

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Driving Cleanliness, Innovation & Savings



How Northwestern
University and
Aramark Achieved
Remarkable Savings
While Elevating
Campus Cleanliness

Northwestern
University

PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

Imagine walking through the halls of Northwestern University—whether in bustling Chicago or serene Evanston—and noticing sparkling clean spaces at every turn. Behind this impressive standard of cleanliness lies a story of resilience, innovation, and partnership. For Northwestern, maintaining pristine facilities isn't just about aesthetics; it's pivotal to the overall student experience and the university's reputation among students, faculty, and staff.

When budget constraints impacted campus operations, Northwestern faced a critical question: How do you do more with less while upholding the expected cleanliness standards? The answer was found in a strategic collaboration with Aramark, a partner equipped with an integrated approach to training, scheduling, advanced technology, and sustainability.

INNOVATION IN ACTION

With new equipment and streamlined processes, custodial teams were empowered to clean more space despite fewer staff. Thanks to a robust Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) analysis, campus spaces were ranked into three service frequencies: daily, weekly, or monthly. This data-driven approach allowed staff to focus their efforts where they were needed most, moving away from rigid schedules to meet demand-driven needs without sacrificing quality.

But the innovation didn't stop there. Aramark championed sustainability alongside operational efficiency, reducing chemical waste and saving water. The results? Northwestern continues to rely on Aramark for custodial operations, enjoying consistently high standards of cleanliness, enhanced sustainability, and significant cost savings.



TECHNOLOGY & PROCEDURES THAT SET THE STANDARD

AUTOMATED CLEANING ROBOTS

Northwestern didn't just adopt new technology—they became an early testing ground for robotic vacuums and autoscrubbers. Today, autonomous vehicles handle routine cleaning, freeing custodians to focus on high-touch or complex tasks. Robotics not only help maintain high standards despite financial pressures, but also showcase Northwestern's dedication to research and technological advancement.

IOT REMOTE MONITORING

High-traffic areas across campus are now monitored by AIWX™, Aramark's innovative IoT platform. The result: faster response times, data-driven staff schedules, and optimized labor allocation—all contributing to Northwestern's mission of operational excellence.

TERRAZZO FLOOR CARE

Stone floors shine like never before, thanks to a diamond grinding process and advanced stone protectants. Floors require polishing only every 12 to 18 months, eliminating the need for harsh chemicals and labor-intensive annual stripping. Over 300,000 square feet have been transformed, supporting Northwestern's sustainability goals and enhancing facility durability and appearance.

EFFICIENT STAFF SCHEDULING

With fewer custodial staff, efficiency became essential. Aramark's proprietary scheduling software allows leaders to fine-tune cleaning frequencies based on actual space usage, reducing unnecessary daily cleanings and deploying resources where they matter most.



ABOUT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Northwestern is a leader in interdisciplinary research and rigorous academics, with 21,000 students and over 3,300 full-time faculty spread across three campuses. The university's vibrant community thrives on creative expression, practical application, and cutting-edge knowledge.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Partnership with Aramark Since 1994 (Athletic Facilities): Expanded to Chicago and Evanston campuses in 2012, and residence halls in 2015.



Over \$17.4 Million Saved Since 2018: Through integrated custodial programming, advanced training, and high-tech solutions, Northwestern realized extraordinary savings, while maintaining service standards.



Productivity Up 33%: By leveraging innovative scheduling and new technology, custodial staff increased productivity by a third, taking on expanded responsibilities and adapting to a new financial reality.



Over 1 Million Gallons of Water Saved: Since 2012, Northwestern has conserved a remarkable volume of water, thanks to Aramark's focus on sustainable cleaning practices.



300,000+ Square Feet Converted to Terrazzo Care: Stone floors across campus now remain gleaming with less labor and fewer chemicals, reflecting a commitment to sustainability and beauty.



Significant Drop in Cleaning Complaints: With smarter scheduling and better tech, the university saw fewer complaints and more satisfied students and staff.

CONCLUSION: A MODEL FOR MODERN CAMPUS OPERATIONS

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For more information visit us at:
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