually beneficial relationship." ■



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Tech Revolutionizes Dining at **FLORIDA UNIVERSITY**

MOBILE ORDERING OPENS DOORS FOR CHECK-IN, ON-CAMPUS DELIVERY, ROBOTIC KITCHENS, AND MORE

BY CHRIS CORUM

WHEN FLORIDA International University (FIU) brought Grubhub mobile ordering to campus, it enhanced the user experience, increased program participation, and delivered efficiencies for campus dining. The rapid adoption of app-based ordering led to a complete rethinking of how to serve the institution's 56,000 students.

Chris Valdes, resident district manager for Chartwells Higher Ed Dining Services, oversees dining operations at FIU. He emphasizes the importance of having a single point of access—a one-stop shop—where students can interact with all things food at the institution.

For FIU, that is the Grubhub app, specifically the app's dedicated FIU-branded page. From their phones, students can place orders from on-campus dining locations for pickup or delivery, check in at residential dining halls, and access a host of other services.

"Single point of access" has become a mantra for the dining services team. "We will not bring on services if they require their own dedicated app," Valdes says. "Technology should be about simplifying life, not over-complicating it."

MOBILE ORDERING AND MOBILE CHECK-IN

FIU brought Grubhub and mobile ordering to campus in 2018. It quickly went all in, launching the Grubhub Ultimate platform across three campuses and 37 residential dining locations.

Grubhub Ultimate blends consumer-facing technology with back-of-house systems. Features such as self-service kiosks, in-location status



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GRUBHUB



In 2018, students at Florida International University were introduced to the Grubhub Ultimate platform on three campuses and 37 residential dining locations.



The Grubhub Ultimate platform blends consumer-facing technology with back-of-house systems. Features such as in-location status screens expedite the dining process from start to finish.

screens, and an advanced kitchen display system expedite the dining process from start to finish.

Mobile ordering has streamlined processes for the customer and the staff member. Not only does it decrease the time it takes for students to receive their food, but it also reduces lines and allows staff to deliver fresher, faster product.

When students arrive at the pickup location, they use mobile check-in through the app to let the dining staff know they are ready for pickup.

Grubhub's platform lets the students know how long it will be until their orders are complete and sends a text from the back-of-house system when the food is ready.

"Mobile check-in lets students skip the lines, and the Grubhub technology lets them better manage their time," Valdes says. "It has been a huge upgrade to our residential dining program."

In addition to ordering and pickup, the platform enables digital queuing or check-in. From the app, diners can reserve a place or specify an arrival time.

"Students appreciate features like this because it allows them to head to the dining location when their order is ready for pickup or

when they are ready to eat," he says. "They avoid waiting around for their name to be called."

