

Ohio Students Help Combat Food Insecurity
Xavier University empowers students through through innovative meal share program

DC University Harnesses Student Creativity
Student talent drives record growth in Howard University's in Howard University's Licensing Program

SUMMER 2025

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**THE HENNESSY EDGE:
MILITARY MODEL
FOR FOOD SERVICE**

Fleet Services &
Flight Kitchen



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BY BRITTANY L. WRIGHT

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Presidential Perspective

CX Momentum: Powering Campuses Through Collaboration



LANIECE TYREE, MPA, CASP
NACAS PRESIDENT

Summer is a time of reflection, renewal, and readiness for the vibrant academic year ahead. As we embark on this summer season, I'm inspired by the incredible resilience and innovation shown by our NACAS community in enhancing campus services nationwide. Your unwavering dedication strengthens our campuses and profoundly impacts student experiences.

This summer, NACAS continues its tradition of fostering meaningful connections and professional growth through our regional CX conferences. These conferences are uniquely tailored to address the dynamic needs and opportunities within each region:

- **Central CX Conference** (June 1–4, 2025, Oakland University, Rochester, MI): Experience an invaluable platform for exchanging ideas and innovative practices and strengthening regional collaboration.
 - nacas.org/about/regions/nacas-central/conference
- **West CX Conference** (June 8–10, 2025, Denver Marriott West, Golden, CO): Engage with colleagues on strategies that drive impactful campus services and discover approaches tailored to your institution.
 - nacas.org/about/regions/nacas-west/conference
- **East CX Conference** (June 22–25, 2025, Hilton Boston Park Plaza, Boston): Explore pressing topics and share insights to advance our collective commitment to excellence.
 - nacas.org/about/regions/nacas-east/conference
- **South CX Conference** (March 30–April 2, 2025): Though recently concluded, the conference's momentum and shared learnings continue to inspire growth across our southern institutions.
 - nacas.org/about/regions/nacas-south/conference

Additionally, our commitment to accessible professional development thrives through an exciting lineup

of webinars on the NACAS Online Institute platform at nacas.org/member-benefits/online-education. These sessions provide flexible, relevant content that aligns with your evolving roles and responsibilities. Upcoming webinars will explore critical trends in campus retail, facility management, sustainability practices, and student well-being. I strongly encourage you and your teams to engage actively in these learning opportunities.

Looking forward, please mark your calendars for the highly anticipated 2025 C3X Annual Conference & Expo from November 16 to 19 in Las Vegas. This event, themed "Building a Winning Hand," promises a transformative experience and will bring together more than 1,000 campus services professionals and Business Partners dedicated to elevating the campus experience. This annual gathering is pivotal in sharing insights, innovations, and best practices to reinforce our essential role in higher education.

Your active participation makes NACAS a thriving community. I encourage each of you to contribute by sharing your experiences, practices, or ideas through NACAS publications, resources, and events. Your voice is essential in shaping the future of auxiliary services.

Finally, let's continue to support the NACAS Foundation, which plays a critical role in funding professional development opportunities and leadership programs. The Foundation's initiatives empower professionals, enhance educational experiences, and ensure the sustained excellence of our profession.

As your NACAS president, I am deeply grateful for your commitment and passion. Together, we will continue advancing auxiliary services, enriching our campuses, and empowering student success.

Enjoy a productive and fulfilling summer! ■

DEPLOYING BEST PRACTICES

UNIVERSITY LEADER IN NEW YORK MAKES IT HIS MISSION
TO ELEVATE CAMPUS AUXILIARY SERVICES

BY KEVIN D'ONOFRIO

IN HIGHER education, auxiliary services are the unsung heroes, shaping the daily experience of students as well as administrators, staff members and faculty. From managing dining halls to overseeing student centers, we are aiming for excellence in every facet of our operations, as we strive to elevate the campus experience. Yet, how often do we step back to evaluate our impact and learn from best practices beyond our borders?

The John L. Hennessy Travel Award, a respected recognition within the U.S. Air Force food service sector, offers a compelling model for evaluation and improvement that provides a powerful benchmark for auxiliary professionals aiming to transform their own operations.

This year, I was chosen as one of two civilians to represent the food service industry in the 69th annual John L. Hennessy Travel Award program. Two Air Force personnel rounded out our group of four who were dispatched to four Air Force bases nominated for their distinguished food operations.

AWARD'S HISTORY

The Hennessy Travel Award, established in 1957, is the oldest military food service award that has been given annually to the best dining facilities in the U.S. Air Force. It is named for the late John L. Hennessy, a hotel and restaurant executive who led a commission under President Dwight D. Eisenhower to improve military food service and commissaries through educational opportunities to members of the armed forces serving in a hospitality assignment.

