

Jena Cantwell



qmPZoAWG

Entry details

Entry Name: Bronchella

Institution Name: Rider University

Entry Completed By (*name and position*): Jena Cantwell, Director of Community Relations

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Introduction:

Our menu was created to feel like a music festival with Coachella-themed vibrant and trendy food that felt like it came straight from a festival food truck. We also wanted to combine elements of California's fresh, health-focused food culture so that the menu was the perfect balance of indulgent, fun offerings with lighter and healthier options. Each station in our dining hall was made to feel interactive, visually engaging, and inclusive of various dietary preferences. From creative handheld desserts to delicious savory stations, the event menu elevated our traditional lunch to an experience that would make our guest's tastebuds sing.

Essay:

Our menu was made to incorporate the bold and diverse flavors of a music festival food scene, with a Gen-Z flair. We focused around creating handheld, customizable, and exciting options that encouraged students to explore the dining hall with our regular stations and interactive food stations. Our Gourmet station transformed into a Walking Taco Bar with students' choice of bags Fritos or Doritos to stuff with a variety of toppings, including seasoned beef taco meat, vegan lentils, melted cheddar, fresh vegetables, and house-made sauces. Another customizable station that incorporated a California- health focused and plant-forward menu was our vegan Falafel Bar home-made falafel and pita pockets and a variety of toppings including, hummus, vegan tzatziki, harissa vinaigrette, and crisp vegetables. The Bakeshop added a nostalgic and Instagram-worthy element with walking banana pudding pouches, iced Belgium-waffle pops, cereal pops, loaded waffle cone skewers, and vegan "snow cone" cupcakes. Additional

healthy options included a Cali Fruit platter with optional chili lime seasoning for those seeking a healthier dessert. Signature mocktails, such as the "Coachella Cooler" and "Dessert Sunset," enhanced the festival atmosphere. And our creative Pepperoni Pizza Grilled Cheese and Roasted Vegetable Calzone gave another savory, food truck vibe option.

Introduction:

On April 10, 2025, we transformed our residential dining hall, Daly's, into "Bronchella," a Coachella-inspired residential dining experience designed to engage students through music and food. Bronchella blended Gen Z's love of festival culture and immersive experiences with Rider pride through a playful school mascot-themed twist. Our mascot "AJ the Bronc" served as inspiration and the muse for the event and its name. The event elevated the everyday dining experience in Daly's into a destination event by incorporating interactive food and activity stations, vibrant décor, and live music. This encouraged our students to linger, connect and engage with each other.

Essay:

Bright tassel photo walls, desert-inspired décor, colorful balloons, playful dance elements of disco balls, a Ferris-wheel cupcake stand, themed signage and more created a visually engaging atmosphere and Daly's into a festival playground for our students. Our team members were encouraged to dress in festival themed attire and were given flower headbands and colorful sunglasses to help create a festival-vibe for guests. Interactive stations such as DIY flower crown making and a DIY bedazzled sunglass station encouraged creativity and participation from our students. An indoor s'mores station and rented gourmet popsicle cart added both nostalgia and a wow factor to the event. And a creative mocktail station added a customizable element with optional Strawberry Syrup to create a "sunset" effect in a cup. Our award-winning campus radio station, 107.7 the Bronc, provided a live, DJ-and a dance-worthy playlist featuring Coachella artists like Lady Gaga, Green Day, and Post Malone. This created a bright energy to the space and helped to keep students lingering longer in our dining hall. From our collaboration with Athletics, we saw a special appearance from our campus celebrity, AJ the Bronc, which added excitement and a little school spirit, as well as some Instagram-able moments.

Introduction:

Based on prior student feedback, we used several platforms we know that students engage with, as well as our partnerships with our radio station, to build momentum and market our event. Our "This Week at Rider" email from the Office of Campus Life was used to promote the event, as this is regarded as a top communication email students actually read. Other marketing tools we used were social media posts, in person food forums, and our campus email communication platforms to promote the event. Additionally, visually appealing digital marketing across campus created engagement and excitement with our students.

Essay:

We began promotion at the start of April through social media calendars and our partnership with Rider's campus radio station, which aired our approved promotional script to build awareness and excitement. Digital signage, displaying on indoor and outdoor TV's around campus, increased our student reach to beyond our dining hall. To drive interest, we included a prize incentive, which was a chance to win Sony headphones if you attended the event. But what truly made Bronchella special was its ability to transport students into a festival-inspired environment. Our standout stations were our elaborate indoor s'mores station cascading out of a camping tent and a gourmet popsicle cart from JamieLynn's Mobile Pop Cart. Popsicles made with raw cane sugar included flavors like Chocolate Sea Salt, Florida Orange, Guava Mango, and Strawberry Banana, and also included allergen-friendly options. The stylish cart, complete with a tassel umbrella and festive balloons, was a hit. California-focused sustainability also was central to the event. All leftover food was donated through to our partners at Share My Meals, a nonprofit based in Princeton, NJ, ensuring excess food feed the local community while reducing environmental impact of potential food waste.