MERCHANT-RUN DELIVERY

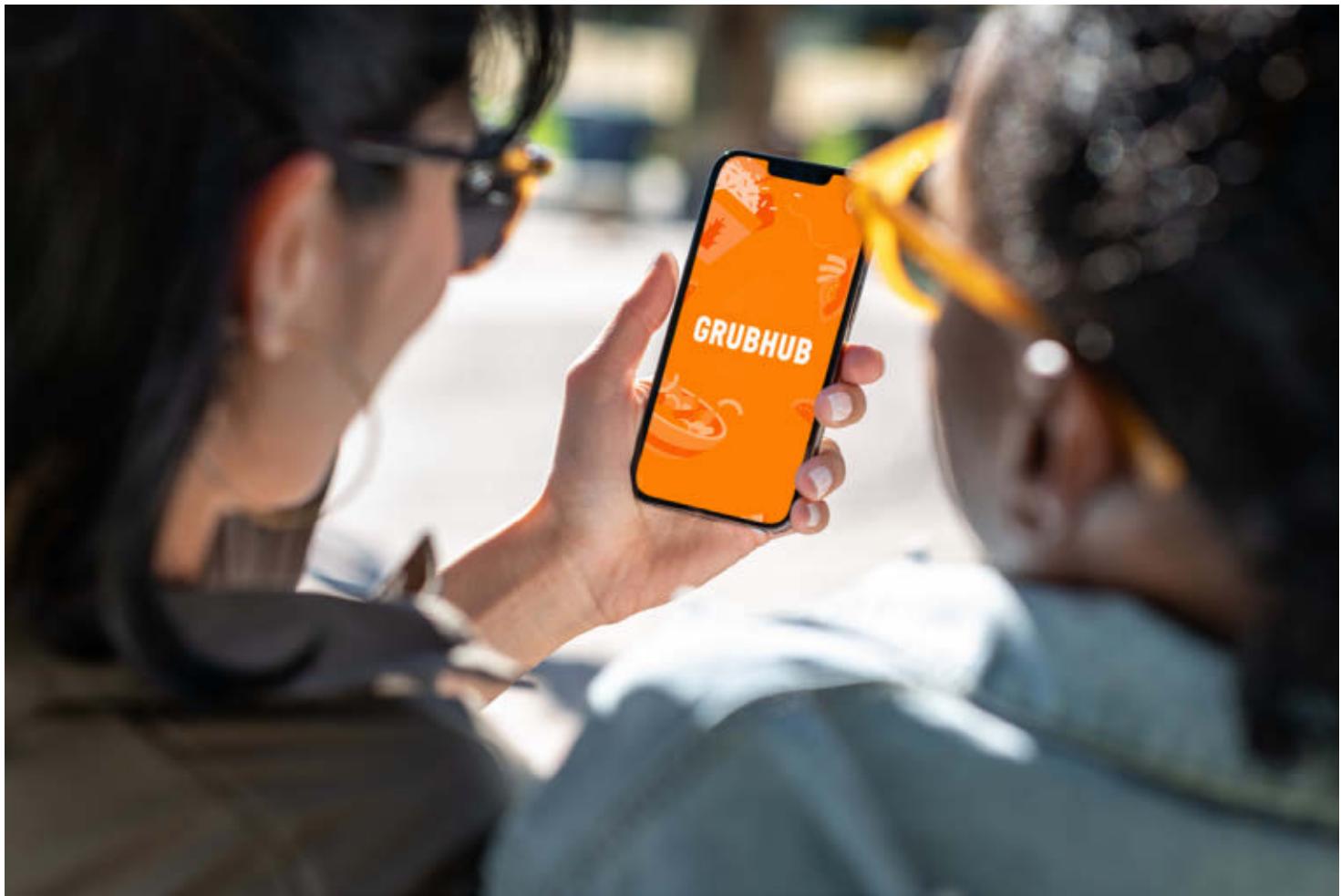
Ordering and pickup are not the only options impacted by technology. In 2024, FIU launched on-campus food delivery using the Grubhub merchant-run delivery program.

Sticking with its mantra of the single point of access, Grubhub integrated delivery in the app. Students can order from any FIU dining location and have the food delivered anywhere on campus for a small fee.

The technology is provided by Grubhub, but FIU employs the two delivery drivers, who use electric bikes.

"We use our own drivers because outside drivers struggled due to a lack of parking, difficulty finding buildings, and an inability to drop orders off inside the dorms," Valdes says. "It has already been a great success, averaging between 70 and 100 on-campus deliveries every day."

Even with the bike deliveries, peak hours and the complex nature of campus buildings can still cause delays. To address this, dining



Mobile ordering through the Grubhub Ultimate platform decreases the time it takes for students to receive their food and allows staff at Florida International University to deliver fresher, faster product.

services is working with the university to put storage lockers in residential buildings so drivers have a hub to drop orders.

ROBOTIC KITCHENS, GHOSTS, AND REUSABLES

The success of mobile ordering led FIU to embrace technology in other areas of dining services, as well.

It opened the first collegiate kitchen in the United States to use the robotic food preparation system from Kitchen Robotics. The artificial intelligence-powered robotic kitchen prepares and cooks made-to-order dishes without human involvement.