The commission recommended that the armed services establish a competition to identify and reward the best food service operations, resulting in the Hennessy Trophy Awards Program. Of the four military branches, the U.S. Air Force was the first to implement this recommendation and establish the program, which was renamed the John L. Hennessy Travel Award. Dining services are nominated at bases in Region 1 (East), Region 2 (West), Air Force Global Strike Command Best Missile Feeding Operation, and U.S. Air Forces in Europe Food Service Small Site.



Hennessy Travel Award "traveler" Kevin D'Onofrio, executive director of State University of New York (SUNY) Cobleskill Auxiliary Services at SUNY Cobleskill, said being an evaluator in the John L. Hennessy Travel Award program was an honor and has become one of the most treasured experiences of his lifetime.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KEVIN D'ONOFRIO/STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT COBLESKILL AUXILIARY SERVICES

cover feature

TRAINING AND EVALUATION

The evaluation process involved a 20-day commitment during which our group rated one base each in Turkey and Italy and two bases in Germany in Region 1 (East). My fellow “travelers” were Mark Bucher, an accomplished chef and restaurateur and founder of Medium Rare Restaurant in Washington, DC; Chief Master Sgt. Charity Grant; and Senior Master Sgt. Willie Hart Jr.

Before we embarked on our trip, we underwent a three-day training at Lackland Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center in San Antonio. In addition to an orientation, we were given an overview of the evaluation process, mock evaluations, and an introduction to Air Force Form 1038. The form’s checklist is used to help evaluate the bases for their execution and sustained excellence in the following areas:

- Food service management
- Force readiness support
- Food quality and production
- Employee and customer relations
- Resource conservation
- Sanitation and proper maintenance
- Training
- Safety awareness

Each installation has the potential to score 1,000 points in its pursuit of the Hennessy Travel Award.

At the conclusion of our training, we traveled from base to base for multiple days each in our assigned region. During these visits, our group adhered to a set protocol. We began with an in-brief and concluded with an out-brief/award ceremony. From 6 a.m. to midnight daily, we evaluated all meal periods—breakfast, lunch, dinner, and late night—and flight kitchens, staff, and locations.

Motivated by a desire to do their jobs to the highest possible level, the airmen serving in hospitality assignments at each base were eager to ask questions and receive feedback during the entire process. We provided

CONNECTIONS WERE MADE AND IDEAS WERE EXCHANGED. OUR GROUP INTENDED TO LEAVE A LASTING POSITIVE IMPRESSION ON ALL OF THE MILITARY PERSONNEL WE CAME IN CONTACT WITH AND TO LEAVE EACH BASE BETTER THAN WE FOUND IT. WE TRIED TO MEET WITH AS MANY AIRMEN AS POSSIBLE INDIVIDUALLY AND IN SMALL GROUPS, HELPING THEM TO SEE THE THREADS OF COMMONALITY BETWEEN THEIR WORK AND CIVILIAN FOOD SERVICE.

FAST FACTS ABOUT THE 2025 HENNESSY TRAVEL AWARD PROGRAM

TRAVEL STATS:

Days: 20
Airlines: 4
Flights: 8
Air miles traveled: 16,000+
Driving miles traveled: 1,000+

Countries:

- United States
- Turkey
- Italy
- Germany

AIR BASES IN REGION 1 (EAST):

- Aviano Air Base in Italy, home of the 31st Fighter Wing and a vital NATO air base, known for its F-16 Fighting Falcon Squadrons
- Incirlik Air Force Base in Turkey, home of the 39th Air Base Wing, which supports NATO missions and objectives in the region
- Ramstein Air Base in Germany, home of the 86th Airlift Wing and headquarters for the U.S. Air Forces in Europe, with over 52,000 military dependents, civilians, and contractors
- Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany, home of the 52nd Fighter Wing, also maintaining F-16 Fighting Falcons

WINNERS:

- **Region 1 (East):** Ramstein Air Base in Germany, 786th Force Support Squadron
- **Region 2 (West):** Yokota Air Base in Japan, 374th Force Support Squadron
- **Air Force Global Strike Command Best Missile Feeding Operation:** F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming, 90th Missile Wing
- **U.S. Air Forces in Europe Food Service Small Site:** Kleine-Brogel Air Base in Belgium, 701st Munitions Support Squadron

AIR FORCE STATS:

Bases: 76
Locations: 197
Served per year: 24.8 million

positive insights and constructive criticism as well as shared best practices from the industry that they could adapt to improve their food and beverage operations—while seeking out the best of the best.