Introduction:

The success of Bronchella went beyond attendance because we created a meaningful event to our student interns and staff, as well as our Rider students. Our interns contributed ideas for the planning, menu development and interactive activities, including the popular DIY flower crown station. Their participation not only enhanced the creativity of the event but also helped serve as a growth opportunity for them and helped us shape a better student-centered event. Our staff also reported positive feedback, noting how much fun they had at the end of the event. We saw nothing but smiles! See some feedback below.

Essay:

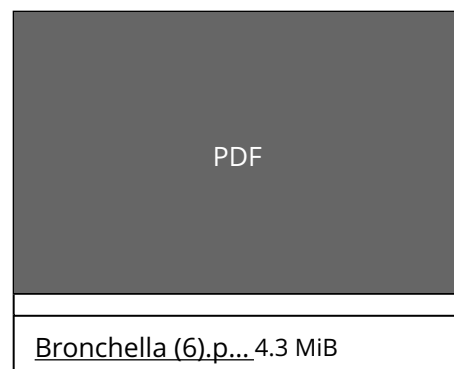
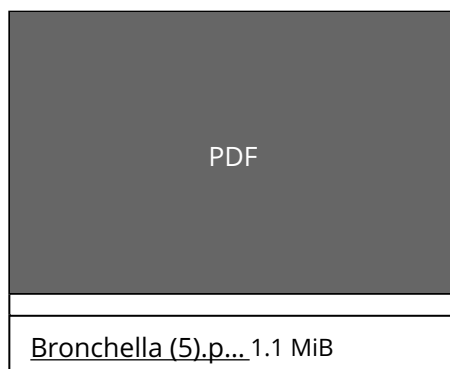
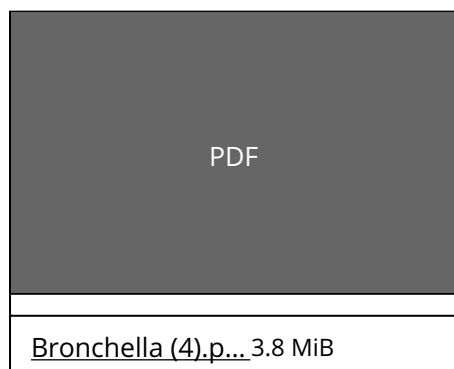
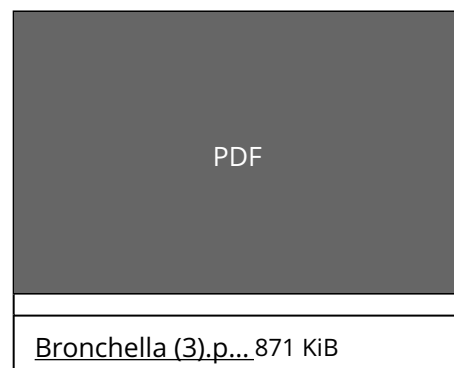
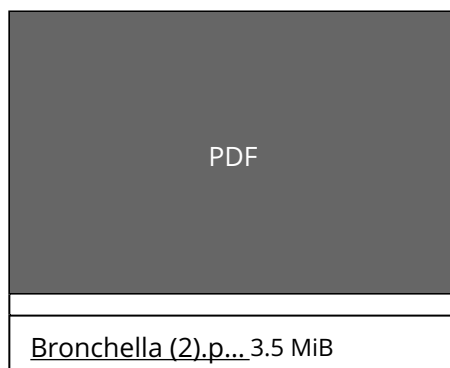
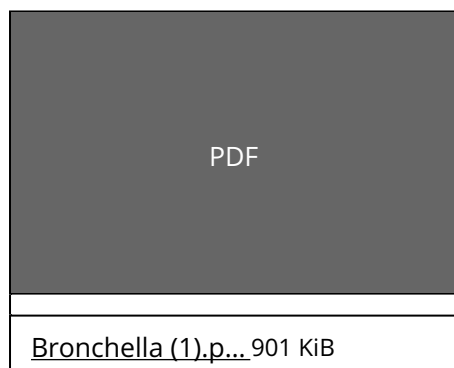
"Bronchella was an amazing event where there was a little something for everyone. From s'mores and mocktails to popsicles and sweet treats, it felt like an immersive experience rather than a small event! I loved getting to try a bit of everything, especially the walking tacos, and even made "Snack King" sunglasses with plenty of sparkle, which made for a memorable event. It was one of those moments where you could just enjoy the atmosphere, be creative, and have a good time with everyone around you!"

"Bronchella was so much fun! The food was amazing, and the energy of the event made it feel like a mini-Coachella festival on campus. I'd 100% go again."

From our intern "I love being a part of the marketing team and this event in particular. The feedback has been so positive from my peers. It is so fulfilling to see my creativity and ideas in action. I love to know my voice is heard and my opinions matter."

As noted by Director of Dining Services, Pat Kurczewski, "What a great event today! The students and staff really enjoyed themselves. It was the most lively, busy, fun event I have seen in a long time."

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Bronchella (7).p... 2.4 MiB

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Bronchella (8).p... 982 KiB

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Bronchella (9).p... 3.6 MiB

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Bronchella (10).... 3.2 MiB

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Bronchella (11).... 3.5 MiB

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Bronchella (12).... 2.9 MiB

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