



**CR
EAT
IVE.**

CREATIVE DINING SERVICES®



Letter from the CEO

Meaningful experiences happen around the table. Your dining program is not just about food; it's about a sense of community that fosters engagement, retention, and productivity.

At Creative Dining Services, we deeply understand the impact of community on the success of an organization and how to strengthen it through an exceptional dining experience. This guide has information about us, but it's also full of information and tips for you. We answer burning questions like, "How can my organization turn our dining program into an attraction and retention tool?" We talk about innovation in dining, and how partnering with a company that keeps things fresh sets you apart. We provide resources that you can use to gather feedback and strengthen your program. We discuss sustainability, how to pursue it well and why it's more important than ever for your bottom line.

So pull up a chair, dive into this guide, and be inspired about the possibilities an excellent dining program presents.



Jim Eickhoff
PRESIDENT & CEO





Meet Our Team

Let's partner and create a personalized dining plan that will reflect your brand, build your community, and help accomplish your goals.



Jim Eickhoff
PRESIDENT & CEO

- 35+ years of senior executive leadership experience at Fortune 200 companies including University of Phoenix, Sallie Mae, and ServiceMaster
- Creative Dining Services has experienced 25% growth and leapt to the 24th largest food service management company in America under Jim's leadership



Jeff Banaszak
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- Nationally-recognized leader in cloud technology; featured by Digital Enterprise and Nucleus ROI for the redesign of Creative Dining Services' finance system
- Held executive finance positions with Herman Miller and a large education system in New Mexico



Susan Golder
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Crafts and implements marketing strategies for Creative Dining Services and for clients' customer engagement
- Previously the Supervisor of Business Development for Cadillac's national advertising agency and Senior Sales Consultant for Targeted Media



Jane Newton
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF PEOPLE SERVICES

- Continuously improves and implements Creative Dining Service's award-winning comprehensive corporate training program & leads DEIB program efforts.
- Has held positions in HR for General Mills and Amway.



Dave Seweryn
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

- Provides the integration of operational strategy and systems for Creative Dining teams
- 35+ years of hospitality experience, including 10 years as an Executive Chef.



Janine Oberstadt
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Creates programming around environmental sustainability initiatives and LEED® Green Associate
- Trained with the U.S. Green Building Council, Food Service Technology Center, ENERGY-STAR, Disney Institute, Ritz Carlton, and the Culinary Institute of America



Luke Apiconek
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT/GREAT LAKES REGION

- Works with prospective clients to develop customized solutions to their specific needs and vision
- 20 years of food and operations experience.



Sheila Rolston
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR AND CORPORATE DIETITIAN

- 25+ years in operational oversight, state & federal food code and eldercare regulation, and senior dining
- Registered dietitian, Certified ServSafe Instructor & Proctor, Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics, LeadingAge Michigan, and Senior Dining Association member.



Susan Smith
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT/ SOUTHERN REGION

- Works with prospective clients to develop customized solutions to their specific needs and vision
- 30 years of dining operational and sales experience fostering relationships leaders in higher education, healthcare, business and industry.



Nathaniel Malone
CORPORATE EXECUTIVE CHEF

- Leads Creative Dining Services Culinary Innovation Council to originate on-trend food concepts
- Implements infrastructure and systems that allow our Culinary teams maximum flexibility.





COOKING UP Community

**Great Dining Programs Create Connection.
Here's Why That Matters For Your Organization.**

I **magine the best meal you've ever had.** Perhaps it was a birthday dinner shared with friends. Or maybe it was trying exotic cuisine while on a family vacation. It might even have been a low-key backyard barbeque on a perfect summer evening. Whatever the memory, chances are you were not eating alone. While food and atmosphere play a crucial role, it's the people who make a dining experience special.

Dining is a social hub; it fosters and celebrates culture, brings people together, and allows them to share experiences as a community. Community directly impacts satisfaction. And we're not just talking about satisfaction with a dining program, but with an entire organization. Across types of businesses and industries, if you can build community, you can increase overall satisfaction.

CONNECTED COLLEGE STUDENTS

Can community affect students enough to impact retention? And can a dining program play a role in this?

