

23  
24



YEAR 3

# Learnings Report

Connections  
in Community



Harvard University  
Dining Services

STAFF are the BEST!

Thank you for being so warm and welcoming! HUDS is the best!

Thank you for everything! You all are the best!!

Thank you all! -Tirth

thank you for all you do!!

Thank you :)

Thank you to the absolute best staff! You're all amazing!

Thank you for all that you do. We love you!

Thank you for always welcoming us and keeping us happy and fed!

You guys are the best!

So thankful for the smiles you bring into Guiney. Wouldn't be home without y'all!

Thank you for being so kind!

Thank you

Thank you for the conversation great brunches and for waiting some extra minutes for us who can't wake up early. Special thanks for Aurora, Luis Carlos and Ana! We love you, obrigado!! -Rebeca

Best dining staff

Thank you!

Thank you for always greeting us with a smile (and sometimes a song!)

Thank you for all them BURGERS!!

Thank you all so much for all you do - You are the true backbone of Harvard.

You always brighten my day! Thank you!!

CARLOS IS KING.

Thanks for always taking the time to chat about our day!

Thank you guys for everything you do. It is really appreciated and I truly just thank you for all the work you do.

Thank you for all that you do every day! The park belly glass.



You are the best! -Julia

Thank you for all the great food and chats -Isabela

Thank you the best!!!

Thank you for being so welcoming! You guys are the best!

Thank you for the appreciation that we all have for Carlos, and Luis kind & wonderful in the dining hall.



I began my role as Managing Director for HUDS in April 2021. The department was emerging from COVID eager to rebuild businesses, yes, but also networks and relationships across our campus and industry.

As I look back on my third full year with this remarkable team, I see that spirit flourishing in the work we did these last 12 months. COVID gave this team the chance to show our nimbleness, creativity, can-do attitude, care and hospitality. As we move into a new era, I'm enormously proud to see this team building on that strength.

We don't just cook and serve food. We create places and experiences that are formative to how Harvard lives on in the memories of our students and broader, connected community.

We shape events that celebrate our diversity; we craft conversations that raise awareness and understanding and drive change; we bring people together, over a cup of coffee or a shared experience; we collaborate to meet the high bar that is Harvard; and we develop opportunities for people to thrive.

I'm proud to share examples of that work, and excited at what I see on the horizon.

In community,

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



Inauguration reception preparations at Annenberg Hall

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# Inauguration

**WHEN HARVARD INAUGURATED** its 30th president on September 28 and 29, 2023, HUDS and its Crimson Catering division played a central role in creating a "joyous celebration" that represented the extraordinary diversity of today's Harvard community.

Festivities started on Thursday evening with an Arts Prelude. After performances from an array of student, faculty and alumni poets, singers, dancers, musicians and even martial artists, the audience entered Annenberg Dining Hall, traditionally the first-year dining hall, for a dessert and champagne reception. Crimson Catering's Event and Engagement Manager, Krzysztof (Kris) Karasek transformed the space using a lighting pallet mirroring the Inauguration branding of blues, reds and yellows. The addition of soft seating, small rounds and high tables allowed guests to mingle comfortably and enjoy a range of desserts and beverages, including an espresso bar, chocolate fountains surrounded by fruits and sweet and salty dipping treats, mini pies, including Boston Cream, tropical fruits, and Haitian Orange Cake and vegan Tablet Kokoye (Coconut Candy) in honor of Claudine Gay's Haitian heritage.

The following day, Harvard hosted a series of academic symposia for the more than 300 academic and civic leaders who came to campus, in addition to Harvard alumni, faculty, staff and students. As guests moved out of the symposia, Crimson Catering served lunch for 900 invitees at Annenberg and an outdoor tent. The pre-plated salad of Belgian endive, roasted carrots, beet farro salad and roasted salmon was complemented by

freshly baked bread and a berry brulée. By pre-setting the meal, guests could converge from the symposia across campus, meet with new and old friends, and then disperse to prepare for the formal installation ceremony.

Meanwhile, in HUDS' residential and retail operations, the Harvard community was treated to special inauguration cupcakes and cookies and a Haitian-themed dinner of Tchaka (Haitian black bean and corn casserole), Poule en Sauce (Haitian stewed chicken) and Diri Djondjon (Haitian black mushroom rice).

