

Evan McMullen



vonxAAM

Entry details

Entry Name:	Grand Opening: Newly Added Teaching Kitchen and Renovated LIFE Station
Institution Name:	Drew University
Entry Completed By (<i>name and position</i>):	Evan McMullen, Marketing Manager
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Introduction:

The grand opening of the Teaching Kitchen and renovated LIFE (Less Ingredients, Flavorful Eats) station at Drew University was designed to showcase innovation, inclusivity, and culinary excellence. The event's menu and meal experience highlighted a diverse range of flavors, preparation methods, and dietary accommodations, reflecting a commitment to meeting the needs of all guests while delivering a memorable dining experience.

Essay:

The event featured a thoughtfully curated six-course tasting menu at our LIFE station to highlight its expansion of diverse and flavorful menu items. Dishes included slow-roasted lemon rosemary chicken with amaranth, chipotle garbanzo salad, pulled pork with three-bean chili, roasted broccoli with cabernet reduction, quinoa with sunflower seeds and baby chives, and an oat smoothie with fresh berries. Each course offered a balance of colors, textures, temperatures, and flavors, ensuring a dynamic and engaging culinary experience.

The menu complemented the LIFE station's allergen-friendly mission, with all items free from the top nine allergens, demonstrating that dietary accommodations can be both safe and flavorful. Various cooking techniques—including roasting, braising, blending, and fresh preparation—were utilized to enhance depth and variety.

Additionally, the Teaching Kitchen component introduced a live cooking demonstration by celebrity chef Harold Moore, where participants prepared hand-stretched mozzarella with marinated tomatoes. This interactive element

further diversified the meal experience. Food safety and quality were prioritized through controlled preparation environments and dedicated service ware, ensuring guests could dine with confidence.

Introduction:

The event theme, centered on “Interactive Culinary Exploration,” seamlessly integrated the unveiling of the Teaching Kitchen with the expansion of the LIFE station. The concept emphasized hands-on learning and elevated dining, creating a unique and immersive experience for attendees.

Essay:

The theme was executed through a combination of interactive experiences, elevated presentation, and intentional design. The Teaching Kitchen served as the focal point, offering individualized cooking stations where guests engaged directly in food preparation. The live cooking class with Chef Harold Moore elevated the experience, blending education with entertainment and allowing participants to learn professional techniques in an approachable setting.

The LIFE station tasting complemented this by offering a refined, sit-down dining experience with a formal table setting, enhancing the sense of occasion. Decor and layout were intentionally designed to distinguish each space while maintaining a cohesive flow throughout the venue.

Multiple service styles were utilized, including action stations, guided tastings, and self-directed cooking, creating a dynamic environment that appealed to a wide audience. Overall, the event’s execution successfully combined innovation, education, and hospitality, resulting in a memorable and engaging experience for students, faculty/staff, and the clients.

Introduction:

A comprehensive and creative marketing strategy ensured strong attendance and engagement for the grand opening event. Messaging focused on excitement, accessibility, and innovation, highlighting the unique features of both the Teaching Kitchen and LIFE station, along with the activities held at each. Once the ribbon was cut and confetti was in the air, excitement grew as the attendees of these activities were some of the first to experience these new implementations we brought to on-campus dining at Drew University.

Essay:

Promotional efforts utilized a variety of media platforms, including social media campaigns, digital engagement through Grubhub, and on-site signage. Graphics were cohesive and visually engaging, reflecting the modern and interactive nature of the event and space. Messaging clearly communicated event details, participation opportunities, and the benefits of the new dining concepts.

To enhance engagement, interactive elements such as a spin-the-wheel prize station, giveaways, and social media entry opportunities were incorporated. Prizes—including Apple AirPods, a JBL speaker, a 55” 4K TV, and gift cards to Chef Harold Moore’s restaurant—generated excitement and increased participation.

The campus dietitian further enhanced the experience by providing accessible education on allergen-friendly dining. Feedback was intentionally gathered before and during the event through a Google Form used for activity sign-ups. Responses highlighted strong student interest, with comments such as “learning how to make a new dish” and excitement about the Teaching Kitchen’s “versatility.” For the LIFE station, students expressed enthusiasm for “more inclusive and healthy options” that support their nutritional goals.

These combined efforts resulted in a highly visible, engaging, and impactful event that resonated strongly with the campus community.

Introduction:

The grand opening achieved its goals of increasing awareness, engagement, and participation in campus dining initiatives. The event emphasized collaboration, sustainability, and student involvement, contributing to its overall success and impact.

Essay:

The event demonstrated clear success through strong attendance, high levels of participation in activities, and positive feedback from students and guests. Many attendees expressed enthusiasm for the Teaching Kitchen's hands-on opportunities and the expanded offerings at the LIFE station. Parents and students alike recognized the value of inclusive dining options and culinary education.

Students and staff played an integral role in the event's execution, from planning and preparation to facilitation and engagement. The Teaching Kitchen itself promotes sustainability by encouraging mindful cooking practices, reducing food waste through customizable portions, and utilizing shared resources efficiently.

The event delivered a strong "wow" factor through its combination of interactive cooking, celebrity chef involvement, and elevated dining experiences. By clearly meeting its objectives—enhancing student engagement, promoting inclusivity, and introducing innovative dining concepts—the grand opening set a new standard for residential dining events and established a foundation for continued success.