The answer is yes, according to researchers at the University of Iowa, who identified a link between dining meal swipes, social connectedness, and graduation rate. They collected data on nearly half a million ID card swipes at the dining hall from about 4,000 students. They found a clear correlation between more meals spent with friends and higher retention and graduation rates. **(See "The Meal Index as a Graduation Indicator.")**

In an article about the study titled "University of Iowa Researchers Find a Link Between Meal Swipes and Social Connection," Von Stange, Assistant Vice President for Housing & Dining at the university, discussed this phenomenon. "When [students] move from their homes that they've spent 18 years in or longer to residence halls, that's a definite change. That sense of connectedness, that sense of belonging is critically important, and we can't underestimate that."

Of course, an excellent dining program can also play a role in attracting students to a school. Forty-three percent of

The Meal Index as a Graduation Indicator

Researchers calculated a meal index, or m-index, based on how many meals a student had and with how many different people. This was measured based on how many times a student swiped his or her dining card within a minute of another student.

To score a high m-index, a student would have to have many meals with the same person. Students with an average m-index had a 74-percent graduation rate. Students whose m-index was a standard deviation higher than average had an 80-percent graduation rate.



“Many organizations have reported that having a good cafeteria is an important component in attracting and retaining talent.”

Sapience Analytics,
Food For Thought—The Office
Cafeteria’s Key Role

**At its heart,
dining
is about
building
community.**



students say dining programs and amenities are important in deciding which school to attend.

Students are factoring into their college decision whether they can see themselves living there, making the campus a home away from home, and enjoying a meal with friends in the dining hall is a big part of that.

ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

Just like at secondary learning institutions, community in the workplace can improve engagement and retention.

A great corporate dining program supports community and increases productivity, retention, and comradery along with it. It encourages employees to eat lunch and hold meetings onsite, promoting interaction and setting the stage for collaboration and efficiencies.

In “Food For Thought—The Office Cafeteria’s Key Role,” Sapience Analytics discusses the impact of corporate cafeterias. “Many organizations have reported that having a

good cafeteria is an important component in attracting and retaining talent. Clearly the cafeteria has an even more key role in helping the employees stay engaged while they are at work.”

Now that millennials make up nearly fifty percent of the workforce, an exceptional corporate dining program is more important than it’s ever been. “There’s less significance placed on dinner. Now lunch is more likely to be a social meal.”

Community around the lunch table enhances engagement and the feeling of belonging among employees. This leads to better job satisfaction and higher employee retention. A job may pay more, be closer to home, or have other benefits, but when you work with people, have lunch with them, go to happy hour with them, you form connections that encourage you to stay.”

Alder smoked salmon, dashi pickled baby cucumbers, shaved fennel/asparagus with toasted quinoa and broken buttermilk-nasturtium dressing.

Innovate to Differentiate

A Fresh Dining Program Stands Out

Across industries, the competitive landscape is fierce—maybe fiercer than ever.

- In higher education, the drastic drop in college enrollment means institutions have to work a lot harder to attract students.¹
- The rapid expansion of the senior population means more opportunity for senior living centers,² but they must find ways to stand out among an abundance of options.
- Businesses are facing an unprecedented talent shortage.³

These organizations have to get creative to show that they are a better option than their competitors. Those with innovative dining programs break away from the pack.

"Organizations everywhere are seeing that a high-quality dining program can be a selling point and a deciding factor," said Ian Ramirez, Director of Culinary Innovation at Creative Dining Services. "It plays into organizational culture. One of our clients just built a beautiful new headquarters, and they added beer taps in the office! They know that being modern, forward-thinking, and fun makes them more attractive to prospective employees."

No one wants to eat the same meals day-in, day-out. Your audience wants new, interesting, and creative dining options.

However, the level of innovation needed depends on who your organization serves. Plus, beloved favorites shouldn't be abandoned. "Younger generations typically want to see innovation, but that's not always true of seniors," noted Ramirez. "Senior living centers need to find a good balance of beloved favorites and fresh new offerings to keep both the 'old guard' and younger seniors happy."

What one organization needs in terms of innovation might be too much or too little for another.