At an on-campus Subway location, a ghost kitchen is used to fulfill mobile orders after Subway closes. The ghost kitchen concept maximizes the utilization of existing physical space by preparing food for delivery only, reducing expenses, and increasing off-hours delivery and pickup.

To increase sustainability, FIU partnered with Topanga.io and its ReusePass program to allow students to request reusable containers for takeout orders. Diners select the option within the Grubhub app when placing their order. The option is currently available at five locations and will expand to two more this spring. More than 5,000 uses were logged in the first three months.

MEAL PLAN AND LOYALTY APP

To streamline the sale of meal plans, dining dollars, and faculty/staff tender dollars, FIU also opened a “meal plan shop” on the Grubhub app. It is set up just like a normal dining location, but instead of selling food, it sells meal plans and upgrades. The interface is familiar to students and staff, so the process is simple.

“We used to use the traditional method, where students would head to the campus card or meal plan office and wait in a line to make their purchase,” Valdes explains. “The integration within the app has been a huge upgrade for students, faculty, and staff.”

Today, 30% of meal plans are purchased through the Grubhub app.

A new in-app loyalty program allows students to collect, track, and redeem points. In the past, FIU used a manual punch card system, but it was cumbersome for students and staff and usage was low. The app reduces friction and resulted in more than 1,000 redemptions in the fall.

IMPACT ON FIU DINING

The integration of technology has had a major impact on dining efficiency and student participation. It has enabled dining services to reallocate staff from mundane cashiering functions to higher-purpose roles.



Improved food quality and service speed because of the Grubhub app has led to an increase in student participation in residential dining at Florida International University by as much as 5%.

"We did lose some face-to-face interaction with students, but we've addressed this with brand ambassadors who help guide them through the new processes," says Valdes. "Our surveys show that the reduction in interaction is outweighed by increases in food quality and speed of service."

At the same time, participation in residential dining has increased as much as 5%, and the number of retail orders in some locations has increased almost 9%. FIU also saw a reduction in prep time by an average of 24 seconds, getting food into the students' hands faster.

"This is all largely due to the convenience of being able to check wait times, order status, and card balances all from the Grubhub app," he says.

DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM

Ensuring both front-end and back-of-house systems work smoothly requires upkeep and consumes time, but staff at FIU have embraced the technology.

"When people realized how painless it was to mark an item as out of stock or how to make a price change from the back end of the system, they jumped on board," Valdes explains. "Seeing that they have that level of control from their cellphone and that they can reach out to Grubhub customer service 24/7 has changed the game for us."

WHAT'S IN STORE

Looking ahead, Valdes plans to continue expanding mobile ordering to maximize efficiency, food quality, and revenue. He believes delivery is the future of dining in all sectors and is exploring creative ways to grow the program at FIU. He also wants FIU to become a model for sustainability in the dining industry.

The integration of Grubhub's mobile ordering platform into FIU's dining services demonstrates a commitment to student satisfaction and technological innovation.

By centralizing food-related services within a user-friendly app, FIU has created a more efficient and convenient dining experience for its large student population. This approach not only enhances student life but also sets a positive example for other institutions looking to leverage technology to improve their campus dining programs. ■



CHRIS CORUM is founder and editor of *CampusDNews*. He has more than 25 years of experience in the higher education technology and auxiliary services spaces, working with hundreds of institutions and many of the leading vendors in the market.



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volunteer spotlight: Ella Carrol



Ella Carrol, Auxiliary/Contract Services Manager,
Metropolitan Community College

N ACAS volunteers are truly the lifeblood of the organization, from holding leadership positions on boards and committees, to organizing educational webinars and writing for *College Services*, to helping out at regional events. For this issue, *College Services* interviews volunteer Ella Carrol, auxiliary/contract services manager at Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City, MO.

College Services: Please introduce yourself and tell us about your role in auxiliary services.