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



Grand Opening Giveaways Teaching KITCHEN LIFE

Name: _____
Email: _____

Grand_Opening... 189 KiB



GOURMET DINING

GRAND Opening

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE THE GRAND OPENING OF OUR TEACHING KITCHEN AND LIFE STATION

The Commons Campus Restaurant | Monday, March 24, 2025 | Starting at 12:00pm & 4:15pm

Teaching KITCHEN LIFE

SAVE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND GIVEAWAY DETAILS >>>

Grand_Opening... 852 KiB



Teaching KITCHEN

Featuring Celebrity Guest Chef Harold Moore

Watch as CHTRK participates in the first cooking class at our brand new Teaching Kitchen, taught by Chef Harold Moore. He will be teaching participants how to make fresh, hand-dressed mozzarella. In addition, Chef Harold will demonstrate how to make marinated tomatoes with thyme, basil, and olive oil - a perfect pairing to the mozzarella.

GOURMET DINING

Grand_Opening... 1.0 MiB



What Is The Teaching Kitchen?

Located in The Commons (Joseph R. Baker Lounge), we are introducing a brand new concept: the Teaching Kitchen. This interactive and flexible addition to our campus dining experience allows guests to explore food, culinary, and nutrition theory that will positively impact food choices and experiences. Additionally, the Teaching Kitchen gives guests the flexibility to create anything that inspires them. With individualized cooking stations equipped with all the cooking essentials - ingredients, pans, pots, utensils, blenders, and induction cookers - guests are given all the necessary materials to make their own meals.

In addition to guests being able to cook their own meals in a fully equipped kitchen, we will be hosting events and cooking classes in the Teaching Kitchen. Partnering with our executive chef, sous chefs and campus dietitian, we will guide guests through cooking sessions that cover a wide range of interests. From making delicious smoothies and energy boosting bites to preparing refreshing summer salads, there is something for everyone, no matter your cooking expertise.

GOURMET DINING

Grand Opening... 1.0 MiB



LIFE Station Menu Tasting & Information Table

To celebrate the newly added and upcoming allergen-friendly menu offerings at the LIFE station, the Gourmet Dining Team will be having a LIFE station menu tasting with various courses to experience all of the new and exciting flavors the station has to offer!

The tasting will have set dining table with appropriate silverware, tasting plates, and glassware - all the things to make your tasting experience enjoyable and memorable.

A sign-up for the tasting can be found using the link in our bio where you will be brought to a Google Form. The tasting is first come, first served.

Along with the LIFE station menu tasting, our campus dietitian, Erica Puck, will have a table to answer any questions regarding the LIFE station and its offerings, hand out informational flyers, and have a sign-the-what-where you can win prizes.

GOURMET DINING

Grand Opening... 936 KiB



What Is The LIFE Station & Its Offerings?

Along with the addition of the Teaching Kitchen, we have renovated our allergen-friendly station, LIFE (Let's Enjoy Delicious & Nutritious Food). This station avoids the top nine allergens (peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, eggs, milk, sesame, wheat, soy) and gluten. The LIFE station has expanded its size, which, in turn, has expanded its future offerings and possibilities. From new daily offerings such as allergen-friendly smoothies, cereals, French fries, and desserts, we are excited to continue to expand our menu at LIFE even further and increase variety. This station is open to all guests, not just those with food allergies. The Gourmet Dining team encourages you and all guests to try the menu offerings available at the renovated LIFE station.

The LIFE station is open every day for breakfast, lunch, and dinner meal periods. For breakfast, the offerings include a type of oat pancake, a protein, a starch, and a vegetable, along with cereal, a smoothie, and fresh-cut fruit. Lunch and dinner menu offerings include two grain options, two protein options, a starch, and a vegetable, along with vegetarian and beef chili, a salad bar, affordable soups, and a dessert option. Offerings include fresh roasted chicken, Spanish potatoes, cucumber tomato balsamic, house special fall roasted vegetables, and more!

GOURMET DINING

Grand Opening... 1.1 MiB

Grand Opening Giveaways

To celebrate the grand opening of our new Teaching Kitchens and renovated LIFE station, we are having **free** giveaway prizes!



Apple AirPods 4



JBL Charge 5 Portable Wireless Powerbank with PowerShare



Hisense 43" Smart LED 4K UHD Smart TV



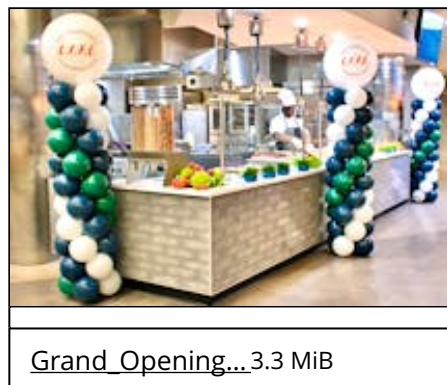
Two LIFE certificates to Chef Harold Moore's restaurant in NYC

Enter via Instagram, our blog, and at our information table for GOURMET DINING every!

To enter, submit your entry via Instagram, following @gdm_uw, and at our information table at the LIFE station the day of the grand opening, and tag those friends in the comments, and/or enter at our information table at the LIFE station the day of the grand opening.

GOURMET DINING

Grand Opening... 959 KiB



Grand Opening... 3.3 MiB



Grand Opening... 3.7 MiB



Grand Opening... 4.5 MiB



Grand Opening... 2.9 MiB



Grand Opening... 3.2 MiB



Grand Opening... 2.3 MiB



Grand Opening... 2.7 MiB



Grand Opening... 2.8 MiB



Grand Opening... 4.4 MiB



Grand Opening... 3.3 MiB



Grand Opening... 3.8 MiB



Grand Opening... 3.8 MiB



Grand Opening... 3.5 MiB