"That's why we're flexible with menuing," explained Ramirez. "Every location is as unique as a thumbprint. We design our menus and concepts to cater to each location, and we strive to include ingredients and flavor profiles that are highly creative and current."

LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING

We hire, train, and cross train talented dining employees in multiple roles so our dining teams can be agile. Plus, we look to continuously train and promote from within.

Creative Leadership: All Creative Dining managers participate in Creative Leadership, a tailored four week leadership development program. They have hands-on training in various positions including dishwashing, preparing food, and serving.

Culinary Network: Our culinarians have the opportunity to join the Culinary Network, a task force assembled of experts from across our company. This talented team works together throughout the year to build and design menus, introduce new concepts, and share cutting edge products.

Creative Dining Culinary School: Our online cooking curriculum is powered by the highly acclaimed institution, Rouxbe. We train employees to become culinary professionals without the disruption of travel or the debt that can come with an expensive degree. Rouxbe is recognized as the official education for certification by the American Culinary Federations' Education Foundation.



Za'atar Hummus Bar

About the Concept: Guests choose from a selection of hummus varieties: Charred carrot and ras el hanout; spring pea and spinach; and beet. Then, choices of protein (chicken shawarma, falafel, pakora, tandoori chicken, za'atar tuna, or garlic-preserved lemon shrimp) are added, followed by toppings like turmeric-roasted cauliflower, baba ghanouj, pickled beets, and quinoa, along with sauces like yogurt-cucumber and garlic tahini. The bowl is accompanied by a warm pita.



Service Lab

Creative Dining front of the house service and hospitality professionals are brought together during this three-day, hands-on training program to learn, inspire, and challenge one another in plating, planning, and team competitions.

Participants take the learnings and skills from Service Lab back to their accounts for their teams to continue to provide excellent service and hospitality to our customers.



Chef Lab

Creative Dining culinary teams receive extensive hands-on training at our three-day, boot camp style training event called Chef Lab. This internally designed program pushes the culinary envelope by creating opportunities for culinarians of all skill levels to collaborate together and hone their skills.

At Chef Lab, culinarians study topics such as:

- Culinary Trends
- Advanced Plating
- Flavor Mapping
- Sustainability
- Food Costing





Throughout this guide, you'll see actual recipes served and loved at our locations.

Kimchi Cole Slaw

SERVES 6-10

Ingredients:

6 cups Napa Cabbage, fine shred
2 cups Sweet Potato, julienne
2 cups Daikon Radish, julienne
3 Red Globe Radish, finely sliced
4 cups Red Cabbage, fine shred
6 Green Onions, bias cut
3 Tbsp toasted Sesame Seeds

Sauce:

½ cup Gochujang Paste
½ cup seasoned Rice Vinegar
¼ cup Fish Sauce
1 Tbsp fresh grated Ginger
1 Tbsp fresh Garlic
¼ cup Lime Juice
½ cup Sesame Oil

Instructions

1. Place all sauce ingredients into a blender. Puree at low speed until emulsified, about one minute.
2. Prepare all vegetables needed, reserving napa cabbage separate.
3. Toss sauce with the napa cabbage until well coated but not wet.
4. Mix in sweet potato, red cabbage, daikon red radish, and most of the green onion.
5. Plate up cabbage and garnish with toasted sesame seeds and remaining green onions.

Business & Industry

SAMPLE MENUS

Mexican Street Nachos

Lime-Marinated Chicken served over Blue Tortilla Chips and covered with a Street Corn Cheese Sauce

Add your choice of Cilantro, diced Tomatoes, fresh Jalapeños, Queso Fresco, and a dollop of Sour Cream

Cardamom Chicken Tabbouleh

Millet Tabbouleh with Parsley, Red Onions, Cucumbers, and Tomatoes, tossed to order and topped with Cardamom and Orange-Marinated Chicken Breast

Finished with a Lemon and Extra Virgin Olive Oil Vinaigrette

Pork Belly Cobb

Mesclun blend Lettuce, braised Allegan Farms Pork Belly, Cage-Free boiled Eggs, smoked Bleu Cheese, marinated Heirloom Tomatoes, and Bleu Cheese Dressing

