May 12, 2010

Dear Students,

Tufts Dining is going trayless this fall. While many of you celebrate this decision, others have deep concerns over this announcement. Trays have become a way of life for many of you, and without them you feel deprived, inconvenienced or worse.

What We Did
- First, we didn’t rush into the trayless movement which started over two years ago.
- We’ve observed how peer institutions across the country made the change and have spoken to them and visited their operations to see how their diners handle their dishes without trays.
- We waited until there was enough student interest in the topic to thoughtfully explore the potential, then worked with a group of committed students and the Office of Sustainability on a pilot program which captured data, as well as measured student perceptions.

How We Decided
- Upon evaluating the data we considered how student diners would feel about the change.
- We considered how our management team, who are deeply committed to the best hospitality possible, would support this change. We also considered how our staff would adapt to the change in their duties.
- Finally we looked to the senior leadership on campus and President Larry Bacow for their views on the matter. We have the support of the administration all the way to Ballou Hall.

Why We Are Doing This
- The results of the pilot program at Carmichael are compelling. By reducing the amount of trays and dishes that are washed each day, we reduce water, electricity, cleaning chemicals, and food waste.
- Some institutions eliminated trays when faced with drought conditions, and never returned them when their water situation improved. We know all too well how precious water is.
- Tufts University is committed to environmental sustainability. President Bacow enthusiastically supports this change stating that we ought to be leaders, not followers in this area.
- By reducing energy usage we support the Tufts Climate Initiative to reduce carbon emissions.

Other Considerations
- We’ll be purchasing 12oz beverage tumblers for Carmichael & Dewick-MacPhie and are looking at where dishes and silverware are placed in our serveries to maximize accessibility.
- Upon request, trays will be available to guests who have mobility issues and truly need them in order to be served.

As members of a highly regarded university community known for active citizenship, we are confident that you will be able to make this adaptation help Tufts realize the tremendous environmental benefits and demonstrate to all that Tufts is a sustainability leader. Thank you for your understanding.

Patti Klos
Director of Dining and Business Services