

GOLD CITATION

CAFETERIAS/FOOD-SERVICE AREAS

Virginia Commonwealth University, Shafer Court Dining Center Richmond, Virginia

Firm: Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company

Associated firm: Ricca Newmark Design

Client: Virginia Commonwealth University;
Diane Reynolds, Director, Business Services

Total area: 56,908 sq. ft.

Total cost: \$13,483,365 (construction)

Total cost/square foot: \$236.93

Completion: August 2004

Committed to energizing student services within its core campus, this urban university chose a site along its main pedestrian mall as the location for a new student dining facility. Programmatic requirements included:

- “Board-plan” dining for 850, providing diverse and changeable food-service venues for an “all-you-care-to-eat” program.

- Retail food-service outlets with cafe and lounge seating for 300, including covered outdoor dining plus a private dining room for 50.

- Kitchen and offices supporting the facility, plus a campus catering program.

- An energetic interior underscoring the quality of the food-service program and entice students to return multiple times daily.

The building is organized around a large, circular lobby called the “drum,”

which collects patrons from two directions. This focal point facilitates movement and acts as a transition between the exterior and dining rooms. Its simple material palette, brick and stone, is formal, strong and quiet.

Cafe dining/lounge areas on the first floor, and dining areas on the second floor, feature more industrial finishes. Exterior walls use a combination of ground-face and glazed masonry units. Maple and cherry wood paneling and ceilings create seating “islands.” Circular, free-form flooring patterns define circulation. Furniture emphasizes the refined, modern aesthetic of the building, intentionally stepped back so as not to distract from the food and food-service venues. Venues feature colorful glass-tiled walls, custom-designed hood enclosures, patterned wood counters with stone tops and colorful accent lighting.

PHOTOGRAPHERS: ROBERT BENSON (INTERIORS) AND JOHN WADSWORTH



“Basils” venue



Information pylon



First-floor cafe seating with faculty mural



“Field of Greens” venue

Eleven works of art, created for a student and faculty competition, are installed in the facility. Multiple sources of architectural and decorative lighting allow Shafer to change moods.

Since opening, board-plan dollar sales are up 19 percent over the same period from the previous year, and total contract sales increased by 32 percent. Also, faculty and staff requested a meal plan of their own. ▲

***“Elegant and artistic.
Sensitive to
student needs.”***

—2005 Jury



“Field of Greens” venue with faculty mosaic



Entry



Seating area



Rodney's Lounge