Ancient Grain Salad with Grilled Halloumi

Farmed Baby Kale, Arugula, marinated and grilled Halloumi Cheese, pickled Red Onions, Farm Honey Mustard Dressing

Maui Poke Bowl

Cubed Ahi Tuna, marinated in our signature Poke Sauce with Maui Onions, toasted Sesame Seeds, and Green Onions

Comes with Kimchi pickled Cucumbers, fresh Avocado Slices, Sesame-roasted shredded Carrots, thinly-sliced Radishes, and Edamame

Served on your choice of seasoned short grain White Rice or Brown Rice

Tikka Masala Curried Chicken Satay

Spicy Yogurt marinated Chicken Skewers, seared and served with a Cilantro Mint dipping sauce on fresh House Naan Bread

Okonomiyaki

Cabbage-, Carrot- and Bacon-Filled Japanese-Style savory Pancake drizzled with Kewpie Mayo, Gochujang, and sliced Green Onions

Topped with your choice of fried Shrimp or Chicken

Craft-Blended Cheeseburger

Smashed Chuck Burger blended with diced Mushrooms, American Cheese, crispy Applewood-Smoked Bacon, fresh Tomato, and Bibb Lettuce, with our Signature Sauce

Za'atar Hummus Bowl

Red Pepper Hummus, Za'atar roasted organic Carrots, Orange Zest Kalamata Olives, crispy Tandoori spiced Chickpeas, roasted Garlic and Lemon Tahini Dressing, and a shredded Kale-Brussels Sprouts Greens blend

Sided with your choice of Za'atar Chicken Skewers or spicy Vegetable Pakoras and served with Za'atar grilled Pita Bread

Taqueria Carnitas Tacos

Spiced house braised Pork Shoulder, house-made Salsa Roja, White Onion, fresh Cilantro on charred Corn Tortilla with Avocado Crema





Happy Employees = Happy Customers

Experts write books and give keynote speeches on the importance of knowing your customer. What are their buying behaviors? How can you best serve them and differentiate yourself from your competitors?

Simply put, we agree with the experts. Your customers are important to you and to us. We are an extension of community for the student who is away from home for the first time, the employee who spends hours at work away from their family, or the older adult who just moved from her home to your senior living community.

Every interaction we have with your customers matters. We invest in our employees in key ways because happy employees equal happy customers.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP: THE POWER OF HUMILITY

Food service directors, general managers, and other Creative Dining Services leaders don't just work from their offices. They are directly involved with the day-to-day, spending time dishwashing, prepping food, serving, and more. They roll up their sleeves and build empathy and appreciation for the challenges of each role. Creative Dining Services leaders refer to these hands-on experiences to understand best practices for the back of the house (food prep, inventory) and front of the house (cashiering, serving, merchandising), administration (budgeting, financials, scheduling), and leadership.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH, PERSONAL FULFILLMENT

The Creative Dining Culinary School is an online training curriculum that equips our employees with not only fundamental cooking skills but also the expertise needed to become professional culinarians. High-potential employees learn techniques and concepts through engaging instructional videos from experienced chefs and are evaluated through real-life, proctored demonstrations. These professional development experiences enhance Creative Dining Services' ability to attract, develop, and retain top talent while improving consistency, efficiency, food preparation, and services.

“Every interaction we have with your customers matters. We invest in our employees in key ways because happy employees equal happy customers.”

CULTURE OF CANDOR

All companies say they have excellent employees who are highly engaged, but few can prove it. In our most recent employee engagement survey, 94% of Creative Dining Services employees said they want to do their best each and every day when they come to work. 97% of employees took the survey.

We attribute this feedback to our work environment, in which employees are encouraged to speak candidly, share ideas, and talk with their managers about the challenges they face professionally or personally. Leaders who are successful in our organization show genuine appreciation and are in tune with each of their employees. They connect them with the resources they need to be successful and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

We reward eligible employees for their success through a quarterly Employee Incentive Program. The bonus criteria are in areas over which employees have individual influence and impact.

Our founding philosophy statement is, “Our clients and employees are our greatest assets; without either, we would not exist as a company. We will strive to listen, respond to their needs, and provide growth opportunities for both.”



