



# Open Campus Dining Supports Success Without Limits



## All Access Dining Plan Expands Student Services and Fuels Revenue Growth for Campus Communities

Colleges and universities face dual challenges: declining enrollment and evolving expectations to support the student experience. With student enrollment predicted to decline an additional 15 percent at many institutions between 2025 and 2029, campuses across the country are seeking innovative ways to enhance the student experience and ensure essential services remain robust and profitable.

The Open Campus Dining program addresses these pressing challenges head-on by growing student services through unlimited meal access and transparent costs integrated into tuition. Doing so ensures students have broad access to campus dining facilities, fostering food security and a vibrant campus community while increasing auxiliary revenue from dining services for the institution.

For campus communities, Open Campus Dining helps boost meal plan enrollment, daily dining transactions, and revenue, offering students greater flexibility and institutions revenue growth opportunities.



**The dining program is building community with more students and employees dining together. We've also been able to offer more variety and better-quality dining options with the increased demand. The increase in our auxiliary revenue has enabled us to invest more back into the program in an effort to improve the dining experience for all."**

**Kelly French**

VP of Strategy,  
Thomas More University



# The Open Campus Dining Program and Strategy

The Open Campus Dining program provides all students — residential and commuter alike — with broad, flexible access to campus dining.

1. **Unlimited access to residential dining halls for on-campus residents and commuters.**
2. **A set number of meal swipes at quick-service retail locations throughout campus.**
3. **Option to add flex dollars which can be used to purchase food and beverages at a wide selection of on-campus locations.**

The strategy behind this model meets the varying and evolving needs of both students and institutions. Expanded dining services and meal plan flexibility mean students have access to nutritious, tasty meals and snacks throughout the day, allowing them to better focus on studies, extracurricular activities, and campus life.

- **Campus Community:** Having access to food and an equitable campus experience is vital to student success and retention. Open Campus Dining fosters a stronger campus community and promotes inclusivity.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Open Campus Dining ensures that all students' dietary needs are met, whether they're student-athletes or have food restrictions. Students and parents alike gain peace of mind, knowing that every student has access to the meals they need without the stress of worrying whether or not they selected the right plan.
- **Enhanced Value:** By spreading the cost of dining across all full-time undergraduate students, the financial impact on first-year and residential students is lowered. Additionally, the model optimizes the use of dining facilities and reduces food waste, further supporting the delivery of affordable and accessible meals.



**PARTNER SINCE:**  
2009

**LOCATION:**  
Crestview Hills, KY

**LAUNCHED OPEN CAMPUS MODEL:**  
2023



**63.2%**  
undergraduate students



**36.8%**  
graduate, online and  
non-traditional students

**65%**  
student athletes

## Thomas More University: A Success Story in Open Campus Dining

In Fall 2023, Thomas More University took a powerful step toward enhancing the student experience by integrating all essential needs — including dining, parking, fitness, sports and technology — into student tuition for incoming and resident students.

The Open Campus Dining model was introduced as part of the Saints Essentials program in partnership with Aramark Collegiate Hospitality. The overarching goal: to make the campus dining experience more accessible, inclusive and flexible.





**My friends and I love the changes that Saints Essentials has presented. We have much more access to food at different times of the day which aligns with our schedules as student athletes. The increase in variety and quality has been great.”**

**Enrique Aceves Pizarro**

Sophomore RA  
Thomas More University



## Unlimited Dining Access for Residents and Commuters

The Open Campus Dining model at Thomas More gives residents and commuters unlimited access to Seiler Commons, the primary all-you-care-to-eat residential dining hall. In addition, both get daily meal swipes to use at quick-service locations. For both the unlimited access and daily meal swipes, residents access is 7 days a week and commuters access is Monday through Friday. When first introduced at Thomas More in fall 23, current upperclassmen commuters were exempt from this model. In fall 24, second-year commuters were added and in fall 25 all commuters will be included.

## Flex Dollars for Added Flexibility

For both resident and commuter students, flex dollars can be added at a discounted rate throughout the school year for added convenience. Flex dollars can be used to purchase food and drinks at retail dining locations beyond Seiler Commons, including the unique restaurant FoodLab and the hand-crafted beverage destination Saints Brew.

Unused flex dollars roll over from the fall to the spring semester, although they are not refundable at the end of the academic year.

## Campus Favorites

With countless food and beverage options across campus, there’s something for everyone. Popular items include:

- Gourmet sweets and pastries
- Hot sandwiches
- Grab-and-go selections
- A full line of hot and cold drinks including specialty coffees, teas and smoothies
- Vegetarian and vegan options
- Freshly made pizza
- Build-your-own-salads
- All-day pasta bar
- Bibimbap (Korean rice bowl)



**As an athlete, my nutrition is very important to me ... Saints Essentials allows me to fuel my training in the way that works best for me.”**

**Bautista Saint Bonnet**

Junior RA  
Thomas More University

“ I have noticed a significant shift in food and service quality this year compared to my previous years living on campus. The program certainly erases any stress you may have about the number of meals you have left for the week.”

**David Moore**

Senior RA, Thomas More University

## Campus Community Building and Revenue Growth With Open Campus Dining

The Open Campus Dining program significantly enhanced student engagement and campus life at Thomas More University. By providing flexible, unlimited access to dining options, the university was better able to meet the diverse needs of all students, including student-athletes, commuters, first-years and those living on campus.

The higher participation in meal plans and increased use of dining facilities, in terms of weekly foot traffic and daily dining transactions, led to growth in both managed and auxiliary revenue for Thomas More.

Students and staff both speak to the improved variety and quality of dining options, with the added flexibility that alleviates the stress about counting meals with a traditional plan or worrying about limited dining options. This shift has contributed to a stronger campus community, with more students and staff dining together in shared spaces, reinforcing a sense of belonging and connection.

**See how Aramark Collegiate Hospitality can support and elevate your campus dining programs.**

**CONTACT US**

For more information visit us at:

[ARAMARK.COM/COLLEGIATEHOSPITALITY](https://aramark.com/collegiatehospitality)

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**49% ↑** in meal plan holders year-over-year

**45% ↑** in daily transactions

**45% ↑** in managed revenue

**25% ↑** in labor spend  
(6.1% reduction as a percentage of revenue)

**28% ↑** in food spend  
(4.8% reduction in food cost as a percentage of revenue)

