

Grace Barbaro



PoBVJYMB

Entry details

Entry Name: W&M Dining Special Diet Program

Institution Name: William & Mary

Entry Completed By (*name and position*): Grace Barbaro - Registered Dietitian

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Essay:

W&M Dining at William & Mary is committed to nourishing every student and fostering an inclusive dining experience. Our work extends beyond providing accessible nutrition- we create individualized, meaningful experiences through direct, human connections. Whether students use our rapid-response text-assist, seek face-to-face guidance from Golden Apron staff, or work directly with our dining team, they receive support tailored to their needs. Student feedback shapes our efforts: 61% of meal plan holders seek food that supports wellbeing, while 55% prioritize convenience.

Our on-site registered dietitian leads our evidence-based approach, applying best practices in allergen management, performance nutrition, and student wellness. Through orientation presentations, campus tabling, social media outreach, and partnerships with student organizations, she helps students navigate dining safely and confidently. Our individualized approach has earned recognition with placement on Spokin's Top 100 Allergy-Friendly Colleges for 2025.

Accessible support is central to our program. The text-assist line provides real-time, human responses, averaging two minutes, to help students verify ingredients, locate safe options, or request guidance. For those who prefer in-person assistance, Golden Apron staff are trained to offer immediate support within the dining halls.

Students needing additional accommodations benefit from our meal pre-order program, which provides customized allergen-free meals through a private message thread with the dietitian and culinary leadership. The dietitian also works individually with students to build weekly menus tailored to their needs, reducing daily stress and supporting academic and personal success.

Both dining halls are nut-free and feature True Balance stations, where meals are prepared without the top nine allergens and gluten using dedicated equipment. The Stress-Less Zone offers packaged, nut- and gluten-free products and dedicated equipment to reduce cross-contact. In 2025, an employee-operated toaster was added at True Balance in response to student feedback, further strengthening safety.

Campus partnerships expand allergen-friendly offerings. Town Center Cold Pressed provides gluten-free bagels and vegan alternatives, while No Nuts Donuts supplies gluten-free, nut-free, and vegan baked goods. Collaborations include recurring events such as holiday cookie decorating, flavor tastings, and allergen-friendly cakes for Charter Day.

Plant-forward dining is a core part of our wellness strategy. Both dining halls feature dedicated vegan stations, and 38% of daily menu items are vegan, including Beyond Meat products, vegan pizza, Just Egg, and more. Events like Plant to Plate, a fully vegan dinner, and Griffin Gourmet Games celebrate plant-based creativity, while Wellness Wednesdays make nutrition education fun and accessible with a build-your-own hummus bar and plant-based scavenger hunt.

Halal-certified offerings now include seven meat products across 14 stations. During Ramadan, we provide grab-and-go Iftar items, prayer spaces, and favorite meals based on student submissions. Kosher dining is supported through Fran's Kitchen, which prepares freshly packaged kosher meals in a dedicated kosher-certified kitchen.

W&M Dining remains committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive experience for every student. Because dietary needs are never one-size-fits-all, our approach is tailored to each student. With 67% of meal plan holders choosing to keep their current plan, student feedback affirms the strength of our program and dedication to meeting their needs.

Log in to nacufs.awardsplatform.com to see complete entry attachments.



