



CASE STUDY:

INDIANA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA DELIVERS DINING INNOVATION — GAINS HIGH STUDENT SCORES AND HIGHER RECRUITMENT

PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

What happens when a university campus dining program is driven by a friendly statewide competitive spirit? In the case of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, it means creating a dining program with many leading-edge innovations that get high scores from students and positively impact new student enrollment. Thanks to its competitive spirit in dining services, the higher education institution has come a long way from 1984 when it had just a few dining venues. Today it has a student dining program that features 18 venues, including food courts, satellite cafes, convenience stores and a food truck.

When it comes to student dining, IUP describes itself as “very trend conscious.” This means it makes an effort to ensure its campus is always first in the state with new dining innovations and offers its students the most dining variety. To that end, the university was the first to bring Starbucks on campus and the first to open an Aramark P.O.D. convenience store, for example. As a result, the university consistently gets high scores from students. It recently received the second highest service satisfaction score in the region—71 percent—out of 34 campuses. Further, it ranked at 62 percent on overall student satisfaction. On Aramark’s annual *DiningStyles* survey, IUP achieved a high score of 5.30 on students’ overall dining experience, a measurement that includes quality, freshness, convenience, speed, affordability, variety, service, cleanliness, sustainability and healthfulness. Additionally, 45 percent of students rank its campus dining as “excellent.”



The university's winning dining program gains strength from its partnership with Aramark, with whom it works hand in hand. The focus is always on: "What do our students want from our dining program?" It aims to offer something new, fresh or newsworthy every semester. The team uses surveys and other data, along with direct student interactions, to make every new dining decision. Aramark also works directly with the university to build new venues according to the institution's high standards and the students' on-trend dining desires.





4BIG **IUP-ARAMARK** **PARTNERSHIP WINS**

OPENED A NEW DINING VENUE EVERY YEAR FOR FOUR YEARS

The growth of the university's dining program went into overdrive in 2012 with the implementation of a new dining master plan, including adding brand new or renovated facilities at the pace of one per year. In 2014, the university opened the Crimson Café food court. In 2015, it opened the completely renovated and expanded Folger Dining Hall, which switched from a food court to residential dining. In 2016, IUP expanded and remodeled its Hawk HUB food court. In 2017, it opened the North Dining Hall, a completely brand new dining location designed to be a campus dining showcase.

BUILT AN INNOVATIVE SHOWCASE DINING VENUE

The new North Dining Hall is not a traditional campus dining venue. It was designed to be different from any other dining venue on campus. For starters, it includes a unique outdoor seating area with heated floors and hanging heaters, so it can be used three seasons out of the year. Further, it has several innovative pieces of cooking equipment in its "global fusion station," including a Chinese wok, a Brazilian rotisserie, a tandoori oven and a homemade gelato machine imported from Italy. The venue also features a New York-style deli and open-pit barbecue, a vegan food station and an open-view bakery kitchen.

DINING-ADMISSIONS PARTNERSHIP BOOSTS STUDENT RECRUITMENT

For years Aramark set up a table at the university's new student recruitment events. But in 2015 things changed. Dining services actually partnered with the admissions team to proactively support student recruitment. Now, instead of just a table, Aramark opens up a whole building to the hundreds of prospective students and their family members who attend the events. Dining's entire senior management team greets the students. They give presentations on the dining program, including the venues, brands and menus, along with samples of the food—giving them an opportunity to taste several dishes. The University views this partnership as a vital addition to the student recruitment process. In fact, IUP experienced its first significant increase in freshmen admissions in 2016 and credits the dining program to a large extent.

EXPANDED CATERING SERVICES AND REVENUE

In 2011, the university opened the Kovalchick Center, an \$80 million event facility with a 5,500-seat arena, a conference center and industrial-size kitchen. Aramark supplies all catering services for events held in the facility, as well as campus-wide and off-campus events, such as weddings and bar mitzvahs. Aramark also proactively supports the facility's marketing efforts at Chamber of Commerce mixers, through business visits with trays of cookies and by attending local bridal events. In fact, the venue has turned into a hub for large social events in the western Pennsylvania area. Adding to its success, the campus has tripled its catering revenue from 2011 to 2017.



BEFORE ARAMARK

- 3 dining venues, including one dining hall and two small residential dining rooms
- No access to student dining data, including sales and survey insight
- Ran an average higher ed dining program with little innovation

AFTER ARAMARK

- 18 dining venues, including dining rooms, national brands, satellite cafes, P.O.D. convenience stores and a food truck
- Extensive access to Aramark's annual *DiningStyles* student survey data and other critical dining insights
- Transformed the dining services into best-of-class program that leads the state university system in campus dining innovation
- Gradually expanded catering over the years, tripling its revenue from 2011 to 2017
- No comfortable outdoor dining options for students on the campus
- Minimal catering services on the campus
- Minimal dining participation in student recruitment
- Flat growth in new student admissions
- Low off-campus student meal plan participation
- Created comfortable outdoor seating on a screened-in residential room with heated floors and hanging heaters that can be used in three seasons
- Dining participates in student recruitment activities on campus
- Increased new student enrollment
- Increased off-campus student meal plan participation by 106 percent

PARTNERSHIP STATS

Date partnered	1984
Students	12,316
Dining venues	18
National retail brands on campus	Starbucks, Subway, Einstein's, Chick-fil-A & Java City
Aramark Brands on Campus	Burger Studio, Greens to Go & Grille Works
Local Brands on Campus	Fire Place (pizza and pasta) Hey Pickle (deli) Pastabilities (pasta)
Campus Catering Services	Kovalchick Center, including arena and conference center On-campus events Off-campus community events



WHAT IUP SAYS:



"Aramark has been Indiana University of Pennsylvania's dining partner since 1984. Their commitment to our dining program has been exemplary and the dining program leads the state in first-to-market dining innovations and student satisfaction scores. They have assisted us in the development and completion of approximately 39 million dollars in renovations to existing facilities and the design and construction of new facilities. In addition, they have aided us in the design and opening of a new arena which also houses their catering operations."

"Aramark has also had a significant impact on our student recruitment program. Prospective students and their entire family are given tours of our facilities, educated about the various meal plans available, made aware of possible employment opportunities, and even given the opportunity to taste samples of the food they will be eating when they matriculate as a student."

Michael W. Lemasters

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
Living-Learning and Well-Being





For more information visit us at:
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