

2022-23



Year 2



HUDS / Learnings Report



Harvard University
Dining Services



Hello & Welcome!

The academic year of Fall 2022 to Spring 2023 was one of launches and growth, compared to the pilots and small forays from the 2021-2022 year. Harvard and its community emerged from COVID with a desire to return full-speed to the traditions, operations and campus activities that create places and moments for convening.

The Harvard University Dining Services (HUDS) team accepted the challenge with an aggressive agenda of menu improvements, special celebrations, education programs, and expanded services.

As a result, the department roared back from COVID-era financial impacts to reach \$90 million in FY23 revenue.

Two years into our Strategic Vision, HUDS is reviewing successes and assessing careful course-correction to remain on a growth track while also adjusting to a changed campus culture as Harvard and its students create new pathways.

We look forward to the work ahead!



In community,

Smitha

Smitha S. H. Haneef
Managing Director,
Harvard University Dining Services

The Residential Dining Program for Harvard College

MODIFYING THE MENU

HUDS' Residential Dining program for undergraduates utilizes a seasonal cycle menu to provide a delicious, creative, consistent, financially balanced experience across 13 different dining halls of varied sizes and equipment fit-outs. The menu is designed by HUDS' Director for Culinary Operations, Martin Breslin, and a team of chefs who lead the daily execution of menus at all those locations.

As the academic year resumed, the team could see that the complex puzzle of menu items had become jumbled after several years of service and supply chain changes. Beginning in the late fall of 2022 and continuing through February of 2023, the team of chefs systematically deconstructed and rebuilt the menu, platform by platform, to bring a transformed experience forward for students.

Changes started small. Hoping to celebrate local, biodiverse produce, chefs replaced the daily, made-to-order traditional American grill at lunch with small-bite daily dishes using farm-fresh ingredients. Called *Delish!*, the menu concept features seasonal fruits or vegetables, transformed into restaurant-worthy explorations of the New England harvest.

Over the course of the semester, chefs offered more than 90 unique *Delish!* bites such as:

- **Crustless Gala Apple Tart & Wild Blueberry Granita** featuring New Hampshire apples and Maine blueberries
- **Macomber Turnip Soup, Pea Greens Purée, Maple Poached Tart Cherries & Fresh Horseradish** featuring pea greens from Dartmouth, MA



- **Roasted Beets, Spicy Miso Emulsion, Rice, Sesame & Nori** featuring beets from Hadley, MA
- **Roasted Honeynut Squash Arancini with Foamed Squash Purée** featuring honeynut squash from Sharon, MA.

Traditional stations such as the salad bar, deli bar and grill all got a boost with enhancements to respond to current eating styles.

- **Greens & Grains** fully took over the salad station, to make it a more complete, nutritious meal destination, with weekly suggested bowl constructions, such as the Big Apple or the Sesame Ginger Salmon. As much as they loved the enhanced menu, students also fully embraced the large serving bowls, which made crafting these complete dishes more satisfying.

- The **lunchtime deli bar** became more varied, with ingredients for vegetarian and meat-based personally-crafted sandwiches (*such as Mesquite Tofu and Guacamole or Toasted Cage-Free Egg Salad with Pickle Chips and Tomato*) and an option for students to make a panini with the nearby panini press.
- **Dessert** got an upgrade on weeknights to feature a sweet treat centered on fruit, giving students a chance to tailor the level of their indulgence. Offerings included shortcakes, arroz con leche, whoopie pies and more, with cut raspberries, blueberries, mangoes and other fruits as a base.
- **Global Bistro Bowls** replaced the Thursday dinnertime American grill, instead offering a restaurant-style dish celebrating a different world cuisine, be it a French Bouillabaisse, a Caribbean Sancocho, or an Ethiopian Doro or Misir Wat.
- On Tuesdays and Fridays, the **grill menu** was reduced so cooks could instead feature specials, such as Vegan Chorizo Tacos or Nashville Hot Chicken Sandwiches. Grill specials quickly became fan-favorites and transplanted other grilled options.

Finally, as the Spring Semester commenced, the chef team unveiled an entirely reconceived cycle menu, with each day's three entrees, two vegetables, and starch re-thought and themed to be more cohesive, all working to form a complete plate. Themes included Dim Sum, Thai, Cajun, Northern Italian and more. The student response was immediate, as HUDS TxtNTell feedback system exploded with compliments.