In the late afternoon, following the official inauguration in Harvard's new Yard, watched by thousands of hearty guests despite persistent rain, the community gathered in old Harvard Yard to cap off the moment. Coordinated by Managing Director Smitha Haneef, Director for Catering Kyle Ronayne, and Director for Culinary Operations Martin Breslin, and supported by HUDS team members from across campus, the celebration featured international culinary stations to honor the diversity of Harvard's community. Guests enjoyed Mediterranean pumpkin kofta, Caribbean plantains, Thai fresh vegetable spring rolls, and Spanish beef empanadas, among other small global bites.

Haneef noted, "The Inauguration took coordination by dozens of colleagues from across our campus, including within HUDS. It was a special moment for this community."

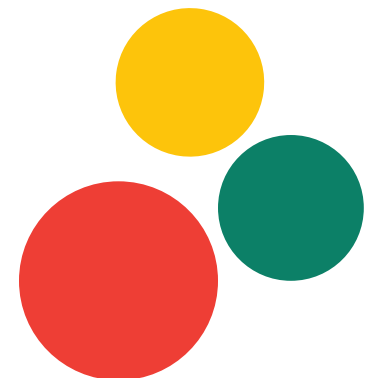




HARVARD  
FOOD  
SYSTEMS  
INITIATIVE



Fall '23 HFSI Conference  
panel discussion and  
break out room working  
sessions.



# Food Education

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY EDUCATES** the world's future leaders. Harvard University Dining Services, therefore, feels a responsibility to drive an understanding of how food forms an inextricable link between human health and environmental sustainability, and how food choices impact long-term well-being and the health of the planet.

To that end, we lead two educational initiatives:

**The Harvard Food Systems Initiative (HFSI)** and the **Food Literacy Project (FLP)**. The former engages Harvard's faculty and administrative leadership alongside our network of food systems partners across Greater Boston in thinking about and addressing broad issues for collective impact. The latter engages undergraduates in programming that broadens one's perspective of food as a valuable area of work, study and individual engagement.

## THE HARVARD FOOD SYSTEMS INITIATIVE (HFSI)

**IN OCTOBER 2023**, HFSI convened a group of approximately 80 faculty, policy makers, NGO representatives, and community affiliates to discuss wasted food. Waste Interrupted: A Working Session to Reinvent Systems to Stop Wasted Food invited food system actors to imagine opportunities related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, mitigating food insecurity, improving nutrition and food access, reducing food costs and more.

The program opened with a panel including:

- **Tori Oto, Clinical Fellow**, Harvard Law School Food Law and Policy Clinic

- **Usha Thakrar, Executive Director**, Boston Area Gleaners
- **Afreen Siddiqi, Adjunct Lecturer in Public Policy**, Harvard Kennedy School
- **Rebekah Emanuel, Senior Advisory for Social Impact**, Harvard iLabs

Invited stakeholders then broke into smaller groups to ideate innovative approaches to addressing the problem, and to propose pilots or projects for shared work. The issue of food waste was examined through multiple lenses:

- **On The Farm:** How state and federal policies affect food waste in agriculture
- **From Field to Fridge:** Pre-consumer waste from the source to the business or individual
- **Culinary:** Minimizing waste during food preparation
- **Technology:** Tech and AI developments in food waste
- **From the Fridge Onward:** Post-consumer waste reduction strategies

Based on the five breakout conversations, two tracks of work are underway:

- **Waste Education:** Consumers (in every link of the food chain) need to know more about the opportunities available to reduce waste. How can we crowd-source information and build a channel or project with an intention of widespread dissemination of information? For example: Instagram or LinkedIn with crowd-sourced content. What messaging within institutions will advance education about institution-specific food donation opportunities, or volunteer opportunities near them.



In addition to hosting on-campus opportunities for food systems learning, **Managing Director Smitha Haneef** also shared our work with the broader food and wellness community.

In June 2023 she was a panelist at Menus of Change for "A Global Perspective: Pathways to Achieving Healthy, Sustainable, and Equitable Food Systems" with Danielle Nierenberg (President, Food Tank), Niyeti Shah, MPH (Co-Founder, Food Systems Collective), Walter Willett, MD, DrPH (Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) and Helene York (Strategic Advisor, Where Food Comes From; Adjunct Professor, The CIA's Food Business School).

