

# Bianca Gilfour



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## Entry details

Entry Name: JASPA Institute 2025

Institution Name: Loyola University New Orleans

Entry Completed By (*name and position*): Bianca Gilfour, District Marketing Manager

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## Introduction:

The 2025 JASPA Five-Year Institute brought together more than 400 student affairs professionals from Jesuit institutions across the country, united by a shared commitment to developing the whole student. Hosted at Loyola University New Orleans, the experience was intentionally rooted in the culture, hospitality, and spirit of the city. With campus dining facilities under full renovation and no kitchen available, the Sodexo team was challenged to completely rethink how food could be prepared and served. What emerged was not simply a menu, but a culinary experience that brought the story of New Orleans to life in every detail.

## Essay:

Executing a five-day culinary program without a kitchen required full collaboration across culinary, catering, and marketing teams. All food was prepared off-site using a shared kitchen at the Academy of the Sacred Heart, with limited daily access, requiring precise coordination, timing, and trust to maintain consistency across each day of service.

The menu reflected the bold identity of Louisiana, featuring crawfish étouffée, shrimp creole, chicken and andouille gumbo, and alligator sauce piquant, alongside elevated offerings like BBQ Gulf shrimp with smoked gouda grit cakes

and bourbon glazed pork belly. Interactive stations, including build-your-own yakamein, grits, eggs, waffles, and French crepes, added energy and variety, while inclusive options ensured every guest felt considered.

Storytelling was woven throughout the experience through intentional signage sharing the history behind dishes and iconic New Orleans favorites. Local partners, including Acme Oyster House, Lucky Dog, Cracklin' Danny, Hubig's Pies, Bae's Bakery, Hansen's Sno-Bliz, Roman Candy, Island Time Daiquiri, and Quintin's Ice Cream, deepened that connection.

Over five days, attendees remained engaged and consistently shared positive feedback, with many requesting recipes. Sydney Begoun, EdD, shared, "Sodexo truly showed out... they showcased the soul of the city and our state."

#### Introduction:

JASPA, the Jesuit Association of Student Personnel Administrators, brings together leaders who are shaping student experiences through mission-driven work. For the 2025 Five-Year Institute, that mission came to life through a fully immersive New Orleans experience. From the moment attendees arrived, they were welcomed into something that felt vibrant, intentional, and alive. It created a feeling that carried through every space, every interaction, and every moment.

#### Essay:

The Loyola University Sports Complex was completely transformed into a New Orleans festival-style experience, immersing guests in the culture and energy of the city. The experience opened with a traditional second line, bringing movement and excitement across campus. Inside, guests were surrounded by a stilt walker, champagne servers, live music, and a Mardi Gras Krewe. The entertainment lineup included Chubby Carrier and The Bayou Swamp Band, a jazz trio, string quartet, club musicians, and DJ PJ. Each evening introduced a new theme while maintaining a cohesive experience. Club JASPA served as a consistent nightly destination, offering a lounge and nightlife atmosphere where attendees could unwind, connect, and celebrate. Cajun Night added deeper immersion with interactive moments, including photo opportunities with a live alligator and ball python. A live zydeco band paired with dance lessons created a shared experience that felt natural and memorable. As Alicia A. Bourque, Ph.D., Vice President for Student Affairs at Loyola University New Orleans, shared, "Sodexo went above and beyond in bringing the heart of New Orleans to life... every detail reflected a deep commitment to collaboration, radical hospitality, and cultural authenticity." The experience did not just reflect New Orleans. It made guests feel it.

#### Introduction:

What made this experience stand out was not just what guests saw, but what they felt. Every detail was intentional and every moment was considered. This was a full team effort that brought together creativity, coordination, and care to create something meaningful. Even with the added complexity of operating without the kitchen, the team remained focused on delivering an experience that felt seamless, immersive, and authentic.

#### Essay:

The transformation of the Sports Complex was one of the most impactful elements of the event. The space was reimagined using elevator wraps, floor graphics, large banners, and decals that welcomed and guided guests through the experience. Banners highlighted the week's entertainment lineup, chef spotlights, and menus, all designed with New Orleans flair. Lighting displays, string lights, and décor created an immersive environment inspired by Mardi Gras and New Orleans architecture. Details such as an imitation wrought iron gate, themed décor, beads, and curated swag brought the experience to life. Each day introduced new visual elements, with décor and team member uniforms evolving to reflect daily themes, keeping the experience fresh across all five days. Pop-up chef banners and the Taste of Louisiana cookbook, created by the local team, added depth through chef spotlights, recipes, and the history behind dishes, serving as both décor and a meaningful takeaway. Sodexo Dietitian Abbey LeBoeuf, MS, RDN, LDN, CNSC, led a work-life balance session during JASPA, offering a moment of reflection,

reinforcing the purpose behind the importance of supporting the whole individual. Dallas Flint, Director of Student Conduct, described the experience as “unforgettable,” highlighting the creativity, atmosphere, and care that defined the event.

Introduction:

The success of this event came down to people. It was the collaboration, the trust, and the willingness to show up and do whatever it took to make it happen. Delivering a five-day experience of this scale without a kitchen required adaptability, communication, and a shared commitment to excellence.

Essay:

This event required full collaboration across Sodexo, Loyola University New Orleans, and the community. All food was prepared off-site using a shared kitchen at the Academy of the Sacred Heart, while the team also supported Sacred Heart’s summer camps and kitchen operations during the same time. “We cooked off-site, worked without a traditional kitchen, and turned a gym into a fully immersive experience,” said Chef Matthew Box, Executive Chef of Loyola Dining. “The chefs, catering, and marketing teams all came together to create something special.

Despite the challenges, the outcome was exceptional.” “This was ambitious, and it required constant coordination, but our team never backed down,” added Chef Christopher Hustad, Executive Chef of Loyola Dining. “What we achieved shows the depth of talent and professionalism across our district.” Charlie Casrill, General Manager of Loyola Dining, emphasized the strength of the team, sharing that “our district comes together when it counts and every person brings their unique talent and creativity to the table.” Local partnerships, including the Cafe du Monde food truck for the final sendoff, reinforced authenticity and connection to the city. It was a shared effort that created an experience people will carry with them long after it ended.

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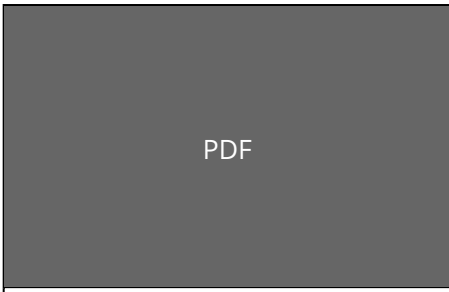
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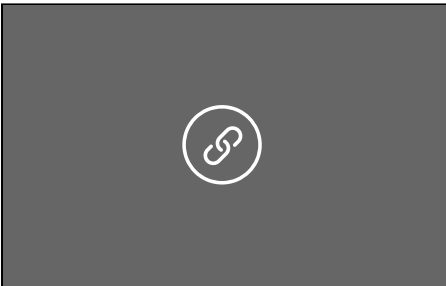


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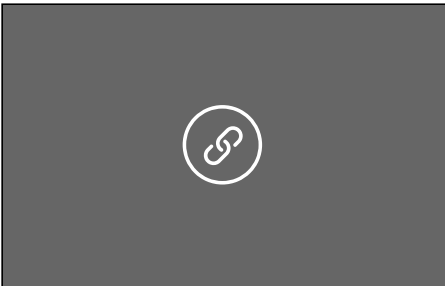
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