“Very grateful for the revamping of the menu, last night’s dinner with the potstickers and crab rangoons was amazing.”

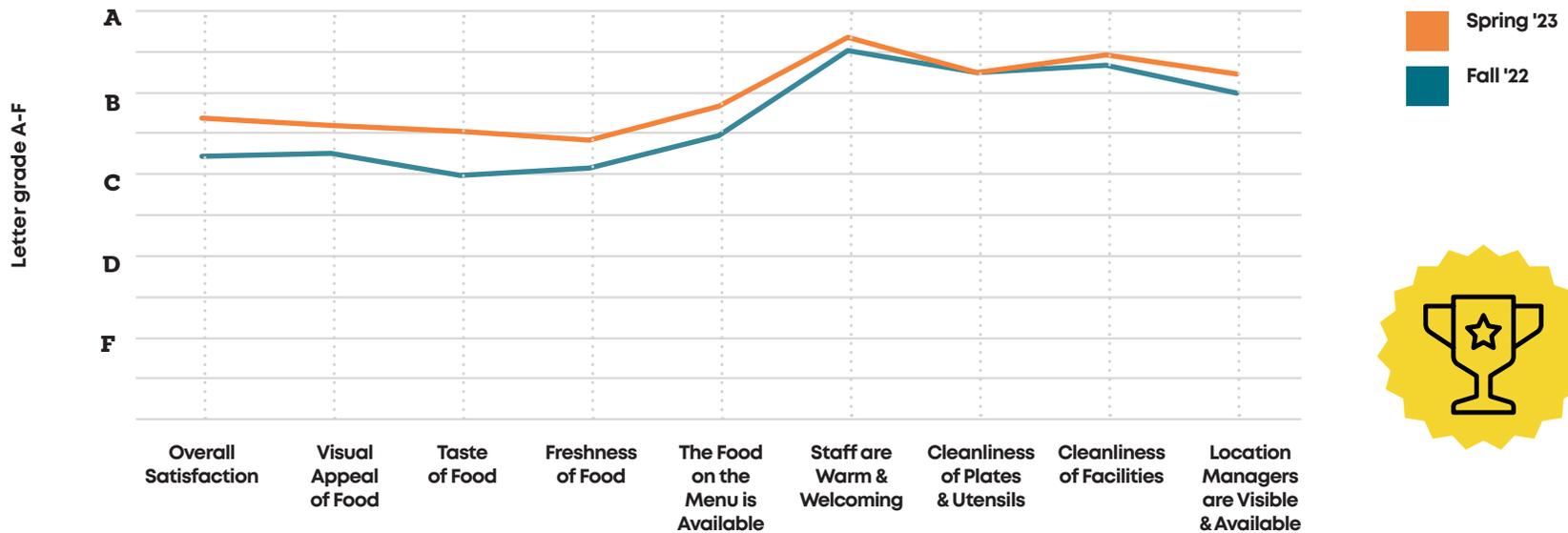
“Lunch (chicken curry and rice and naan) was amazing today! I'm loving this new and improved HUDS menu.”

“Dinner today was absolutely amazing!! Thank you so much! please keep this menu forever!!!!!!”

“The tacos from the grill on Tuesday are FIRE! SO tasty! The quality of food has been really good recently - I really appreciate the effort to improve the menu!”

“I'm LOVING the new menu!! The chicken at lunch today and the groats were especially delicious. Just wanted to say thank you to the kitchen staff for doing such an awesome job!!”

SPRING 2023 SURVEY RESULTS



SURVEY RESULTS

When HUDS conducted its Spring 2023 Satisfaction Survey, the team’s collective work on menus and community spaces was easily quantified in a fall-to-spring comparison of scores. The Spring 2023 undergraduate dining satisfaction survey enjoyed a 23% response rate, equally distributed among class years and locations. **Overall Satisfaction Scores and food-related scores improved by 10-15%.**

YEAR-ROUND SERVICE

As the spring semester came to a close, Harvard also recognized the changed landscape of a student community which is more diverse than ever. When Harvard accepts new members to its student community, the institution becomes a year-round home to many.

