

ON-CAMPUS HOSPITALITY

an **ebm** publication

NOVEMBER 2011

BRANDING

VCU Finds Success with Wendy's

Dining Services at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond, recently opened a new Wendy's in the Gateway Building on the VCU Medical Center Campus.

The location serves a variety of customers. "The primary customers are visitors to the health system, patients who have had doctors' appointments there, VCU and VCU Health System faculty, staff, students and neighboring businesses," said Diane Reynolds, director of Business Services at VCU.

The Wendy's, which is co-located with an Einstein Bros. Bagels, replaces another national hamburger brand. Choosing a replacement for that brand was based partially on customer feedback gathered by the school and Aramark, the campus foodservice provider. "Part of the driver

was based upon feedback," she said. "We do a lot of surveys. Some of the determining factors are based upon surveys, in terms of the type of quickserve restaurant that we wanted to have, but it was through a competitive proposal process."

She continued, "Wendy's was one of several that we were considering. That national brand name, coupled with all of their healthy options, price points, the value menu and diversity of their menu offerings was really the reason behind that."

A national brand was always preferred. "Being on an urban campus, we have a lot of outside brands as competition," said Melissa Leake, marketing manager for Aramark. "I think that plays a factor in it as well. We wanted to be on the same playing field as them."



Wendy's is one of several national brands at VCU. "We have a mix on campus, both national and proprietary brands," said Reynolds. "The importance of national brands to our customers seems to be the credibility of that brand. When you say a brand name, there is an immediate association with that brand and what you are going to have."

The menu is consistent with any off-campus Wendy's — with one exception. "We are doing breakfast as well, which is a bit of an exception for Wendy's," said Michael Martin, resident district manager for Aramark. "It is their breakfast program. Our Wendy's opens up at 6:30 a.m. We have early hours as well as closing at 11 p.m."