COMMON GROUND

Through our discussions with the many airmen, our group learned about the shared challenges we have in the civilian and military arenas. As an executive



Airmen stand with Kevin D'Onofrio, executive director of State University of New York (SUNY) Cobleskill Auxiliary Services at SUNY Cobleskill, fourth from right, during an award ceremony at the conclusion of the evaluation of Incirlik Air Force Base in Turkey.



Hennessy Travel Award evaluator and "traveler" Kevin D'Onofrio, standing, addresses airmen on hospitality best practice and the food service industry at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. Ramstein won the Hennessy Travel Award for Region 1.

cover feature



Hennessy Travel Award evaluator and "traveler" Kevin D'Onofrio is with Bonnie and Clyde, the chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear artificial intelligence "dogs" at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.



Kevin D'Onofrio, executive director of State University of New York (SUNY) Cobleskill Auxiliary Services, middle, chats with airmen after touring an F-16 fighter jet at Aviano Air Base in Italy.

MORE ABOUT THE AWARD PROGRAM

- Sheppard Air Force Base won the John L. Hennessy Travel Award multiple times, including in 2013, 2015, and 2018.
 - bit.ly/3Yn70uK
- Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota also won the Hennessy Travel Award multiple times, including in 2018.
 - bit.ly/4jfxt5E
- The Hennessy Travelers Association is an advisory group of travelers from the food service industry that helps develop techniques, offer management skills, and advise and mentor military food and beverage professionals.
 - hennessyawards.org

director overseeing auxiliary services at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Cobleskill, I found many similarities between university dining and the dining facilities on each Air Force base. We both aim to hire and train the best people for each job, produce delicious and nutritious food, and provide top-notch service and constant engagement with our customers. So, in many instances, I was able to learn as much from the airmen as they did from me.

During this experience, connections were made and ideas were exchanged. Our group intended to leave a lasting positive impression on all of the military personnel we came in contact with and to leave each base better than we found it. We tried to meet with as many airmen as possible individually and in small groups, helping them to see the threads of commonality between their work and civilian food service. For example, their experience and work ethic are an exceptional fit for later involvement in professional associations such as the National Restaurant Association (NRA), Society for Hospitality and Foodservice Management (SHFM), National Association College of Auxiliary Services, and International Food Service Manufacturing Association the Food Away From Home Association (IFMA). It is our goal that military service members transitioning back to civilian life will take advantage of the relationships formed and become leaders in the civilian food service world.



Top left: Fellow Hennessy Travel Award evaluators and "travelers" Mark Bucher, an accomplished chef and restauranteur and founder of Medium Rare Restaurant in Washington, DC, center left, and Kevin D'Onofrio, executive director of State University of New York (SUNY) Cobleskill Auxiliary Services at SUNY Cobleskill, join airmen at Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany.

Right: Kevin D'Onofrio, second from left, joins fellow Hennessy Travel Award evaluators and airmen for a look at an F-16 fighter jet at Aviano Air Base in Italy.

Bottom left: Sitting at the controls of a C-136J aircraft with airmen at Ramstein Air Base in Germany is Hennessy Travel Award evaluator and "traveler" Kevin D'Onofrio.

INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM

The Hennessy Travel Award exists through the partnership of professional organizations such as NRA and SHFM that understand the importance of mentorship to military personnel in hospitality positions. I learned about the Hennessy program through my long-term involvement with SHFM. I am honored to have been chosen to be part of the program in 2025 and am thankful for the opportunity to support our airmen. Although I worked for years at the United States Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, NY, this was my first opportunity to visit and work with the Air Force, and it left an indelible impression on me.

The Hennessy Award isn't just about recognizing excellence in the Air Force; it's about driving continuous improvement and fostering a culture of innovation. In an era when student satisfaction and retention are paramount, the quality of auxiliary services plays a pivotal role in shaping the campus experience.

By exploring the strategies and best practices highlighted by this award, we can glean lessons in leadership, resource management, and customer engagement. This journey of evaluation and discovery underscores the importance of benchmarking against the highest standards, ensuring our auxiliary services contribute to a vibrant and supportive campus environment.

Just as the Hennessy Award elevates Air Force food service, we, too, can elevate the standards of excellence within our own institutions, creating a lasting impact on the lives of our students and the campus community. ■

Author's note: I could not have accepted this opportunity without the support and encouragement of my professional community at SUNY Cobleskill. I especially want to thank President Marion Terenzio, Associate Vice President for Student Development Matt LaLonde, my senior leadership team, and the many talented and dedicated team members at SUNY Cobleskill Auxiliary Services for supporting this experience and for stepping up in my absence.