As such, as HUDS turned the corner towards summer, we rapidly built a pilot dining model for feeding students nearly year-round. While we readied Houses to commence the class of '23, we also stood up a series of operations to provide a continuity of food for those staying on campus beyond the academic year. And while HUDS has long hosted various summer programs, for the first time ever, we did so without a break in service between exams and the new academic year, and with provisions for three meals a day, for several hundred students.

This change in operations is an anticipated new normal, and brings with it the benefit of also providing more year-round employment opportunities for HUDS’ staff.

Registered Dietitian Expertise

The College encourages undergraduates to live and dine on campus for the full period of their studies, so HUDS has long maintained a policy of supporting every student's dietary needs as part of our regular service.

In more recent years, our population has seen a marked growth of food-related allergies and special dietary needs, and as a result HUDS hired its first Registered Dietitian in 2020. The role has evolved in that time, and in the most recent academic year, HUDS Registered Dietitian, Karen Jew, coordinated a highly complex network of supports for more than 175 students with registered accommodations.

Assistance includes everything from closely monitored and marked ingredient lists and labeling that facilitate self-navigation of dietary needs to complex, individualized menus and preparations when a student has multiple, life-threatening allergies.

Under Karen's careful guidance, the dining experience has also become more inclusive, ensuring that not just the daily dining hall but also the many campus celebrations are spaces where individuals with special dietary needs can fully engage in the community experience. The traditional Harvard-Yale game barbecue for students included a station of gluten free burger buns and cookies, halal burgers, kosher meals and more.

Karen is also an enthusiastic educator, and during National Nutrition Month she provided opportunities for undergraduates to ask person-

alized nutrition questions, to explore new food options, and to learn about the core components of a strong and balanced approach to food.

In tandem with the chefs at each dining hall, and inviting student ideas as well, Karen shared Dining Hall Hacks, or ways to assemble everyday ingredients into fun and satisfying dishes, including homemade Apple Crisp, Sriracha Tofu and Mediterranean Bagel and Smoked Salmon Bagel Sandwiches.



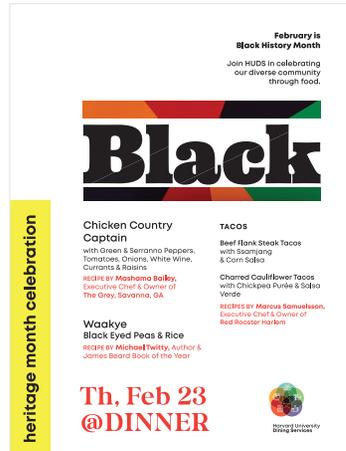
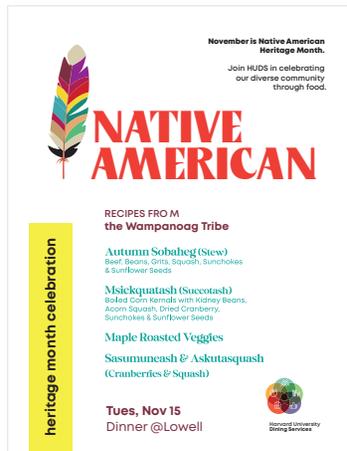


HUDS Registered Dietitian, Karen Jew, coordinated a highly complex network of supports for more than 175 students with registered accommodations.



“I just wanted to thank you so much for everything you did this past year to help accommodate my dietary restrictions. Adjusting to living 400 miles away from home and having a totally new diet was daunting, but the accommodations you set up for me made things so much easier. You always replied to my emails and acted so quickly whenever I needed something. Harvard’s first years are very lucky to have someone as caring as you in their corner. Thank you so much for everything. I really, really appreciate it.”

“I wanted to thank you for all of your help this year! You’ve been such an incredible resource with everything HUDS and food related. Thank you for ensuring I had more variety, making sure I got food when I was in COVID isolation, and constantly checking in with the HUDS Team to improve the allergy situation for me. I really appreciate how much easier you made all of this!”



A Full Calendar of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Events

In the 2021-2022 school year, HUDS partnered with the Harvard Office for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging to pilot a series of small special events, hosted in one or two locations, to reflect the diversity of our community.

