

# ON-CAMPUS HOSPITALITY

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HEALTHY  
DINING<sub>at</sub>USF

# USF Opens Champion's Choice



When the University of South Florida in Tampa renovated its recreation center on campus, it approached campus foodservice provider Aramark to create a new dining location to focus on healthy items and cater to athletes.

That new location is Champion's Choice.

"When the university came to us, we got together with our nutritionist here with Aramark and created more well-balanced recipes and menus that we were able to offer at the facility," said Tom Williamson, senior resident district manager. "We serve up healthy meals, including gluten-free, vegan and vegetarian options. We have tried to create a well-balanced menu, not just using vegan and vegetarian options, but also using other proteins that are available for the student athletes and the students on campus."

The new facility features four stations serving only the freshest ingredients "The Gold Energy Zone provides higher carbohydrate foods in the form of whole grains such as pasta and flatbreads," he said. "Grille FiftySix features many lean proteins and nutrient-dense items such as grilled chicken and vegetables while the Comfort Zone features healthy versions of traditional foods."

Williamson continued, "Finally, for those craving a sandwich or salad, the Fresh & Green Zone offers students made-to-order sandwiches, as well as a salad bar where there is a wide variety of fresh and vibrant produce."

The station also features all natural, roasted, fresh-ground nut butter that is made fresh daily. Flavors include: Natural Peanut; Organic Peanut; Honey Roasted Peanut; Almond; and Peanut and Dark Chocolate.



## HEALTHY EATING



The Hydration Zone features a Coca-Cola Freestyle machine with more than 100-plus drink choices. Another new feature is Colombo Frozen Yogurt, which is available daily as a healthy dessert option.

To help students choose what items are best for them, the facility features 10 iPads with access to nutritional information. “They are wirelessly connected to our website that enables the students to check and look at what the nutritional values for each one of the entrees or items that are being served at the location,” said Williamson. “It is put together by CampusDish, an Aramark-supplied internet company. We are currently working with Computrition to upgrade that system to be able to actually use mobile devices (smartphones) to also access that nutritional information.”

While the facility caters to student athletes, it attracts the entire university community. “It is in the main athletic corridor of the campus,” he said. “It is not only for student athletes, but those who just want to be fit also have access to the student recreation center, which is right across from the facility.”

The training tables, another aspect of the facility, allow a large number of students to sit together, enhancing the sense of community.

In addition to offering healthy choices for students, the facility was built with a healthy environment in mind. “The building is Silver LEED-certified,” said Williamson. “All of the equipment that we purchased for the location was Energy Star rated.”

The facility, like others on campus, uses a reusable ‘To-Go’ box program and tray-less dining. The facility also makes use of

Platewise dinnerware made of natural bamboo, which is biodegradable, free of melamine and provides guests with an eco-friendly dining experience. Additionally, locally grown fruits and vegetables are offered throughout the dining halls as part of the farm-to-table program, which helps support the local economy.

Student reaction has been very positive. “They like the nutritional options that they have,” he said. “We recently got our survey scores back and we have seen an uptick in our availability of nutritional information and options on campus, which is a very positive sign.”