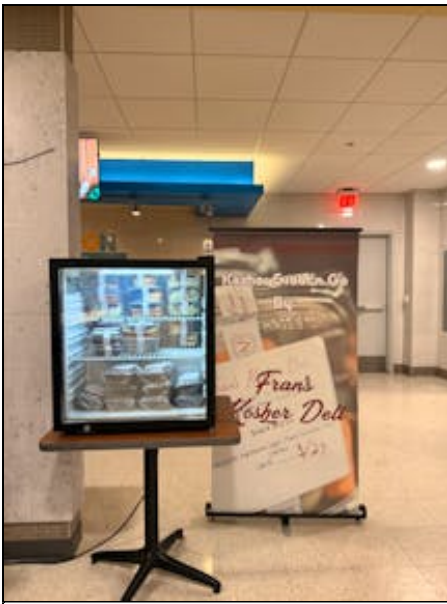
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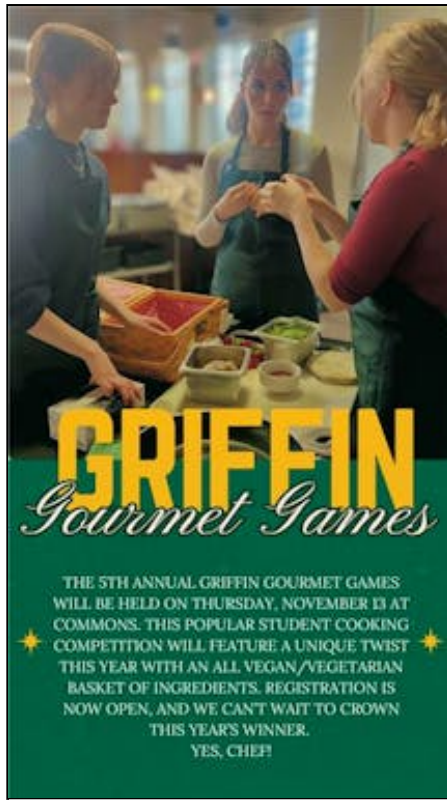
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[Donut Tasting.J...](#) 2.4 MiB



FransDeli.jpeg 4.1 MiB



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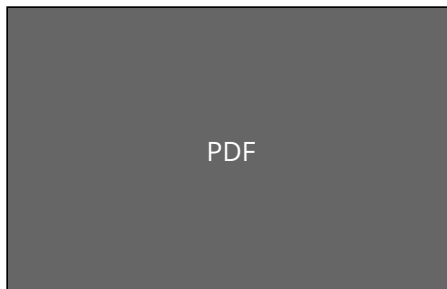


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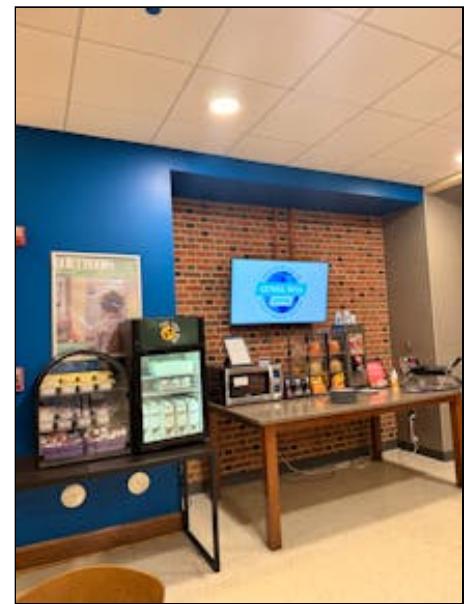
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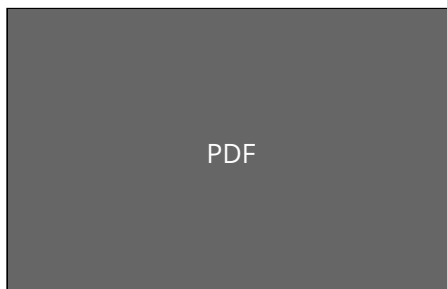


StressLess.jpeg 4.8 MiB



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Vegan Social Po... 3.9 MiB



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W&M Campus S...403 KiB



Dietitian Is In.jpg 193 KiB



Golden Apron.j... 210 KiB



Halal Chicken.jpg 119 KiB



True Balance.jpg 262 KiB



Plant Forward ... 522 KiB



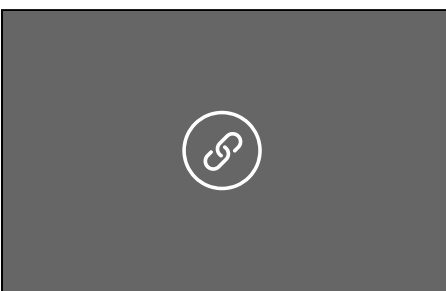
Plant-Based W... 183 KiB



Plant to Plate Di...577 KiB



PlantToPlateMe... 1.3 MiB



Attachment name
Health & Wellness page...

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