

## NACUFS (2025)

### Wellness and Nutrition Program of the Year

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EatWell Program

Laker Food Co, Grand Valley State University

#### Essay:

##### EatWell at GVSU: Integrating Nutrition and Wellness for Student Success

At Grand Valley State University, Laker Food Co's Registered Dietitian collaborated with the Center for Health and Wellbeing's Wellness Information Team (WIT) throughout the year to engage students in creative and educational nutrition programming.

##### Goals:

Recognizing that wellness extends beyond just physical health, the EatWell initiative was developed to promote nutrition education through the lens of the 8 Dimensions of Wellness. By leveraging the expertise of both the Laker Food Co RD and our campus wellness team, we aimed to bring accessible, interactive, and informative experiences to students on campus.

##### Objectives:

Enhancing students' understanding of how nutrition supports various aspects of well-being.

Providing accessible nutrition education in a fun, engaging format.

Strengthening campus-wide partnerships to expand wellness initiatives.

#### Execution:

The RD and WIT worked closely to plan and execute monthly EatWell events, each focusing on a different dimension of wellness. Events were held in various locations around campus to reach a broad student audience. Events included:

**Food Samples:** Students were provided with samples that aligned with the event's wellness theme, such as post-workout snacks for physical wellness, brain-boosting foods for intellectual wellness, and plant-based options for environmental wellness.

**Educational Materials:** Handouts and interactive activities reinforced key nutrition messages, offering students takeaways to apply in their daily lives.

**Engagement Activities:** Taste tests comparing generic and name-brand foods, goal setting, mindful eating exercises, and guessing brain-boosting ingredients in a snack are a few examples of activities that students participated in to help strengthen the connections they are making between food and wellness.

#### Events & Impact:

**Physical Wellness (January):** Post-workout samples, including RX Bars and chocolate milk, were distributed to students alongside performance fueling handouts.

**Emotional Wellness (February):** A discussion on mindful and intuitive eating engaged students with tips on comfort foods and emotional well-being.

**Occupational Wellness (March):** Students built on-the-go snack boxes with protein, whole grains, and fruit to support balanced nutrition in a busy schedule.

**Intellectual Wellness (April):** A brain-boosting ingredient challenge encouraged students to recognize the impact of food on cognitive function.

**Social Wellness (September):** A s'mores social event fostered conversation and connection while students roasted marshmallows around a fire pit.

**Financial Wellness (October):** A taste test activity helped students explore cost-effective grocery shopping habits.

**Environmental Wellness (November):** A plant-forward dining experience partnered with Impossible Foods highlighted sustainable eating practices that students can implement when dining on campus.

#### Reflection:

Through this collaboration, over 700 students engaged with nutrition education in dynamic and meaningful ways. The success of EatWell demonstrated the power of interdisciplinary partnerships in promoting student health. The EatWell program will continue to evolve to meet the needs of students.

By integrating nutrition into the broader wellness conversation and making learning accessible, interactive, and enjoyable, the EatWell program embodies the spirit of the NACUFS award: creating fun and innovative nutrition experiences that leave a lasting impact on students' lives.

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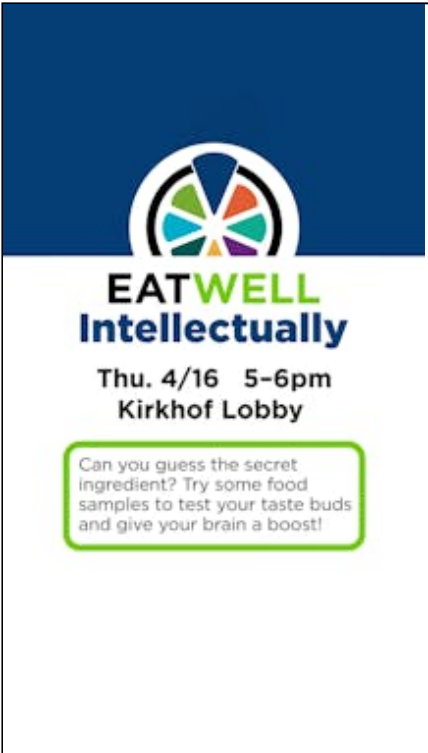
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**NOVEMBER IS World Vegan Month!**

Take small steps to make a big impact! Try more plant-forward meals this month and see how easy it can be to eat sustainably.

- Try a vegan burger at the grill station at The Dish, Fresh Food Company, Connection, and Laker Grill
- Swap meat for tofu when getting stir fry or pasta at Fresh Food Company
- Check out the 1 World Kitchen, the vegan station at The Dish
- Visit Seedwell at the Connection for a selection of plant-forward rotating entrees

Look for our icons:

**Lower Your Carbon Footprint**  
Plant-forward meals typically produce far fewer greenhouse gases than animal-based options. Even swapping just a few meals per week for plant-based ones can make a big difference.

**Eat Fresh, Eat Local**  
Take advantage of local farmers' markets or gardens. Eating fresh, seasonal produce supports the local economy and reduces the environmental impact of transportation and packaging.

**Reduce Waste**  
Plan and prepare your meals to make sure you use all ingredients before they go back. If you do need to toss anything, look for composting bins around campus!

**For tips on making plant-forward choices on campus, check out our Vegan & Vegetarian Dining Guide**

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**Nov 11th**

**Plant-Based Eating**

**Nov 12th**

**Plant-Based Eating**

**Nov 13th**

**Plant-Based Eating**

**Nov 14th**

**Plant-Based Eating**

**Nov 15th**

**Plant-Based Eating**

**Nov 16th**

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The 8 Dimension... 605 KiB



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