KEVIN D'ONOFRIO is executive director of SUNY Cobleskill Auxiliary Services. He has extensive background in college and university food service and is a former vice president with Aramark, district manager for Sodexo at the University at Albany, and director of the culinary group at USMA. D'Onofrio is a 2014 Silver Plate Award winner. This award, given by IFMA, recognizes professionals who have demonstrated leadership and made lasting contributions to the advancement of the food service industry.

feature





Future of Campus Food Aid

OHIO STUDENTS BREAK BARRIERS BY SHARING MEALS THROUGH FIRST AUTONOMOUS MEAL SHARE PROGRAM

BY JENNIFER PAIOTTI, MBA, CASP

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHUTTERSTOCK/TORWAVSTUDIO

FOOD INSECURITY is a pressing issue on many college and university campuses, and Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio, is no exception. Facing rising living expenses and the challenges of balancing academic life, many students need help accessing consistent, nutritious meals

Xavier University launched the mobile Musketeer Meal Share program to address this challenge head-on. This program is the first of its kind: a fully autonomous meal share system that enables any student who has a meal plan to donate their unused meal swipes to students in need, who can then access these meals anonymously. The program has transformed how Xavier supports students while fostering sustainability and community engagement across campus.

The Musketeer Meal Share program is also the latest in the university's ongoing effort to combat food insecurity as a Swipe Out Hunger campus. Swipe Out Hunger is a national nonprofit that focuses on ending student hunger on campuses throughout North America. It provides funding and other types of support to the more than 850 college and university campuses working to minimize food insecurity.

The other Xavier programs that help students in need are The Store, an on-campus food pantry, and the student emergency fund, which offers an application-based grant for up to \$500. Last year, almost 600 Xavier students used The Store, underscoring the need for persistent efforts to address food insecurity within the student community and reinforcing the need for the autonomous meal share program.

feature



Xavier University's Musketeer Meal Share Program is going into its third year. During its pilot phase, which began in the last two weeks of the fall 2023 semester and continued through the spring 2024 semester, 431 meals were donated and 141 meals were requested.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF XAVIER UNIVERSITY

Do you have extra guest swipes? Are you on a block plan with extra swipes left?

Share a meal swipe with the new Musketeer Meal Share program.

Shared meals go directly to fellow Musketeers without meal plans and experiencing food insecurity.

Learn how to help in the caption

This graphic is used on Facebook to promote Xavier University's Musketeer Meal Share Program with instructions on how to use it. Students are encouraged to download the Transact Mobile ordering app. After logging in with their Xavier University credentials, they can scroll to the bottom to "Auxiliary Services" and click on "Musketeer Meal Share." Then, students can share one meal, which will be automatically deducted from their guest swipe balance or block plan balance.

QUICK BITES ON FOOD INSECURITY

The U.S. Government Accountability Office reported in 2024 on food insecurity on college and university campuses throughout the United States. The student data originated in the Department of Education's National Postsecondary Student Aid Study. Following are some insights from the report titled "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Estimated Eligibility and Receipt among Food Insecure College Students":

- About 3.8 million students in higher education institutions experienced food insecurity in 2020.
- About 59% of food insecure students who were potentially eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits didn't report receiving benefits. SNAP is the largest nutrition assistance program available to low-income households in the U.S.
- About 58% of food insecure students had very low food security, meaning they reported multiple instances of eating less than they should or skipping meals because they could not afford enough food.

For more on the report, visit bit.ly/4i5MJRx.

THE PROGRAM WAS DEVELOPED TO FILL IN THE GAPS THAT TRADITIONAL SERVICES MIGHT NOT REACH. COMBINING DEPARTMENTS AND PARTNERS, INCLUDING AUXILIARY SERVICES, CHARTWELLS HIGHER EDUCATION, TRANSACT CAMPUS INC., AND CARE MANAGEMENT, THE MUSKETEER MEAL SHARE PROGRAM ALLOWS STUDENTS TO REQUEST MEALS ANONYMOUSLY.

EVOLUTION OF CAMPUS FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVES

Historically, colleges and universities have used various approaches to address food insecurity, such as food pantries and meal swipe donation systems. While effective, these programs sometimes have administrative hurdles or can leave students feeling stigmatized when asking for help. Recognizing this, Xavier University created a more seamless and inclusive solution for its mobile meal donation program.

The program was developed to fill in the gaps that traditional services might not reach. Combining departments and partners, including auxiliary services, Chartwells Higher Education, Transact Campus Inc., and care management, the Musketeer Meal Share program allows students to request meals anonymously. This provides a dignified, user-friendly way to address food insecurity and ensure students can access the support they need.

HOW THE MUSKETEER MEAL SHARE PROGRAM WORKS

The program allows students to donate unused meal swipes to a shared pool through the Transact Mobile Ordering app. Students experiencing food insecurity who need help can anonymously request meals from this pool using the same app, ensuring their privacy is protected. Once the meal has been added to their digital student ID, the student can tap into the dining hall like everyone else.