Ella Carrol: Born and raised in Kansas City, MO, I am a resolute single mother to two daughters. I have over 15 years of professional experience. I completed a customer service internship with Disney World. I lend my marketing expertise to the entrepreneur community and support divorced women.

As an auxiliary/contract services manager, I have managed the vendor relationships for the book-store and food services and overseen facility use agreements at Metropolitan Community College since December 2023. My educational achievements include a master's in public administration, human resources management, and business administration, and a Bachelor of Science in marketing/advertising and promotions and a minor in quantitative business analysis.

CS: What do you get out of being a NACAS member?

EC: I enjoy serving and connecting with others in the industry as well as gaining insight about what others

are doing on their campuses. I jumped in headfirst. I am the membership coordinator for the Central Region and love being a resource for the Central Region. Although I am new to the role, I know how to reach out to my resources to get the answers for the people served in this region.

CS: What NACAS member did you meet that made an impact on your role and/or your department?

EC: I met NACAS President LaNiece Tyree, MPA, CASP, assistant vice president of auxiliary enterprises at Howard University, when she was one of the speakers on a NACAS virtual session titled "Leveraging Your Leadership Voice," on Feb. 29, 2024. I took another leap and asked her to be a mentor, and she was willing to serve in that capacity for me. I am very appreciative.

CS: What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

EC: My greatest professional accomplishment was becoming a published author.

CS: What show have you recently binged that you would recommend?

EC: *The Diplomat.* ■

If you would like to contact Carrol, she can be reached at ella.carrol@mcckc.edu.

member spotlight: Rick Moreci



Rick Moreci, Associate Vice President of Campus Life and Auxiliary Services, DePaul University

NACAS members are leaders who help create hospitable, well-rounded campus communities worldwide through the various campus services they ensure are provided. In this issue, *College Services* interviews member Rick Moreci, associate vice president of campus life and auxiliary services at DePaul University in Chicago.

College Services: Please introduce yourself and tell us about your role in auxiliary services.

Rick Moreci: I have worked at DePaul University for almost 25 years in various roles. My portfolio has changed to include more auxiliary operations, which has meant oversight of housing and residence life, conference and event services, student centers, and dining, to name a few. I was recently moved back to the division of student affairs from business and facility operations. The transition has been interesting given my connection to the auxiliaries, specifically auxiliary revenue. That said, we have made it work well, and the emphasis on auxiliaries remains strong.

CS: What do you get out of being a NACAS member?

RM: I have been involved in a number of professional higher ed organizations throughout my career. I have enjoyed all of those experiences at different times, for different reasons. I joined NACAS about three years ago and immediately knew I had found my new professional home. This organization is more inclusive of the multiple auxiliary areas I work with on a daily basis.

NACAS is filled with “my people” in terms of peers and colleagues who do similar work and manage similar challenges. The learning and networking I have done through NACAS has really been extremely beneficial for my work.

CS: What NACAS member did you meet that made an impact on your role and/or your department?

RM: The members who have had the biggest impact on me, my work, and my involvement in

this organization have been the members of the Central Regional Board. When I first started coming to NACAS and attended my first C3X in Las Vegas, I went to a first-timer’s event hosted by the Central Region, and I met people who helped me feel at home. These people also kept in touch and encouraged me to get involved.

I want to give a shoutout to Kim Rademacher of Ferris State University in Michigan and Angela Meldonian from University of Wisconsin–Whitewater. These individuals helped bring me onto the Central Region Board, of which I am the president as I write this testimonial. I have the entire Central Board to thank for this, with special thanks to Kim and Angela.

CS: What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

RM: My biggest professional accomplishment thus far at DePaul has been my involvement in creating the first student food pantry on our campus. This happened almost five years ago and started as a small pantry in a small storage room in our student union. Since then, the pantry has collaborated with other departments and offices across the university, including our career center, to offer clothing in addition to food items. Today, our food pantry is a basic needs hub providing food, clothing, household items, sheets, and towels, etc. We also have a hub location on both campuses.

