

ON-CAMPUS HOSPITALITY

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Breakfast
Beverages
and Branding

“We have been doing these surveys for ages. We used to do them with data collection boxes and we would post all of these boxes in the various dining halls,” said Mayer. “They could ask some core questions rating from 1-5 – strictly quantitative questions. It took a great deal of time to get the information and pull it down and analyze it and summarize it. As the Internet grew, we were able to move them online.”

The move to online surveys allowed for more in-depth questions. “We ask questions in a couple of ways,” he said. “We have benchmark questions that we ask year over year and they let us look at some core competencies and make sure nothing fluky is happening — questions like how is the temperature of your food? If we see a change in that score, we might be able to know that there is something going on with the equipment that we ought to look at, or speed of service or cleanliness. Those core questions keep us on target in basic operational ways. Then we can add some additional questions that can help guide us in making decisions, whether it be a programmatic decision, something we are considering doing or feedback on possible new menu trends that are of specific interest to the student. Things like that really help us hone in on something that we are considering and want to gauge their interest in.”

Gathering this type of information is very important to the operation. “Data is vital,” said Mayer. “It lets you put your attention where you really ought to put it. In college dining, our dedication to extraordinary customer service sometimes leads us to quickly address individual complaints when we hear them. But if you are always oiling the squeaky wheel, it can take your program off course. It is important to have data that confirms where you should be focusing.”

Mayer has advice for others planning on conducting a dining survey. “I think that there are lots of fantastic tools that let you execute surveys that can really help inform your program. I do think response is enormously important. First off, you should never ask a question you are not prepared to answer because that just leads to frustration. Second, you do need to share the results — good, bad and indifferent — because people want to know the value of their time in situations such as this.”

UB Chef Takes Top Honors in Food Competition



Chef Delanda Kent of Campus Dining & Shops at the University of Buffalo (UB) in New York recently won Best Signature Seafood Appetizer at the annual U.S. Foods Competition.

Kent's signature dish, Shrimp Rémoulade: East Meets West, was selected best over 10 other dishes from area fine dining restaurants and hotels. This seafood appetizer consists of a traditional

French rémoulade accompanied by avocado mousse, red Thai aioli, crispy wontons and masago roe. The inspiration for the dish came from Chef Kent's love of both French and Japanese cuisine.

“I enjoy infusing different flavors and creating unique dishes that really awaken people's tastebuds,” said Kent, who has been with Campus Dining & Shops for more than four years and oversees UB's Residential Dining program.

Caramel Frappé

Better Pleasure #
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