The program was developed and coded within Transact ID systems and integrated with point of sale and mobile ordering platforms to make the process fully automated and easy to use.

The Musketeer Meal Share program launched a pilot phase in the last two weeks of the fall 2023 semester, and it continued throughout the spring 2024 semester. During the pilot phase of the program, 431 meals were donated and 141 meals were requested.

IMPACT ON STUDENTS AND CAMPUS CULTURE

The mobile meal share program offers more than just meals; it helps foster a campus culture of care and support. By providing an anonymous, accessible way to receive help, the program reduces the stigma of asking for assistance. This allows students to focus on their academic and personal development without additional stress.

The program also enhances the sense of community at Xavier as students who donate unused meal swipes are helping their peers. This act of generosity reflects the Jesuit value of *cura apostolica*,

Latin for “apostolic care” or “care for the organization.” This approach involves caring for the broader community and strengthens Xavier’s mission to care for the whole person.

In addition, the program aligns with the university’s sustainability efforts. By repurposing unused meal swipes, the program directly supports the principles outlined in *Laudato Si’*, Pope Francis’ encyclical on caring for the common home. Musketeer Meal Share encourages the thoughtful use of resources, helping Xavier fulfill its sustainability goals while supporting students in need.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

There are many opportunities for the meal share program to grow. Raising awareness is key, ensuring all students who could benefit from the program know of its availability. Additionally, exploring ways to strengthen collaboration with other campus resources such as the food pantry will create a more comprehensive student support network.

In the long term, this program could serve as a model for other universities. By sharing these experiences and the system Xavier built, the university hopes to inspire other institutions to create similar initiatives to combat food insecurity on their campuses. Ultimately, Xavier’s goal is to build a community that cares for each other and ensures no student struggles to meet basic needs. ■



JENNIFER PAIOTTI, MBA, CASP, is associate director of auxiliary services at Xavier University. She has led several innovative campus service initiatives, including the Musketeer Meal Share program.

LEARN MORE

- Xavier University posted an Instagram reel where students demonstrate how to use the Musketeer Meal Share program.
 - bit.ly/4iYByLE
- Swipe Out Hunger is a national nonprofit addressing food insecurity among college and university students across all 50 states.
 - swipehunger.org

Licensing Takes Off With **STUDENT DESIGNS**

DC UNIVERSITY LEVERAGES TALENT OF FINE ARTS STUDENTS

BY BRITTANY L. WRIGHT

The Student Design Program at Howard University in Washington, DC, has emerged as a beacon of innovation and opportunity, showcasing the immense talent of its fine arts students and contributing to unprecedented growth in the university's licensing program, particularly in designing branded merchandise.

The 2022–2023 academic year marked a milestone, with Howard reporting a 21% increase in the number of licensees, a 51% surge in overall sales, a 40% boost in unit sales, a 7.4% rise in average unit prices, and an 11.3% increase in artwork submissions. The program's success highlights how strategic partnerships and student empowerment can drive significant outcomes.

Central to this achievement was the 2022 Howard University x FISLL Homecoming Student Design Program, a collaboration with FISLL, a social impact brand founded by two-time NBA All-Star, Olympic gold medalist, and philanthropist Allan Houston. FISLL, which stands for the values of faith, integrity, sacrifice, leadership, and legacy, seeks to inspire individuals to live better, perform better, and lead better through leadership training, legacy development, and branded products.

This partnership offered four Howard fine arts students the opportunity to design exclusive merchandise for the university's homecoming festivities, creating products that were sold in the university bookstore and showcased in retail signage, hangtags, and marketing materials.

The program provided more than just a creative outlet for students. Each participant received a stipend, had the chance to build their portfolio, and gained valuable exposure to industry opportunities. The partnership also included an internship pipeline with FISLL, with one student already securing an internship there. Through this initiative, students were not only able to showcase their work but also lay the groundwork for future careers in the fashion and design industries.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY



Howard University fashion students Gabrielle Marion, Brenda Dubois, Jared Belfield, and Calyn Coleman pose in the merchandise they designed for the university's homecoming in 2022.

feature



The Howard University fashion students who designed items in partnership with FISLL, Gabrielle Manion, Brenda Dubois, Jared Belfield, and Calyn Coleman, showcase their items at the Homecoming 2022 fashion show at the Washington, DC, campus.

Howard's commitment to collaboration extended beyond FISLL. The university forged partnerships with other Black-owned brands such as Black & Scholared and Legacy, History, & Pride, contributing to an expanded product range and driving additional sales growth. This strategy underscored Howard's dedication to supporting diversity and promoting the work of Black creatives, enhancing the university's licensing program while fostering an inclusive business model that uplifts the community.

