

The Eatery at Broward: Renovation of the Year

University of Florida

Introduction:

On August 22, 2024 Florida Fresh Dining unveiled our newly renovated dining hall- closing a chapter on two years of thoughtful planning, marketing and collaboration.

The Eatery at Broward is the University of Florida’s centrally located, most-visited location. But its shortcomings became apparent as more students joined our on-campus dining community. Lack of seating, no contained allergen-free prep and a claustrophobic floor layout all hurt the Broward experience.

Our students deserved an renovation, and we began planning — with their needs and desires in mind.

Each element of the process incorporated student feedback at the forefront.

Essay:

Florida Fresh Dining redesigned Broward with the intent of connecting students to the food on their plates, encouraging them to participate in their own dining experience. The new dessert station includes a finishing kitchen, so students can see house-made desserts daily — including a popular orange-and-blue cookie.

Gator pride doesn’t stop at desserts. A state-of-the-art sound system and big-screen TV allow sports fans to watch the latest games while they eat. Or, they might look to the Gator Grill station for high top tables. There, 10-foot glass viewing windows let them see orders from grill to plate.

While creating a fun, welcoming environment for our students, we prioritized our commitment to community.

We honored our “Florida First” commitment by sourcing local vendors within 250 miles. We also preserved legacy trees in the construction area, working with landscaping experts across the university to protect the surrounding environment. The renovated Broward offers a sustainable, inclusive and enjoyable solution to meet the needs of a growing community of diners. When students walk into Broward, they know they’ll find a place to sit, healthful and delicious food to enjoy, and a community to welcome them home.

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Striving to help our student body adjust seamlessly to the change, we had food trucks to serve diners as a supplement to our new facilities.

Accompanying the launch, we held a traditional Grand Opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony. Continuing to highlight the space, we also moved a series of special signature events to Broward. Among the most popular was our late-night breakfast event, where students can stop by the hall after hours for special sweet treats, snacks, giveaways and attractions from photo booths to limited-edition mugs.

Feedback included: “Beautiful.” “Perfect location.” “Pretty awesome.” “Massive.” “10 out of 10.”

Essay:

Florida Fresh Dining began teasing the opening for The Eatery @ Broward in the months leading up to the hall’s grand opening on its Instagram @floridafresh.dining. With over 5,500 followers, this account provides one of our strongest digital connections to our student community. 9 months before opening, we delivered a temporary portable building solution for the Spring 2024 semester during the renovation. Each week, we emailed students photos of construction updates to keep them engaged.

Our anticipation-building promotion expanded beyond static graphics or photos, utilizing multimedia strategies to create a well-rounded marketing campaign that kept our largely Gen Z student body at the forefront.

Drawing on the growing popularity of short-term video content, we created a Reel featuring a brief “sneak peek” at the venue before opening. We also tapped into playful trends, posting Reels with captions like “The person who sent you this wants to eat pizza with you at the new Eatery @ Broward.” By encouraging students to share our content among their friends, we strived to communicate the new dining hall’s offerings across our campus.

In the first month, Broward served 4,200 per day - surpassing previous high of 2800 the year prior.

Introduction:

Florida Fresh Dining worked to connect our reopened dining hall to the rest of campus throughout the renovation planning process. From the floor-to-ceiling glass windows on the lower floor of the building, students can look out onto the newly opened Honors Village student housing. Emphasizing the area’s connection to its external environment, we ensured our new Broward could fulfill its function as a comfortable, inviting dining hall.

Essay:

Our dedicated partners who played a key role in the renovation of the Eatery at Broward. This project was a true team effort, and we are grateful for the collaboration of our design team, construction experts, University of Florida staff, and all other partners who contributed their time, talent, and resources. We met on a weekly basis, reviewed research and worked together to meet project goal on time and on budget. Their unwavering commitment to quality and innovation helped transform a traditional dining space into a modern, functional, and inviting environment for our students. From concept to completion, the expertise and dedication of our partners were instrumental in creating a space that reflects our shared vision of enhancing student life. We are proud of what we’ve accomplished together thanks to the exceptional teamwork that made this renovation a reality.

Partners include:

UF Business Affairs
UF Business Services
UF Division of Planning Design and Construction
UF Environmental Health and Safety
UF Department of Landscape Architecture
UF Department of Facilities
State of Florida Board of Health
Design/Build contractor: Parrish McCall
Lead architect: Tekton Design
Food service consultant company: Scopos Design
Dining partner: Chartwells Higher Ed.
Traders Hill Farms

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Attachment name
Click on Broward to see t...

<https://dineoncampus.c...>



Attachment name
Overview of the dining pr...

<https://dineoncampus.c...>