And in April 2024, Haneef presented on "Designing hospitality programs to promote healthy diets from sustainable food systems" at the Mindful Actions for Climate Change Symposium hosted by the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health's Thich Nhat Hanh Center for Mindfulness in Public Health.

- **End-to-End Waste Reduction:** With partners at every point in the food chain represented, we are considering business models and connections to create outlets for otherwise wasted food.

## FLP

**WITHIN THE FLP**, Food Literacy Project Manager Gwen Koch coordinated 20 outings, speaker programs or cooking classes over the course of the academic year to engage undergraduates. The programs followed monthly themes:

- **September** – Intros to HUDS
- **October** – World Food Day: Water is Life, Water is Food
- **November/December** – Food History & Culture
- **January/February** – Black History Month, Food & Labor
- **March** – Nutrition & Women’s History
- **April** – Sustainability

Among the 20 events:

**Becca Millstein**, Founder/CEO of Fishwife and a Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree, drew a crowd of more than 60 eager listeners as she described her entrepreneurial journey establishing her ethically-sourced, premium tinned seafood business.

**Christine Tobin**, food stylist for such media as "Julia" on HBO and the Greta Gerwig-directed movie

"Little Women," shared her process for representing food in a historically accurate, deliciously depicted way for a packed audience.

**Gaitskell Cleghorn, Jr.** led a sold-out cooking class on Global African Cuisine, featuring recipes for candied yams and FuFu.

And HUDS’ own Director for Residential Dining Operations, **Barb Kempken**, led a packed kitchen of eager student culinarians through Plant-Based Cooking.

Additionally, students lead almost 20 peer-to-peer events, and worked collaboratively on a dozen projects – everything from recipes for DIY Vegan Salad Dressings using everyday dining hall ingredients to an environmental study of Dairy vs. Plant-Based Milk Alternatives in the Dining Hall.



**TOP: Global African cuisine cooking class led by Gaitskell Cleghorn, Jr.**

**BOTTOM: FLP students enjoy food at Mei Mei, Boston after a dumpling making class**

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# Renewed Operations

**AS HUDS BEGAN** the academic year, we were reuniting with three old friends: the **Chauhaus Cafe** at the Graduate School of Design (GSD), the **Barker Cafe** at the Barker Center for the Humanities, and the **Lamont Library Cafe** at Lamont Library.

In October 2023, all three operations re-opened under HUDS' management. Barker and Lamont had been shuttered since COVID (except for a brief few weeks at Barker in 2022). Chauhaus had been run by a contract operator, but came back to HUDS for reinvigoration in a changing campus community dynamic.

The re-openings of **Barker** and **Lamont** as coffee houses was cheered by the student community, who both staff and patronize these spots. At Barker, a menu of espresso-based drinks, tea, baked goods, fresh cookies and light snacks kept the space lively



**HUDS**  
baristas

for breaks between classes. At Lamont, in addition to coffee and tea drinks, popular boba tea lattes generated energy into late-night study hours. Both locations utilized local coffee roastery Dean's Beans and featured other locally-made pastries.

**Chauhaus** re-opened to the GSD community with a menu of basic breakfast fare, sandwiches, customizable grain bowls, snacks and beverages. The operation serves as a respite for the tight-knit community who spends long hours in the tiered studios above the eatery.

All three operations felt symbolic of the campus' full return following COVID. While ongoing flexible work arrangements have permanently altered the traffic in these community cafes, they serve as a connective tissue among the populations in a building or space.

Paula Gaughan, HUDS' Associate Director for Retail Operations, led the re-openings. "It's so exciting to see the unique personalities of each space emerge," Gaughan notes. "Barker has a definite undergrad casual study and connect vibe. Lamont is more like an oasis amid the serious, focused work in the carrels upstairs. And Chauhaus is like a deep breath where lots of connections happen as people grab a bite."

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# HKS 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**ON JULY 1, 2013**, Harvard University Dining Services opened for service at the Harvard Kennedy School, taking over operation from a contract foodservice company that had held the business for more than two decades. On June 30, 2024, as we close out our 11th year of service at the professional school, we look back and celebrate the extraordinary growth and development of this location since it's initial year.

At the time HUDS assumed the business, the café averaged 174,000 transactions a year, and 3,900 events a year. By the end of HUDS second full year at HKS, business had grown modestly, and the operation returned a small profit to the school.