The support of Howard's alumni and advocates for historically Black colleges and universities played a pivotal role in this success. Their continued engagement helped amplify the university's licensing reach and contributed to the impressive 51% increase in overall sales, proving that community backing is integral to Howard's enduring growth.

"The Student Design Program exemplifies our commitment to student development and strategic partnerships," says Howard University Assistant Vice President of Auxiliary Enterprises and Director of Licensing LaNiece Tyree, MPA, CASP, who is also NACAS president. "By integrating student creativity with business acumen, we're not only driving revenue but also preparing our students for successful futures."



Howard University fashion students Gabrielle Manion, Brenda Dubois, Jared Belfield, and Calyn Coleman received a stipend and an opportunity to build their professional portfolios through the Student Design Program.

In a major recognition of these efforts, the Howard University Licensing Program was recently awarded the 2025 Best Product Partnership or Collaboration Award by the Collegiate Licensing Company. This honor celebrates the most recent collaboration between the Student Design Program and ProStandard, developed in celebration of Howard's historic 100th homecoming. The partnership featured limited-edition merchandise that captured the spirit and legacy of this milestone event. The award underscores the continued excellence of the program and affirms Howard's national leadership in innovative, student-centered licensing initiatives.

Howard University's Student Design Program, paired with its dynamic licensing initiatives, has set a new standard for what can be accomplished when higher education leverages its creative resources and community ties. The university's approach is a testament to the transformative power of collaboration, showcasing how forward-thinking partnerships can empower students, amplify voices, and achieve remarkable growth. ■

BRITTANY L. WRIGHT is assistant director of trademark and licensing in the Office of Auxiliary Enterprises at Howard University.



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volunteer spotlight: Jerry Clemmer



Jerry Clemmer, MHRM, CASP, Executive Director of Campus Business Services, University of Richmond

NACAS 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 Jerry Clemmer, MHRM, CASP, executive director of campus business services at University of Richmond in Virginia.

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

Jerry Clemmer: I have been an employee at University of Richmond for 19 years in multiple roles. I oversee various auxiliary operations, including budgetary responsibility for dining services, housing, and our entire auxiliaries' enterprises. I've worked with outstanding professionals over the years and am incredibly grateful to the team surrounding me now. Their energy and determination motivate me to serve them in the best ways possible.

My management philosophy centers around a people-first approach. Keeping students happy is paramount, and I make it a point to spend time with my employees, teaching them new skills and showing appreciation for their hard work. Respect and clear communication are essential in fostering a positive work environment where everyone feels valued. My goal is to ensure our campus services not only meet but exceed the expectations of our students and staff.

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

JC: I gain invaluable access to professional development resources that keep me informed about the latest trends and best practices in auxiliary services, enhancing my skills and effectiveness in my role. The networking opportunities allow me to connect with fellow leaders in higher education, fostering collaboration and idea-sharing. Additionally, the chance to collaborate with Business Partners tailored to our needs empowers me to implement customized solutions for University of Richmond that genuinely benefit our institution.

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

JC: Anthony Coschignano, associate vice president for campus services at Swarthmore College in

Pennsylvania, has impacted me through his exemplary leadership and dedication to auxiliary services. His selfless commitment to NACAS East, particularly during challenging times, has kept the organization afloat and thriving.

Anthony's tireless efforts and strong leadership have also fostered a supportive environment for all NACAS members. His passion for sharing knowledge and willingness to make himself available to answer questions demonstrate his commitment to the growth and development of professionals in the field.

CS: What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

JC: My most significant professional accomplishment is creating a one-year program at University of Richmond focused on developing more than 20 hourly employees into supervisors and managers or helping them find new career paths. Developing careers is my passion, which is probably why I am on the CASP Commission. I love sharing all that I can give.

This initiative benefited the university and allowed me to fulfill my passion for nurturing young talent. Watching these individuals take on increased responsibilities has been rewarding. Knowing I played a role in their professional journeys brings me the most satisfaction.

I have always believed in the importance of succession planning, and this program exemplifies my commitment to employee development.

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

JC: I love *The Bear* on Hulu because it captures a family-run restaurant's chaotic yet heartfelt world, with compelling characters whose relationships resonate deeply with me. My career came through the dining industry in New York City, and this authentic portrayal of life, filled with tension and camaraderie, immersed me in the frenetic energy of the high-level culinary scene. ■

If you would like to contact Clemmer, he can be reached at jclemmer@richmond.edu.



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member spotlight: Stephen Barr



Stephen Barr, Ed.D., CASP, Director of Business Services, Virginia Commonwealth 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 Stephen Barr, Ed.D., CASP, director of business services at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, VA.