In 2022-2023, HUDS launched a full calendar of programming, with special focus on University-celebrated heritage months. September marked LatinX Heritage Month, and while every location offered featured recipes, Chef Rob Neely at Harvard Hillel created a fully themed menu at the kosher kitchen. The menu included:

- **Sopa de Tomate y Tortilla**
(Roasted Tomato and Tortilla Soup)
- **Vaca Frita de Pollo**
(Cuban Shredded Chicken with Pickled Red Onion and Cilantro Sauce)
- **Frijoles Negros con Aguacate**
(Cumin Black Beans with Avocado Salsa)
- **Arroz Amarillo**
(Spanish Saffron Scented Long Grain Rice with Carrots and Peas)
- **Calabacitas con Pepitas**
(Mexican Style Zucchini with Tomato, Corn and Pumpkin Seeds)
- **Naranja y Jicama**
(Orange and Jicama Salsa)

On Tuesday, November 15, HUDS marked Native American Heritage Month when every undergraduate dining location offered a distinct dish or menu honoring indigenous recipes, from a Chickasaw Three Sisters Stew to a Sioux Grilled Corn with Wild Greens and Sunflower Seeds.

At Quincy House, Chef Damian Friedank was able to execute a recipe shared by one of the student residents in Quincy House, a Corn Soup from the Akwesasne Mohawk Tribe. The student shared that her "tota" (*Mohawk for Grandmother*) learned the recipe from her "old tota." The student wrote, "To her, passing on the recipe was important, she believed future generations should know the Indigenous ways. The sharing of your food with loved ones is like the warmth of love that is felt, like the soup that warms the body and strengthens it."

In February 2023, every house highlighted Black History Month with Bistro Bowls from celebrity chefs. At Cabot and Pforzheimer Houses, Chef T.J. Graceffa honored several renowned Black chefs by featuring their recipes for dinner, including:

- **Country Captain** by Mashama Bailey, Executive Chef and Owner of The Grey in Savannah, GA
- **Waakye Rice** by Michael Twitty, Foodways Historian and James Beard Book Award recipient

- **Charred Cauliflower or Flank Steak Tacos** by Marcus Samuelsson, Executive Chef and Owner of Red Rooster in Harlem, NY

Dunster and Mather Houses mirrored the menu of acclaimed Boston restaurant Darryl's Corner Bar (*2021 Best of Boston Winner for Southern & Soul Food*). In addition, several Houses served community-sourced recipes in collaboration with the Harvard Center for African Studies. Dishes included Jollof Rice, Somali Rice and Black Eyed Peas.

And then in April, the pilot program of the previous year flourished when HUDS and its Crimson Catering division supported Ramadan at both Harvard's Cambridge and Longwood campuses. With hundreds of community members joining for the nightly Iftar, menus reflected the full spectrum of Muslim culinary cultures, including menus inspired by Turkish, Indian, Pakistani, African American, Egyptian, and New England cuisines.

HUDS efforts were celebrated in the Harvard Office for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Annual Report.



Corn Soup from Kiera's "Tota" (a member of the Akwesasne Mohawk tribe)

Ingredients

- 3 pork hocks
- 2 cans of hominy
- 1 can of kidney beans
- 2-3 diced carrots
- 1/2 head of shredded cabbage
- 1 cup of diced turnip

Directions

**Cook hocks until they fall apart
Dice the meat, put in veggies,
and cook until done
(Can be thickened with flour
and water)**



Plants on the Plate



Harvard University signed on to the Cool Food Pledge in 2020, and committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions from food by 25% before 2030. Central to that pledge is shifting dietary patterns toward more plants on the plate.

HUDS has long engaged in this work with the Department of Nutrition at the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health, and we continue to expand opportunities to taste and try new things through all our venues.

At the Science and Engineering Complex (*SEC*) café, in addition to standard plant-based protein options, chefs formulated four new plant-positive burgers, including a Kelp Burger which drew (*surprised*) rave reviews. More than 6,000 kelp-based burgers were sold.

At Crimson Catering, the team created a fully plant-based menu to support clients in seamlessly offering hearty, satisfying event menus where meat options were an occasional condiment, rather than a menu focus.

