

# Julie Bannister



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## Entry details

Entry Name: Pitt Catering Co.

Institution Name: University of Pittsburgh

Entry Completed By (*name and position*): Maggie Weaver, Sr. Marketing Director

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## Introduction:

The Pitt Catering Co. sales process is designed to be consultative, transparent, and genuinely client-centered from first inquiry through final post-event follow-up. A dedicated sales office anchors the entire experience, with the Director of Sales and Catering Coordinator working in close tandem to guide clients through every critical decision — menu selection, service style, budget alignment, and logistical execution. The result is a program that consistently earns enthusiastic praise not only for the exceptional quality of its food and service, but also for the ease and genuine confidence it so reliably delivers to every client throughout the planning and service processes.

## Essay:

All catering inquiries flow through the dedicated sales office, where clients are immediately connected with the Sales Director and Catering Coordinator. This dual-contact model ensures responsiveness and continuity, with menus and service styles tailored to each event's goals, budget, and audience. Sales collaborates closely with culinary and operations teams, ensuring every commitment made during consultations is executable on event day.

Tastings are offered as a strategic relationship-building tool, particularly for annual and repeat clients. These sessions allow clients to experience new offerings firsthand, collaborate with the culinary team, and fine-tune menus ahead of high-profile events — building confidence and fostering long-term loyalty.

Client relationships are actively maintained beyond the event itself. Post-event emails and CaterTrax surveys gather feedback, while monthly testimonial communications celebrate service excellence across the campus community.

Community commitment further distinguishes the program. A strong partnership with 412 Food Rescue redirects surplus food to neighbors experiencing food insecurity. Sustainability is embedded operationally: 70% of disposable serveware is compostable, recyclable beverages are standard, and a PHEV vehicle serves the fleet. Local partnerships with Turner Dairy, Breadworks, Potomac Bakery, Hershey's Ice Cream, and 1978 Rentals reinforce regional sourcing values. Pitt Catering Co. does not simply feed the campus — it sustains it.

#### Introduction:

Pitt Catering Co.'s marketing strategy reflects the same intentionality found in its menus and service execution: multichannel, brand-consistent, and deeply rooted in genuine community engagement. Promotional materials are developed in close partnership with the program's marketing team. This ensures every touchpoint — from digital signage to printed catering guides — reinforces a cohesive visual identity well-aligned with campus dining. The program effectively reaches its broad audience through campus-wide newsletters, digital screens, direct client relationship building, and an annual catering showcase. The showcase has become a valued and widely anticipated destination for previewing new seasonal menus, generating excitement, and deepening meaningful community connections.

#### Essay:

Promotional materials are polished, cohesive, descriptive, and visually unified with the broader Pitt Eats brand identity. Catering menus and guides are designed for clarity and creative flair, making options easy to navigate while communicating the program's full range and quality. Digital signage placements across the campus dining halls extend visibility to the daily student and faculty audience, while monthly newsletters keep established clients informed of seasonal specials, new offerings, and upcoming events throughout the year.

Brand consistency is a cornerstone of the marketing philosophy. Every client-facing touchpoint — PID signage, food station identifiers, BEO confirmations, and tasting materials — is designed as a seamless extension of the Pitt Eats' dining vision, building recognition and reinforcing professional character at every interaction.

Customer engagement is built directly into the marketing calendar. The Annual Catering Showcase previews new menus and gathers direct client feedback, while customized tastings for repeat clients demonstrate a lasting commitment to personalization. The Mocktail Bar — born at Pitt and now a national corporate limited-time offer — exemplifies the program's trend-forward identity. Two additional Pitt-originated items, the Biscuit Bar and Harvest Vegetable Table, were featured in the national catering menu launched recently by our corporate parent, validating broader creative influence by the program.