Conquering the Culinarian Crisis

The Culinarian Shortage is Hitting the Foodservice Industry Hard

Creative Dining Services attracts, develops and retains employees through its award-winning professional development program: Creative University.

In years past, college food was compared to other college food, food from corporate kitchens was stacked up against food served at other corporate kitchens.

But today, hospitality management companies who operate dining programs in colleges and universities, senior living communities, and corporations are catering to students, seniors, and employees who are more educated about food than past generations. They compare their dining experience to their favorite restaurant. They are setting the bar higher than ever before, seeking dining experiences that include the highest-quality food; farm-to-fork dining and cooking; vegan, vegetarian, and plant-forward menus; international cuisine and trending food concepts; and exceptional service.

This new reality has led to a growing and immediate need for highly-trained, on-trend culinarians. They are critical for success in the hospitality industry. Creative Dining Services continuously cultivates innovation and uplevels our culinary chops by investing in and developing our dining teams.

And now we have expanded our educational offerings by launching Creative Dining Culinary School, an online cooking curriculum powered by the highly-acclaimed institution Rouxbe. Why? Because while the pressure increases to serve high-quality restaurant-like food, the hospitality world is feeling the pain of a

chef shortage that has escalated in the last several years.

Potential professional culinarians are deciding that the chef salary ranges are not worth the cost of expensive culinary schools. Now Creative Dining Services can turn employees who start as sandwich makers into full-fledged culinary professionals. Those who work for Creative Dining Services and aspire to be educated culinarians and master their craft can do so—without the debt that can come along with an expensive degree.

With a focus on foundational training, Creative Dining Services offers its team a scalable, affordable, and flexible solution to attract, develop, and retain employees. The training is complete with a variety of automated assessments, and hands-on demonstrations. Creative Dining Services culinarians take weekly lessons to learn the latest cooking techniques. They are also given access to an expansive recipe library and hours of video content.

The Creative Dining Culinary School is part of Creative University, a comprehensive corporate employee training and development program that won the National Restaurant Association's Winning Workforce Award. Creative Dining Services' Creative U curriculums are delivered during a tri-semester calendar of courses focused in three disciplines: leadership, hospitality operations, and the culinary arts.

Balancing



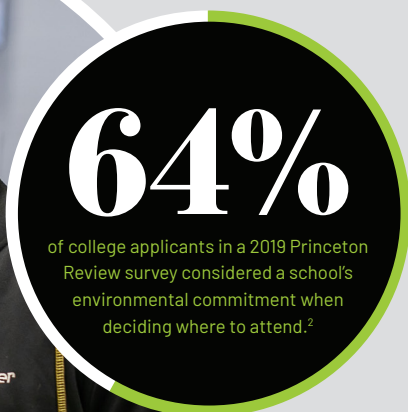
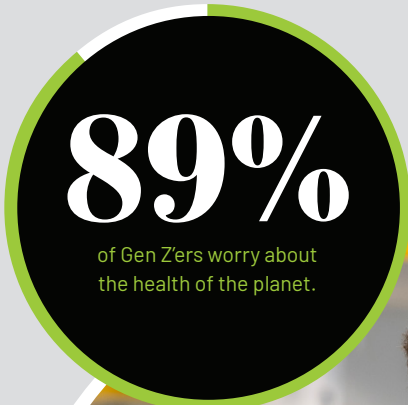
There is increasing pressure for businesses to be more environmentally and socially responsible, and it has become a significant differentiator.

Sustainability-minded millennials are the largest generation in the workforce. Replacing them on college campuses are Generation Z'ers, who take social and environmental responsibility to a new level. These generations want to be part of sustainable organizations—and they want to know what's in their food and where it comes from.

SUSTAINABILITY AT CREATIVE DINING SERVICES

At Creative Dining Services, we embrace triple bottom line decision-making. We are a growth-oriented, profitable company that understands that true sustainability means caring for people and the planet.

Through a balanced approach and responsible programming, we create lasting value for all of our stakeholders: Customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and the environment. We also provide a portfolio of customizable sustainability options, under the umbrella of our GROW™ program, for our clients.



