

Eliza Haffey



EyMGZjmo

Entry details

Entry Name: Food for All: Integrating Inclusion, Safety, and Trust into the Campus Dining Experience

Institution Name: University of Michigan

Entry Completed By (*name and position*): Eliza Haffey, MPH, RD - Senior Culinary Nutrition Specialist

Email Address: ejarman@umich.edu

Phone Number: +19894449898

Address: 541 Thompson St

City: Ann Arbor

State: MI

Zip Code: 48109

Country: United States of America

Essay:

Michigan Dining's inclusive special diet program is grounded in the principle that no student should have to choose between food safety, religious or cultural preferences, health, or belonging when navigating campus dining. Serving a diverse student population with a wide range of dietary needs, Michigan Dining has intentionally built systems that allow students with food allergies, medical conditions, and religious dietary requirements to participate fully in the dining experience with confidence and trust.

At the core of the program is a team of Registered Dietitians who provide leadership across dining operations. The team manages ingredient and nutrition data, establishes campus-wide allergen standards, and collaborates closely with culinary and operations leaders. Through weekly meetings, they maintain a structured six-week master menu that guarantees daily access to vegan, gluten-free, halal, and top nine allergen-free entrées in every residential dining hall, ensuring inclusive options are embedded into everyday service rather than offered as exceptions.

Michigan Dining employs a multi-layered approach to managing food allergies and dietary restrictions. Recipes and menus are labeled for the top nine allergens, as well as coconut, pork, beef, oats, and alcohol. Dining staff complete recurring training on allergen awareness and cross-contact prevention. Students with complex dietary needs may submit a special meal request form to pre-order personalized meals prepared in controlled kitchen environments, providing an added layer of safety and reassurance.

Religious dietary accommodations are seamlessly integrated into daily operations. Certified halal proteins are served daily with transparent sourcing and labeling. For students observing Kosher dietary laws, a certified Kosher kitchen operates under mashgiach supervision, and Kosher-certified meals are also available in campus retail and café locations to ensure consistent access.

To promote awareness of inclusive dining and special diet services, the nutrition team prioritizes high-visibility engagement, hosting more than 75 in-person events annually. Registered Dietitians maintain a presence at Campus Days, New Student Orientation, and start-of-semester events to introduce students to available resources early in their campus experience. The team also launched a Wellness Tabling series featuring interactive pop-up events in residential dining halls. These events paired engaging experiences, such as a build-your-own trail mix bar, blueberry slaw tastings, and a popular bubble tea pop-up, with evidence-based nutrition education. By combining cultural relevance, approachability, and education, the team reinforces that Registered Dietitians are visible and accessible resources.

This inclusive approach has led to increased student engagement and positive feedback. Students who once expressed hesitation about campus dining report greater comfort and trust after connecting with dining and nutrition teams. By removing barriers related to food safety, religious observance, and dietary restrictions, Michigan Dining fosters inclusion and belonging, ensuring all students can safely and confidently participate in the shared campus dining experience.

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Twigs Wellness ... 3.0 MiB



Screenshot 202... 954 KiB



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RD pic.png 1.2 MiB



tabling pic.png 764 KiB

Taking Action During an ALLERGIC REACTION

What is anaphylaxis? An extreme, often life-threatening allergic reaction to proteins found in food to which the body becomes hypersensitive.

THE TOP 9 FOOD ALLERGENS:

- Peanuts
- Tree nuts
- Milk
- Egg
- Wheat/Gluten
- Soy
- Sesame
- Fish
- Crustacean Shellfish

These foods account for 90% of food allergies and serious allergic reactions in the U.S.

SIGNS/SYMPTOMS:
Hives, swelling, itching, vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, wheezing, wheezing, trouble breathing, drowsiness, fainting, and even death.

Not every student will react in the same way. The signs/symptoms vary from person to person and even from incident to incident. People can react from a single crumb of a peanut whereas some may need larger quantities, like a handful of peanuts to start reacting. It is also important to remember reaction times may vary as well.

HOW TO TAKE ACTION:

1. Encourage the guest to administer their own adrenaline (or other medication)
2. Call 911, and let them know the location including building, room, building etc.
3. Make sure to mention the student is having an allergic reaction and that emergency is needed.
4. Encourage the guest to remain where they are until to be ok or to drive.

RESOURCES

Michigan Dining is one of the few universities that have a medical emergency program on campus. Notifications are shared to all of our restaurant dining halls and our Dining Managers are trained and ready to administer the program.

For more information, visit our website at www.michigan.edu/dining or contact us at CustomerService@umich.edu.

Scan the QR code to visit our Incident Report Form (password protected).

Contact CustomerService@umich.edu to speak with the team of Registered Dietitians with Michigan Dining.

AllergenHando... 604 KiB

Share Your Wellness Win!

How do you take care of yourself during finals week?

Share Your Well... 365 KiB

LEARN ABOUT UBE

Pronounced oo-beh, Ube is a Filipino purple yam. It has origins in Southeast Asia and is common in Filipino cuisines and has been used for over 400 years.

What are some ways Ube is traditionally prepared and consumed?

- Ube Milk Tea (with Biko)
 - Ube Flavored tea with tapioca pearls
- Ube Halaya (Jam)
 - Filipino Jam made from boiling and mashing the purple yam
- Ube Rice Cake
 - Steamed rice cake that is layered with powdered Ube
 - Typically served during special occasions like holidays, family gatherings and etc.
- Other Desserts
 - Cake, cupcakes, cheesecakes, cookies, donuts and many more!

Ube.png 235 KiB

