

NACURH, INC.
Educational Program of the Month
Food and Feedback

School: University of Washington **Region:** PACURH
Person in charge: Winthrop Hubbard **Nominator:** Nathaniel Block

Target Population: 100 **Time Needed to Organize:** One Month
Number of People in Attendance: 200 **Date(s) of Program:** November 10
Number of People Needed to Organize: 10 **Cost of Program:** \$0.00 (Donated food)
On-Campus Population: 5600 **Chapter Size:** 56

Origin of Program:

Food and Feedback is based off of a program that occurred last year called Whine and Cheese. Whine and Cheese was developed as panel discussion where residents could speak directly with the dining hall chefs to discuss issues that they had with food, things that they liked, and things they would like to see changed. However, this year Win Hubbard, the Residence Hall Student Association Director of Internal Affairs took it to another level. In conjunction with UW Dining, Win worked to make it more of a tasting event where chefs and other administrators were present. While residents still had the opportunity to provide feedback to the chefs, they also had a chance to learn about how the food was made, the local products that are used, and why the dining halls operate how they do. Furthermore participates this year had an opportunity to sample food.

Word Count: 146

Please give a short description of the program:

At the event, residents had the opportunity to sample different foods that are offered at the dining facilities within the residence halls. Some of the samples that were available for residents to try were different salads, pastas, and bread products. Also, there were chefs and administrators present to explain what was in the products, how it was made, why it was done the way it was, and get immediate feedback from residents on their thoughts on the various samples. Furthermore, the chefs were walking around talking to all residents to see what they thought of the food in general that is offered in the dining halls, foods they would like to see in the dining halls, and to receive general feedback on everything from prices to hours to options that are offered. In addition there were members of the Advocacy Council for Tomorrow, a committee comprised of residents from each residence hall, worked to compile a survey to provide to the chefs. These surveys were designed where residents could fill out a three to four question half-sheet that asked them to give foods they liked, foods they would like to see, and any other general feedback that they wanted to share. Furthermore, dining staff asked each survey participant if they would be willing to be contacted by dining services to have more in depth discussions about their feelings of food in the residence halls. Finally, the Residence Hall Student Association worked as well to try and recruit residents to come to the event and provide help to members of ACT, the chefs, and dining administrators

in any way that they could. This included talking to residents about their thoughts on food and helping to run the survey. Word Count: 287

Goals of the program:

The goals of the program were to provide residents the opportunity to meet directly with dining staff to provide their feedback on what they liked, disliked, and general thoughts were of food within the residence halls. Additionally, it was a chance for residents to learn about the different foods that were offered within the residence halls, why they were offered, and why they are priced how they are, one of the most common questions from residents. Furthermore they learned about how dining services attempts to use local and natural products to not only help the local economy, but also provide healthy, nutritious food to all residents. The last goal was to show residents that dining services truly care about residents and are willing to go above and beyond to try and satisfy the distinct tastes of all 6,000 residents. Along these lines dining wanted to show how any resident can contact them at any time to give feedback and express any concerns that they have. Word Count: 165

Positive and lasting effects of the program:

For residents the positive and lasting effects are incredible. Residents stated that they now feel that they understand why food is chosen to be served, how it is priced, and how dining services try to put forth a huge effort to make the best possible food that is healthy and locally grown and/or raised. Furthermore, dining services were given the opportunity to meet directly with residents and incorporate their feedback into the dining halls, something that is already occurring. Also, dining staff stated that on their end the survey and personal conversations were so successful in gaging student tastes that they would love to do similar events like this one quarterly if possible. Finally, dining staff is planning on posting the survey results and the surveys themselves to show residents how their feedback is actually used and the importance of student feedback to dining services. Word Count: 145

Short evaluation of the program:

Food and Feedback was an unbelievable success. Not only did residents express that they were thrilled with the program, but dining staff felt that they received huge amounts of feedback that they would be able to use in the future. Additionally, the program had more attendees than Whine and Cheese did the previous year and food samples ran out just over half-way through the event, illustrating how much more popular the event was than previously expected. As previous stated dining staff also stated that they want to do multiple events like this in the future. Finally, the impact of the event was felt across campus. The campus newspaper, The Daily, put an article about the event on its front page to show how dining services truly care about students and how the program had an impact on any student, resident or not, that eats at any dining facility on campus. Word Count: 150

How could this program be adapted to other campuses?

This is a program that can easily be adapted to any campus. For a campus that has an in-house dining service group, such as UW, you can work with the staff on your campus to see if they would not only be willing to donate food for the tasting, but also if they would be willing to attend the event to discuss with residents their thoughts on food at your institution, how food is chosen, and why it is priced how it is. For a campus that has its food contracted out, you can try to work with the company that you contract to and see if they would be willing to have a representative attend the event to discuss with students the same things as an in-house dining service can do. In terms of manning the event, if you do not have a committee that works with food services, you can have your RHA, NRHH chapter, General Assembly, or Hall Governments to put on the event, organize it, collect the survey and compile the results, and talk to residents about their thoughts on dining. Word Count : 185