Over a 5 year period, café transactions and catered events each grew by approximately 20%, with sales outpacing expense growth to ensure that HUDS could return a significant profit back to the program.

But of course 2020 ushered in a sea change experience for the entire campus, leaving HUDS to rebuild from FY20 to FY24.

At the close of business on June 30, 2024, HUDS had rung up 185,000 transactions in the café over the course of the academic year, and had executed 4,344 catered events in FY24. Revenue had bounced back to FY19 levels, and profits exceeded prior highs, all thanks to careful stewardship of this thriving community and event center.

General Manager Serie Demelo and Executive Chef Ernie Quinones form a powerful tandem. Innovative menus, a willingness to creatively answer the community call for events, and vital partnerships with such groups as the Office for Sustainability has made HKS a flagship operation.



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# Chef Wahid Wins Gold

**SOUS CHEF AMEER WAHID**, part of the culinary team at Harvard Law School, earned a prestigious American Culinary Federation (ACF) gold medal at the National Association of College & University Food Service (NACUFS) regional conference on April 2, 2024.

Wahid had one hour to prepare a nutritionally balanced plate using three core ingredients: fresh branzino, bulgur wheat, and white shrimp. Competitors were allowed 30 minutes before the competition to complete any simple preparations, such as measuring out ingredients. All ingredients had to be whole and raw at the start of competition, and could not include any pre-made sauces or broths.

Wahid prepared a Pan-Seared Branzino with Shrimp Infused Bulgur, Roasted Seasonal Vegetables & Citrus Beurre Blanc. The dish was judged by three ACF-approved judges on a 100-point scale, with evaluation based on Organization, Cooking Skills and Culinary Technique and Taste.

“Ameer did an amazing job!” noted Martin Breslin, Director of Culinary Operations for HUDS. “The competition rewards excellent technique and taste, but also careful use of your ingredients and limited waste. Ameer made a classic dish that allowed the flavors to shine through!”



## MORE AWARDS!

In June 2024, Quincy House team member **Adilson Lopes** was honored as a **Harvard Hero**. His coworkers nominated him for always going the extra mile and teaching others to do the same. “Your drive to work better, smarter, and faster inspires your colleagues and nourishes our community,” they noted.

In July 2024, **Crista Martin**, Director for Strategic Initiatives & Communications, received the **Richard Lichtenfelt Award for outstanding volunteer service** to the National Association of College & University Food Services on a national level. Crista has served as a Regional Ambassador for the last year, among other efforts throughout her tenure.

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# Greenest University



**JUST PRIOR TO** Earth Day 2024, the Green Restaurant Association named Harvard the Greenest University, as the school with the most Certified Green Restaurants®.

Annenberg Dining Hall, every House dining hall, Hillel Kosher Kitchen, and campus cafes at SEC, HSPH, HLS, HKS and HDS are all Certified Green Restaurants®. Collectively, these Certified Green Restaurants® have taken more than 1,000 environmental steps to earn GreenPoints™ in categories related to Energy, Water, Waste, Disposables, Chemicals, Food, Building, and Education & Transparency.

For example, through facility changes to refrigeration controls, exhaust fan controls, dish washing equipment, and refrigeration waste heat capture, we’ve achieved (annually) a reduction of 1,088,089 kWh of electricity; 4,533 MMBTU of steam; and 1,518,666 gallons of water. All our facilities compost and recycle, and our menu includes ample locally purchased products, and offers numerous lower-on-the-food-chain selections.

Learn more about Harvard’s Certified Green Restaurants® at: [www.dinegreen.com/harvard](http://www.dinegreen.com/harvard)



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# Year-End Staff Celebration

**ON TUESDAY, JUNE 4**, as Reunion events concluded and our team was beginning to shift into summer gear, we hosted a Thank You Celebration event for HUDS co-workers.

Over lunch from local food trucks, the team gathered to mark the achievement of another incredibly busy year. All were welcomed with giveaways donated by our vendor partners, as well as a chance to win raffle prizes like Red Sox tickets, a mountain bike and a 55-inch television. The day included a fun photo booth, music, yard games and lots of camaraderie and laughs.



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# Growing Our Team

**IN FY24**, 13 team members enjoyed promotions within our exempt staff ranks, including four individuals who grew from non-exempt hourly roles into management positions.

