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## Virginia Tech Staff Employees of the Week

September 3, 2007

**Group Name:** Dining Services



### Summary

Virginia Tech dining is No. 1 in the nation, according to The Princeton Review's "Best 366 Colleges: 2008 Edition." The program has steadily climbed the ranks of the best campus food category, moving from No. 9 to No. 2, and finally to the top of the rankings. Because the surveys are based entirely upon student evaluations, Virginia Tech's standing indicates the highest student satisfaction among college dining programs in the United States.

Providing high quality food, offering excellent customer service, and staying abreast of current dining trends have become hallmarks of Virginia Tech dining. Dining Services improves facilities, employs executive chefs and trained culinary professionals, and follows stringent food safety procedures in an effort to increase satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is paramount, and employees go out of their way to give students the best possible dining experience.

"Our program is successful because of our employees—they are what make Virginia Tech dining so special," said Rick Johnson, director of Housing and Dining Services. "Their commitment to the students and to providing quality products and customer service is the reason we were voted number one."

Virginia Tech received three Loyal E. Horton Awards this year and the grand prize for a theme dinner from the National Association of College and University Food Services. Individual restaurants have received recognition as well, including Deet's Place's Golden Cup Award from the Specialty Coffee Association of America, a 2006 Franchise of the Year Award for Au Bon Pain, and D2's Outstanding Design Award from American School & University Magazine.

Another component of the program's success stems from an effort to tailor facilities to students' needs. Students are encouraged to share their opinions by talking to dining center staff or filling out online and paper comment cards. A panel of Student Advisory Committee volunteers meets regularly with administrators to provide input. Housing and Dining Services has made changes to menus, improved facilities, and extended hours of operation as a result of feedback from these programs.

The Virginia Tech dining program has received 59 national awards since 1992 for excellence in special events, menus, restaurant design, sales volume, and innovative achievement from organizations such as the National Association of College and University Food Services, the National Association of College Auxiliary Services, the American Culinary Federation, and the Specialty Coffee Association of America. For more information about dining at Virginia Tech, visit [www.studentprograms.vt.edu/dining](http://www.studentprograms.vt.edu/dining).

About the ["Staff Employee of the Week"](#) Program

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