CS: What show have you recently binged that you would recommend?

RM: This is not a show I recently binged, but it is my favorite show and is absolutely bingeable: *The West Wing*. The show is about the president of the United States and his staff and how they run the country while in office. It is inspiring, the writing is fantastic, and the cast is second to none. Even though I have seen every episode many times, I still binge all of the seasons from time to time. ■

If you would like to contact Moreci, he can be reached at rmoreci@depaul.edu.

business partner spotlight: Neil Janmohamed



Neil Janmohamed, Vice President of Business Development, Picadeli

Business Partners offer various unique campus service solutions that meet the needs of NACAS' higher education members and their school communities. In this issue, *College Services* interviews Neil Janmohamed, vice president of business development at Picadeli.

College Services: Please introduce yourself and tell us about your role in auxiliary services.

Neil Janmohamed: I'm a University of British Columbia and Michigan (Go Blue!) graduate based in Seattle. I currently lead business development at Picadeli, a turnkey fresh food provider. I was previously at Starbucks for over 17 years.

I joined Picadeli because of its fresh take on the traditional salad bar concept. Picadeli handles everything, from the equipment and ingredients to the technology and on-site support, so healthier food is easy to get. Picadeli can be found in seven countries with over 2,200 locations, serving over 70 million salads each year.

CS: What do you get out of being a NACAS Business Partner?

NJ: Being a Business Partner affords me the opportunity to interact with industry leaders and help them elevate the campus experience. Picadeli is a great solution for colleges and universities.

CS: What NACAS member did you meet that made an impact on your role and/or your department?

NJ: The NACAS member who made an impact is Linda Thacker, director of dining services at Maryville University in Missouri. Linda opened the first Picadeli on a university campus. She has a passion for serving her students and staff quality ingredients and healthy options. Linda has been a strong supporter of Picadeli and is a true pioneer.

CS: What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

NJ: I've had the good fortune to work with some amazing people at great companies throughout my career. At Starbucks, I had the opportunity to be part of a successful growth journey and helped build an iconic global brand and Fortune 150 company. My teams and I opened over 900 stores through a complex business-to-business licensing model with leading retailers, grocers, and travel operators, extending the Starbucks experience to countless customers.

CS: What show have you recently binged that you would recommend?

NJ: *A Spy Among Friends*. I loved the acting and immersive storytelling. I didn't know anything about it before I watched it, so I will keep it a surprise for you, too! ■

If you would like to contact Janmohamed, he can be reached at neil.janmohamed@picadeli.com.

NACAS Announces Inter-Association Partnership

An initiative to address the urgent need for systemic transformation in higher education became a formal partnership in 2025. The American College Personnel Association, Society for College and University Planning, and NACAS created this formal partnership that will collectively invest knowledge capital to demonstrate in tangible ways how associations can collaborate and innovate to transform our traditional models of serving higher education.

The partnership, being referred to as the Inter-Association Movement (I-AM), is being led by a joint steering committee. The energy of the steering committee is focused on creating action-driven solutions that will break down siloed thinking, increase capacity, enhance communication, and drive revenue and success for higher education. Multiple in-person and virtual activations are being planned for 2025 (details forthcoming), including at the annual conferences of each association.

Partnership and collaboration continue to be a hallmark of NACAS. To the benefit of our members,

we continue to build upon long-standing relationships with international, national, and state organizations, including:

- National Association of College Stores
- National Association of College & University Food Services
- National Association of College and University Business Officers
- Independent College Bookstore Association
- Association of College Unions International
- Canadian Association of University Business Officers
- Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior (Mexico)
- National Federation of University Co-operative Associations (Japan)
- Auxiliary Organizations Association (California)
- Auxiliary Services Council of Georgia
- State University of New York Auxiliary Services Association

Such a collaborative spirit will continue to be key to our future success as an association. ■



RICH STEELE, CASP
NACAS CEO



NACAS

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