At the October 2022 launch of the Salata Institute hosted by the Harvard Kennedy School, the culinary team offered a fully vegetarian lunch of Squash Blossom Tempura, Roasted Heirloom Tomatoes and Patty Pan Squash with an Arugula Pesto. The beautiful plate was as sophisticated as it was climate-friendly.

And HUDS routinely participates in academic coursework, including this past spring's course *GOV 1318: The Great Food Transformation*, led by Dr. Sparsha Saha. Students were encouraged to work with campus partners to study and propose solutions for increasing

consumption of plant-based meals. Students praised the variety of HUDS offerings and focused their solutions largely on community outreach, education, and “nudges” such as where plant dishes appear in a buffet line.

Over the course of the academic year, through its creative and enticing menuing, HUDS advanced plant consumption to new heights, serving:

- 30,600 pounds of chickpeas, 19,830 pounds of black beans, and another 40,800 pounds of seven other bean varieties
- 55,550 pounds of tofu and 10,770 pounds of edamame
- 62,000 pounds of fresh broccoli (*our most popular vegetable*)
- Almost 3,000 gallons of olive oil for sautéed vegetables
- Plant-alternatives represented 29% of milk consumption

In addition, changes such as Delish! and other concepts helped HUDS reduce overall beef consumption and shift dietary patterns towards more seafood and poultry.

- Students ate 20,000 fewer beef burgers in FY23 than in FY22.
- HUDS served 32,730 pounds of fish caught by Boston-based day boat fishermen, primarily featuring underutilized species, in the 2022-23 school year.
- In FY23, guests ate twice as much sausage from chicken and plants as in the prior year, both as menuing and consumer acceptance increased.



GradPlus & Professional School Support

While Harvard houses only a small percentage of its 18,000 extension, graduate and professional school students, they have cafes in virtually every advanced degree school. HUDS operates the food services at several of them, including the T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the Divinity School, the Law School, the Kenneth C. Griffith Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and the Kennedy School.

HUDS' professional school and campus cafes are designed to bring students, staff and faculty together into shared spaces that forge conversation, connection and community. We do so through a baseline of staple menu items, enhanced by varied concepts and cuisines that invite engagement.

To bolster that sense of the cafes as community spaces, HUDS added a GradPlus Meal Plan to its services in the 2022-2023 academic year. Created explicitly for advanced degree students, the meal plan offers a 10% discount to users, and can be conveniently term-billed (*which is advantageous based on how a student is funding their education*).

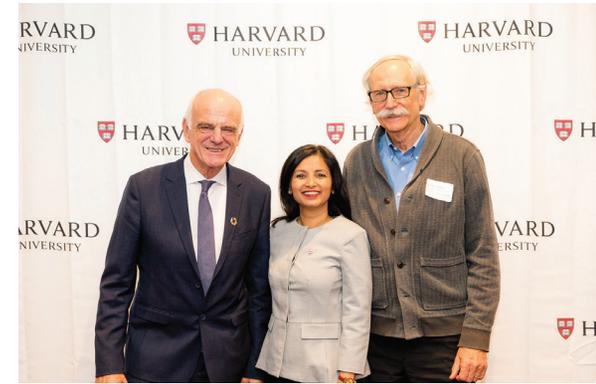
During its initial year, the GradPlus program had 275 meal plan holders, who utilized the program in all of the HUDS-run professional school cafes. The declining balance program facilitated \$172,000 in purchases. In 2023-2024, with expanded outreach, the program is expected to double.



A promotional graphic for the GradPlus Meal Plan. It features a bowl of food with rice, vegetables, and meat. The text "gradplus MEAL PLAN" is overlaid on the image. Below the image is a QR code and the text "SIGN UP TODAY! bit.ly/HUDSgradplus". To the right of the image is a dark green box with white text. The text in the box reads: "GRADPLUS MEALPLAN", "Harvard graduate & professional school students, enjoy a declining balance meal plan and a 10% discount for use in designated Harvard University Dining Services Professional Schools & Campus Cafes.", "The meal plan follows the academic calendar & consists of two allotments of declining balance dollars (\$400 Regular / \$600 Deluxe for the fall 2023 semester, uploaded on Sept. 1, and \$500 Regular / \$750 Deluxe for the spring 2024 semester, uploaded on Jan. 21).", "GradPlus Regular provides approximately \$2/weekday in value; Deluxe provides approximately \$8/weekday in value.", and the Harvard University Dining Services logo.