#### Introduction:

Pitt Catering Co.'s menus are a living expression of the University of Pittsburgh's culinary identity: dynamic, inclusive, and deeply connected to the campus community it serves. Built from the ground up during the COVID era and refined continuously since, the program leverages the Carved + Crafted corporate framework while layering in distinctive Pittsburgh-rooted creativity. Curated menus draw from some beloved internal retail brands — Pom + Honey, Cucina, PA Taco, Smokeland, Farmstand, and Table 33 — translating their signature flavors into elevated catering experiences. Every menu intentionally reflects current national food trends and the specific needs of each client, guest, and occasion.

#### Essay:

Pitt Catering Co. offers a comprehensive suite of menu options across the full spectrum of campus events. Standard ordering tiers include Full Catering, Student Organizations, America to Go, and Snack Stop, each scaled to budget and event scope. Menus are refreshed every semester to remain relevant, encompassing breakfast, coffee breaks, lunches, dinners, receptions, picnics, and corporate events.

Special dietary needs are woven into the program's architecture, never treated as exceptions. Vegan, vegetarian, and avoiding gluten options are available at every service tier. Allergen-specific events receive separately prepared meals to ensure guest safety. Religious requirements are supported through regular halal beef and chicken sourcing and a dedicated kosher program developed in partnership with The Delicatessen and a local kosher market. This capability was demonstrated at scale during the fall 2024 Maccabi Games, where the team served 2,500 guests a complete kosher menu across six consecutive days.

Beverage programs are a particular strength. The Mocktail Bar — originating at Pitt and now a national LTO with our parent company — anchors receptions with visual drama and seasonal energy. Rotating juice fusions keep offerings fresh year-round. New bowl options inspired by the Wellness and Recreation Center ensure catering reflects campus dining trends in real time.

#### Introduction:

Food presentation by Pitt Catering Co. is an art form applied across every service scenario. It could be a boxed lunch for a student organization or a plated dinner for a university gala. The guiding philosophy is consistent: every presentation must reflect the quality of the food, the character of the event, and the identity of the campus dining program. Creativity and intentionality are built into each setup, ensuring that whether a guest picks up a packaged meal or moves through an elaborate buffet station, the experience is polished, memorable, and distinctly representative of what Pitt Catering Co. stands for.

#### Essay:

Pitt Catering Co. offers presentation styles thoughtfully suited to any occasion. Boxed lunches and packaged meals are assembled with careful attention to dietary labeling, ensuring efficient and dignified service at large-scale grab-and-go events. Coffee breaks and snack stations are merchandised for visual appeal, with fresh garnishes and cohesive serveware reinforcing a sense of care in casual settings. Student events and informal gatherings receive the same presentation discipline as corporate functions, appropriately scaled without compromising quality.

For buffets and receptions, food stations stand out. Their design is a signature program strength. Stations are crafted to be visually engaging and intuitive for guest flow, with height variation, clean sightlines, and thoughtful signage guiding the experience. Fresh herbs, flowers, and seasonal vegetables add warmth and dimension to every display. Creative alternatives — cast iron, paella pans, and specialty chafers — complement classic buffetware to keep presentations fresh and unpredictable.

Serveware reinforces the visual narrative throughout. The inventory spans classic melamine, white and black china, a slate series in greys and blues, patterned blue, and a Fiesta collection in blue and gold that pays homage to Pitt's H2P spirit. Every service format — from passed hors d'oeuvres to formal galas and fundraisers — is executed with creative confidence.

#### Introduction:

Pitt Catering Co.'s service model is built on professional depth, operational flexibility, and a team culture defined by longevity and shared purpose. Every step in the service process — from initial inquiry to the final cleanup — is guided by experienced professionals who understand both the logistical demands of campus catering and the relationship-driven nature of event hospitality. Three distinct service tiers are designed to meet any client need, and staffing decisions are made with the same intentionality as menu design. This ensures that every event is fully supported by the right people, in the right roles, at precisely the right time.

#### Essay:

Three service styles anchor the program's design. Drop-off service provides fully disposable setups with no return trip — a streamlined solution for informal events and tight timelines. Catering setup delivers a complete buffet arrangement with a scheduled supply pickup, suited to departmental meetings and midscale functions. Full Wait Staff service, available in disposable or full China, provides comprehensive event management from setup through teardown, tailored to galas, receptions, and high-profile university occasions.