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

Stephen Barr: As director of business services, my focus is on enhancing the student experience, addressing food insecurity, and creating strong campus partnerships to improve the overall campus environment at VCU.

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

SB: Being a NACAS member provides me with invaluable opportunities for professional growth, networking, and collaboration with peers across higher education. It's about connecting with professionals who face similar challenges and learning from their experiences. Whether it's through attending conferences, joining leadership discussions, or simply networking with others, NACAS helps me continuously elevate our work at VCU, ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our students and campus community.

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

SB: There are too many to name. One NACAS member who greatly impacted my career is Diane Reynolds,

whom I had the privilege of working under. Diane's visionary leadership and dedication to student-centered services shaped my approach to managing auxiliary services.

CS: What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

SB: Earning my CASP certification and completing my doctorate are accomplishments I'm truly proud of—and I'm especially grateful to my wife for holding down the fort while I was taking classes. I value the daily accomplishments in a field I'm passionate about while supporting the VCU community through the work we do in the business services department. The true reward is seeing the positive impact on students, and when something exceptional happens such as launching a new initiative or improving a service or space, it's just the icing on the cake. It's humbling to be part of something that consistently drives positive change.

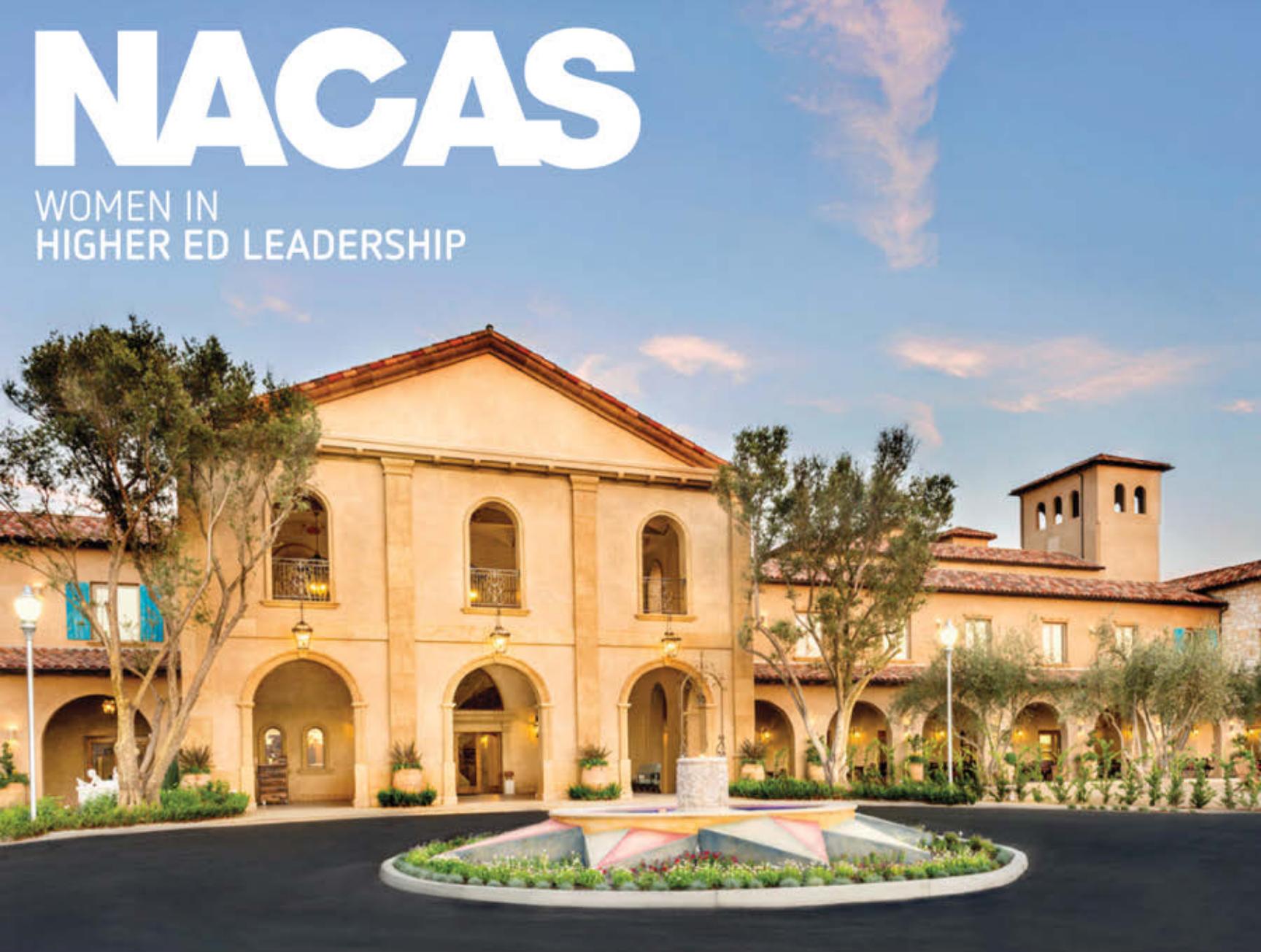
CS: What show have you recently binged that you would recommend?