Harvard Food Systems Initiative (HFSI) Launch



Sitting at the nexus of world-leading research in numerous fields of food study, HUDS often finds itself connecting like minds around food systems work. To better formalize that, Smitha Haneef partnered with Walter Willett, Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition and former chair of the Department of Nutrition at the School of Public Health, to create the Harvard Food Systems Initiative.

Haneef and Willet had the goal of creating more community-based opportunities to engage in food systems conversations, and to educate the community of future world leaders in food systems thinking.

In September 2022, the Harvard Food Systems Initiative kicked off by welcoming David Nabarro, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Food and

Nutrition, to campus to lead a dialogue focused on The Future of Food Systems. Attended by approximately 100 Harvard and Greater Boston food systems stakeholders, the program invited thinking about how our communities could connect and collaborate to work on intractable food systems challenges.

HFSI offered a full year of virtual and hybrid learning and engagement programming, including additional experiences such as:

- **Neighborhood Dining Hall Kitchen Tours** organized by Food Literacy Project Fellows
- **Meet the Food System** with Dr. Walter Willett, followed by a group dinner at Annenberg Dining Hall
- **Eating for Personal & Planetary Health** with Frank Hu, Chair of the Department

of Nutrition, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health & Stacey Blondin, Behavioral Science Associate, World Resource Institute

- Tour of the **“Resetting the Table”** exhibit at the Harvard Peabody Museum
- **De-Mythifying K-12 Food** with Maura Fleischman, CEO of the Chef Ann Foundation, Mellissa Honeywood, Director of Nutrition for Cambridge Public Schools, and Sunny Tang '24, Food Lab for Kids
- **Digesting the Food System Faculty Panel** organized by Food Literacy Project Fellows and featuring: Emily M. Broad-Leib, Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Food Law and Policy Clinic of the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation; Sparsha Saha, Lecturer on Government & Preceptor in Expository Writing; Dr. Christina Warinner,



Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology;
Sally Starling Seaver, Associate Professor at the Radcliffe Institute;
and, Dr. Christine Webb, College Fellow in the Department of Human
Evolutionary Biology

- **Scraps: The Environmental and Societal Implications of Food Waste** featuring Afreen Siddiqi, Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, Chef Justin Cassidy, HUDS, Dailey Brannin, Supervisor for Harvard Recycling Services, and Breda Page Violette, Harvard College student and Food Literacy Project Fellow
- **Pathways to Law and Food Systems from Harvard Law School Students** Sophie DeBode, Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic (*FLPC*), Arlene Lopez, Animal Law and Policy Clinic (*ALPC*) and Kipper Berven, Environmental Law and Policy Clinic (*ELPC*)
- **The White House Conference on Nutrition: A Discussion** with Dr. Dariush Mozaffarian, Conference Task Force Co-Chair and then-Dean and Jean Mayer Professor of Nutrition, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University

- **Healthy Oceans and Healthy Diets** with Dr. Christopher Golden, Christopher Golden, Assistant Professor of Nutrition and Planetary Health at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
- Educational programming was attended by 675 people, with approximately one-third from Harvard, while the other two-thirds were global food systems citizens, thanks to virtual offerings.

In the Fall of 2023, HFSI continued, reconvening many of the original stakeholders, as well as new voices, to focus specifically on Wasted Food. Out of an evening-long panel and brainstorming session, groups generated multiple pilot project ideas intended to advance awareness of wasted food and perhaps connect new partners in the work of taking new steps to further reduce wasted food.



Introducing Crimson Event Services

In May and June of 2023, Harvard celebrated Commencement and Reunions for the first time as separate events. What is an annual herculean effort to host thousands of guests for these activities was broken out into two distinctive sets of celebrations.

As an extension of its hospitality services surrounding this time, HUDS absorbed the professional responsibility for coordinating all the infrastructure that supports these and other campus events. During Commencement and Reunions, Harvard deploys more than 121 tents, 5,859 tables, 66,740 chairs, and thousands of hours of professional services such as contracted audio visual, lighting and equipment striking.