1. Mitchell, Alastair. "The Rise of the Millennial Workforce." *Wired*.
2. "2018 Cone Gen Z CSR Study: How to Speak Z." *Cone Communications*. 2017.
3. Peters, Adele. "Most millennials would take a pay cut to work at an environmentally responsible company." *Fast Company*. February 14, 2019.
4. "The Princeton Review 2019 College Hopes & Worries Survey Report." *The Princeton Review*. 2019.
5. Baker, Beth. "Green Retirement Communities Are Sprouting." *Forbes*. August 11, 2015.



GROW™ Sustainability Programs & Initiatives:



Local Purchasing

Our FARMSTEAD™ program engages Creative Dining Services' accounts with local and regional growers, producers, foodhubs, and markets. FARMSTEAD provides a safe, vetted supply chain, allowing our dining programs to augment traditional purchasing with locally- and regionally-produced products.



Plant-Forward

Vegetable-forward menus support health, wellness, and environmental sustainability. Our plant-forward culinary programming is inspired and guided by industry best practices, such as Menus of Change, an initiative from The Culinary Institute of America and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.



Waste Stream

We fully participate in clients' existing waste, recycling, and composting programming. We also provide product selection and pricing analysis for eco-friendly tableware. Staff are trained in Creative Dining Services' proprietary IMPACT ZERO™ program to minimize food waste and in energy & water conservation best practices.

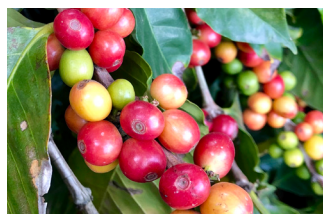


Consulting

Creative Dining Services provides customized sustainability project management and consulting for additional skilled support in advancing sustainability programming.

Sustainability Spotlight

We source delicious direct-trade coffee from Thrive Farmers. Thrive Farmers' innovative revenue-sharing model emphasizes economic sustainability. It offers higher, more predictable and stable pricing to its farmer-partners across the globe, empowering their businesses, families, and futures to flourish. Learn more by going to www.thrivefarmers.com.



Meet Thrive Farmer Vinicio Gonzalez

Gonzalez is a second-generation coffee farmer located in Concepción Pinula, Guatemala. "Great coffee is about a good plantation—but it's also about the heart you put into harvesting the coffee," he said. Gonzalez strives to only go to the plantation when he's happy because he believes that translates into an incredible cup of coffee!

Why Choose Us?

Here are some of the many ways in which Creative Dining Services' "untraditional" approach keeps your customers coming back for more.

Creative Dining Services

1

Greater Oversight

Our account managers oversee half the number of accounts than those of our competitors. Greater oversight and accountability means better programming.

2

Flexible Purchasing

We enable you to choose the options that your customers want. Creative Dining Services uses primary vendors and offers specialty vendors and local purchasing.

3

Transparency

Operating on a management fee model, Creative Dining Services charges an upfront fee. Monthly reports detail exact costs. Any extra revenue is kept by the account. This allows you to make decisions in your best interest.

4

Consultative Approach

One size doesn't fit all. Our expertise and flexible approach allow us to consult with you and deliver a program that suits your specific needs. We adapt our models, menu cycles, systems, processes, and dining environments based on each client.

5

Freshness

Our menus are never static. They are always changing to keep your customers engaged and satisfied.

6

Creativity

Our Culinary Innovation Council, Chef Lab program, and innovative and passionate culinarians ensure that we are always on top of trends.

7

Responsiveness

We actively seek input from your customers and actually implement changes in response. We don't just rely on comment cards, instead gathering feedback through a variety of proven methods. (See pp. 10-11)

8

Award-Winning Professional Development

We know that our happy employees equal your happy customers. We invest in our employees in key ways, including through our award-winning comprehensive employee training and development program, Creative University.



Let's Get Cooking!

Interested in learning how Creative Dining Services can help you provide high-quality, creative, and sustainable dining experiences that are customized to your community?

Visit creativedining.com or contact us!

CREATIVE DINING SERVICES®
— Complete Hospitality Management —

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