SB: I recently binged *Ted Lasso* (again), and I'd definitely recommend it. It's like therapy but with more British accents and biscuits. ■

If you would like to contact Barr, he can be reached at sbarr@vcu.edu.

NACAS

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Join colleagues at the 2025 Women in Higher Ed Leadership Summit September 14-17 at the Allegretto Vineyard Resort in Paso Robles, California. This empowering event brings together influential leaders in higher education to inspire, educate, and advocate for women's leadership development.

business partner spotlight: Myra Haley



Myra Haley, National Sales Manager, Club Colors

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 Myra Haley, national sales manager at Club Colors in Illinois.

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

Myra Haley: I work for Club Colors, which provides innovative branding solutions tailored to our campus partners' needs. Club Colors aligns with trademarks and licensing, as well as procurement to deliver high-quality branded apparel and promotional products that support college and university communities.

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

MH: Being a part of NACAS has been instrumental in strengthening our ability to connect, collaborate, and innovate alongside auxiliary professionals dedicated to enhancing the campus experience. Through this partnership, we've deepened our understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities within higher education, allowing us to offer tailored solutions that bring value to students, faculty, and staff members alike.

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

MH: I've had the privilege of working with several remarkable NACAS members who have significantly influenced my perspective on the auxiliary services landscape. Individuals who have played a key role

in shaping my knowledge and approach to campus engagement are Rachel Skipworth of University of North Carolina at Charlotte and Derick Robertson of Georgia Southern University in Statesboro. Their insights and expertise have helped me better understand campus needs and how Club Colors can support institutions in delivering impactful, creative brand experiences.

CS: What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

MH: When reflecting on my greatest professional accomplishment, I take immense pride in my role as a mentor and advocate for my colleagues and the campus communities I serve. Having spent 20 years working on campus before transitioning into a strategic advisory role, I've been able to bridge my firsthand experience in higher education with my passion for helping institutions create stronger brand engagement.

At Club Colors, I strive to be a trusted partner in fostering a sense of identity, unity, and pride across campuses nationwide.

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

MH: I recently binged *The Afterparty*, a great murder mystery, with the viewer getting to see each party-goer's perspective of the events leading up to the murder. The show has only two seasons, but it's a great whodunit with humor. ■

If you would like to contact Haley, she can be reached at mhaley@clubcolors.com.

Celebrating Achievements and Embracing the Summer Reset

I hope you take advantage of the happiest time of the year on campus and connect with graduates as they celebrate their achievements. Commencement brings true pomp and circumstance to your campus community, with lots of smiling faces to brighten your day. Each student who crosses the stage has been shaped not only by their academic program but also by a network of dedicated staff who have played a crucial role in their success.

As an auxiliary professional, you play a notable role in every student's journey to reach this milestone in their lives. You lead and guide the valuable services provided to support student success. You network with peers, track trends, implement best practices, develop your teams, and maximize the excellence of your operations. You dedicate your career to enhancing the quality of campus life that encourages students to persist and graduate. You help students reach this milestone, and for some, you helped make their dreams come true. We send them off with the hope that they will succeed in a career filled with passion and purpose.

However, a recent study by Hult International Business School and Workplace Intelligence showed

that 55% of recent graduates felt their education did not prepare them for their job. Additionally, 75% of leaders in human resources said colleges and universities are not preparing people at all for their jobs.

I hope you will use some time this summer to consider these concerns. Auxiliary operations often hire many student workers. An intentional approach to developing and guiding student staff to be effective employees beyond their college career can change such negative perceptions about higher education. Student staff learn about teamwork, communication, planning, budgeting, supervising, effective meetings, time management, productivity measures, and more while working in an auxiliary unit. All it takes is an auxiliary professional who will offer opportunities to student staff and point out the value of their out-of-the-classroom education.

I want to thank you and commend you for your dedication to higher education, your institution, and your students. While I know summers are rarely slow, I hope you will carve out time for self-care and restoration. Another excited group of incoming students will be needing your support in a few months. Our efforts today will shape tomorrow's graduates, and the cycle of impact continues. ■



RICH STEELE, CASP
NACAS CEO



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