Campus Event Services was borne as an extension of HUDS Crimson Catering program. Spearheaded initially by Director of Catering

Kyle Ronayne, and later with the hiring of subject matter expert Dan Caterino, Campus Event Services now manages and directs the planning and implementation of outdoor events ranging in size and complexity.

In creating this service, HUDS ensures the safe and appropriate placement of resources that also honors the historic area in which we work and celebrate. It also allows the consolidation of resource deployment to make it more efficient and cost-effective for our community, while respecting the appropriate approvals which have to be given on as bustling a campus as ours.

Hiring & Year-Round Work

The hospitality industry was significantly impacted by COVID-related workforce changes, as many hospitality professionals found new lines of work and new workplaces. While Harvard saw some impacts from COVID, the University's commitment to maintaining continuity of pay for our team throughout the pandemic was a powerful statement of support for our team.

As we resumed full—and even expanded—operation, hiring was a foremost concern. Through a series of job fairs and intensive hiring events, HUDS was able to maintain a vacancy rate of less than 6.6%, bringing on new team members throughout the year.

This included re-opening several student-staffed coffee bars, employing more than 50 students in the spring semester at the HLS Pub, the Cambridge Queen's Head and the Cafe Gato Rojo.

Meanwhile, in the summer of 2023, with expanded services and operations, HUDS was able to keep a significant portion of its hourly work-force employed year-round, a number which is expected to grow in FY24.

From a team of just over 500 people who are members of our Local 26 union, more than half (268) were employed for the full year (*no summer seasonal pause in work*). Another 218 elected not to work with us in the summer, leaving just a small number without a summer role with HUDS. That said, they had regular and frequent opportunities to pick up open shifts as offered through our Dialer system.

The right-skilling, upskilling and promotion of team members continues to be a focus. HUDS prefers to grow its talent from within and offers regular opportunities to learn new skills and certifications. This focus has also included the deployment of a Managers Learning Path of recommended coursework, available through Harvard's Center for Workplace Development and other training tools. At present, every management team member is expected to engage in a minimum of 10 hours of independent training annually.





Other Successes to Celebrate

- The Harvard-Yale rivalry roared back to life in November 2022 with more than 30,000 game attendees who feasted on HUDS-hosted barbecues for Harvard and Yale undergrads, while alums and Harvard Departments hosted tailgate meals across multiple locations.
- In FY23, HUDS relied on the Passamaquoddy Tribe in Maine for all our frozen wild blueberries. Our community enjoyed 21,780 pounds of this vital, local harvest.
- By changing our standard for bottled water from plastic to aluminum, we reduced plastics use by 156,564 bottles.
- In the Spring 2023 semester, the HUDS-managed and student-run Cafe Gato Rojo in the lower level of Lehman Hall resumed normal service post-COVID. The team served 5,628 hand-crafted coffee, espresso or tea drinks as they re-cemented their place as a vital, casual community gathering space.
- At Harvard Law School, the team extended service beyond the embedded cafes to support HLS faculty in the Faculty Dining Room, and the HLS Dean in all events for his campus residence. HLS served 337,270 patrons through the cafe and supported 2,050 catered events.
- As of May 2023, HUDS employed 587 individuals. We are extraordinarily proud of our diversity and equity, and celebrate that our team is 59% minority and 44% female.

Looking Ahead – Year 3 2023-2024

By the end of FY24, HUDS will operate 13 residential dining halls, 2 quick-service residential lunch venues, a kosher kitchen and dining hall, plus 15 distinct professional school or campus cafes, and a comprehensive catering and events program.

We anticipate a need to review and recalibrate our Strategic Plan, especially given changing global economic and political concerns.

New technology, to support growth and communications, will continue to be a focus of work. HUDS is evaluating and deploying new catering and event logistics software; as well as preparing for an overhaul of its website.

Service needs continue to evolve, as students have more and more demands on their time and endeavor to make the most of the many opportunities Harvard has to offer.

HUDS is engaging in a wholesale review of its residential services with key stakeholders and building a new model to meet changing community need.

All the while, we are prepared for financial headwinds, as recession continues to loom, and as the “swell” of undergraduates following COVID returns to a more traditional steady state of several hundred fewer undergraduates enrolled in the College.





Harvard University
Dining Services