“This kind of growth is truly something I celebrate,” notes Managing Director Smitha Haneeff. “It makes me so proud to see colleagues flourishing and having the opportunity to advance at Harvard.”

Such growth was also formalized with the launch, in the 2023-24 academic year, of the Managers Learning Path, a collaboration with the Harvard Center for Workplace Development. The Managers Learning Path outlines a series of in-person, virtual, synchronous and asynchronous education programs based on job classification grade. The programs are intended to help teammates build the practical skills needed to excel in their current role, while also building skills to meet long-term professional development and career goals.

Classes include skills around management and supervision, communication, effectiveness and efficiency, and equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging.

In its first year, 34 individuals took advantage of the resource to complete 85 programs in 25 different subjects.

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# By the Numbers

## HUDS HAS:

- **19 kitchens** supporting **31 operations** including:
  - 15 Undergrad residential locations
  - 6 FAS cafes
  - 8 Professional school cafes (GSD, HLS, HKS, SEC, HSPH, HDS)
  - 1 Catering division
  - 1 Kosher operation
- **2,482,007 Residential meals** served in FY24
- **280 events** and roughly **90,000 meals** served at Commencement & Reunions
- Heat-N-Eats – Three FLP Food Recovery Fellows led plate-up sessions at Annenberg 3 nights per week, and over the course of the academic year prepared **2,290 Heat-N-Eats meals** of HUDS leftovers, individually plated for donation to food pantries such as at neighboring Bunker Hill Community College
- **71 people** were newly hired to the HUDS team in FY24. The team is **61.5%** minority and **45%** female.
- As of June 2024, HUDS' team is made up of **621** professional colleagues: **526** Local 26, **10** HUCTW, and **85** Exempt
- Recognizing the environmental impacts of plastic water bottles, in FY24, we transitioned to Open Water, utilizing **146,568** cans of water, diverting an equal number of plastic bottles from the waste stream.

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# Looking Ahead

**AS WE MOVE** into the academic year, we are undertaking several projects for the benefits of the community experience:

- We received funding from the President's Administrative Innovation Fund (PAIF) to pilot a reusable container program that leverages the technology and psychology of library book lending. If received well by students, it would allow us, with a \$50,000 investment across all locations, to replace the \$150,000 we spend annually on compostable take-out containers (setting aside the environmental impact). This is also an exciting opportunity to contribute to the University's broader Zero Waste goal.
- Food is a universal language for sharing who we are as people, as members of a culture, and as representatives of a specific place. HUDS received a Harvard Culture Lab Innovation Fund award to pursue a community engagement project called **Connecting Community Through Food**. HUDS will work with Harvard College students and student organizations, as well as Harvard employees with a special emphasis on Dining Services staff, to develop recipes and menus that more authentically represent the varied cultures and communities of our undergraduates, with recipes scaled to share at the volume required for undergraduate dining hall production.
- HUDS web site will be redesigned and refreshed by May 2025. The current site was established more than a decade ago. This overhaul will allow it to become fully accessible, and to provide easy access to information about programs and services. We have conducted initial user surveys and audits, and are now moving into the design and information transfer stage.
- FAS and HUDS have embarked on a multi-year strategic planning process to envision hospitality and services for our community.

STAFF at X  
the best

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Thank you ☺

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We love you  
→ you rock

Thank you for the conversation great brunches and for waiting some extra minutes for us who can't wake up early. Special thanks for Aurora, Luis Carlos and Ana! We love you, obrigado!!!  
-Rebeca

So thankful for the smiles you bring into Quincy. Wouldn't be home without y'all!

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THANK YOU!!!

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Thank you all so much for all you do - You are the backbone of the Harvard.

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Thank you for all that you do every day!  
The park belly glass.  
CARLOS GOAT

You are the best!  
-Julia

Thank you for the extra bonuses that we appreciate. I appreciate all you do! Ana, Carlos, and Luis are so kind & wonderful! nces in the dining hall.

Thank you for all the great food and chats  
-Isabela

Thank you for the best chat ever!!!

Thank you so much for

I really appreciate what you do for us - Rebecca



**2024 GREEN RESTAURANT AWARDS**

# **GREENEST UNIVERSITY**

**HARVARD  
UNIVERSITY**



Harvard University  
Dining Services