Staffing is determined on a case-by-case basis, with event scope, guest count, location, service style, and action station requirements informing each deployment decision. The team encompasses a regional catering director, executive chef, sous chefs, cooks, banquet events director, servers, banquet captains, drivers, sales director, and sales coordinator. This full-spectrum team can scale from a 20-person coffee break to a 2,500-guest kosher dining event.

The program's most powerful differentiator is its depth of institutional knowledge. In 2025 three staff members with more than 60 years of combined service retired. Numerous current team members bring 20 or more years of experience. Collaborative relationships with Carnegie Mellon, Carlow, Pitt's satellite campuses, and Levy at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center extend the available labor pool for peak-demand weekends, including Homecoming and Graduation.

Log in to [nacufs.awardsplatform.com](https://nacufs.awardsplatform.com) to see complete entry attachments.

PDF

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Student Caterin... 1.2 MiB

PDF

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Pittsburgh Cook...57 KiB

pitt catering co.

## HOMECOMING PACKAGES

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**GAME DAY TRAY** \$9.95/person

Bacon Cheeseburger Sliders  
Vegetable Crudite  
Buffalo Chicken Dip + House-Made Chips

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**SMOKELAND BBQ** \$22.95/person

Slider Bolls	Vegan Squash Ribz
BBQ Pulled Chicken	Corn Bread
Mac + Cheese	BBQ Sauce
BBQ Baked Beans	Pickles

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**PANTHER PACK** \$24.95/person

<p><b>CHOOSE 2</b></p> <p>Smokeland BBQ Wings Hamburgers Hot Dogs Sausage + Peppers Beyond Sausage + Peppers</p> <p><b>CHOOSE 2</b></p> <p>Nashville Hot Chicken Dip Beer Cheese Dip French Onion Dip</p>	<p><b>CHOOSE 2</b></p> <p>Mac + Cheese Pierogies Potato Salad Hakasi</p>
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packages Available For Drop Off or Pickup!

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**TAILGATE CONCEIRGE**

Catering Setup + Teardown  
Chaffers + Catering Equipment  
Service Staff + Bartenders

Inquire about pricing for custom concierge services.

412-446-3282  
catering@pitt.edu

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Homecoming P... 266 KiB



Alumni Dinner.j... 69 KiB



Dessert Setup.j... 80 KiB



Pittsburgh Cook...86 KiB



Signature Blue ... 174 KiB



Family Weeken... 84 KiB



Hillman Celebra...79 KiB



Hillman Celebra...61 KiB



Chancellor Dinn...3.4 MiB



Pitt Catering LT... 250 KiB

PDF

Student Caterin... 598 KiB

PDF

Breakroom Ser... 84 KiB



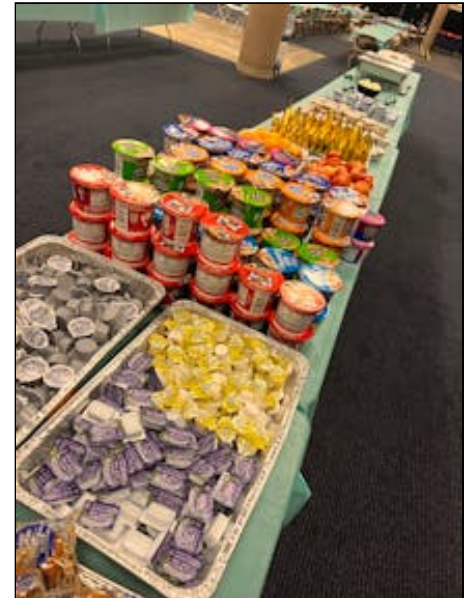
Pitt Catering Co... 211 KiB

PDF

Pitt Catering Co... 4.4 MiB



Chancellor Dinn...3.1 MiB



Maccabi Games... 329 KiB



Maccabi Games... 75 KiB



Attachment name  
Maccabi Information

<https://jccmaccabi.org/>