

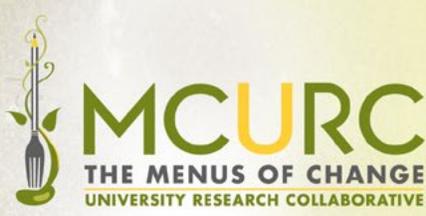


MCURC

THE MENUS OF CHANGE
UNIVERSITY RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE



MCURC 2025 C&U MEMBER TESTIMONIALS



"I have really enjoyed my time with MCURC. This is the group of like-minded individuals I was searching for when I decided to come work for the CIA. I value the collaboration across campuses, and the best part of the annual conference was seeing concepts and ideas put into real and tangible everyday practices."

—RYAN LUTTRELL '99 CHEP, M.S., Lecturing Instructor
Culinary Arts | The Culinary Institute of America



"This year's MCURC meeting left me more energized than ever about developing plant-forward and allergen-friendly recipes. My colleague, Meghan LeFave, and I dove straight into brainstorming new concepts during the conference—and we were back in the test kitchen the following week putting ideas into action! Beyond the inspiration, the spirit of collaboration among universities is an incredible asset. The opportunity to exchange best practices, gather feedback, and spark new ideas together is truly invaluable. Huge thanks for such a phenomenal experience. Already looking forward to what's next!"

—CHRISTINA KARALOLOS MS, RD, LDN, Administrative Dietitian
Past President of the Massachusetts Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics | Boston College



"Meeting in person can never be replaced and being able to make connections with members institutions and industry partners is foundational to MCURC success. I also appreciated the opportunity for us to provide feedback on how MCURC can improve and have our impact resonate beyond our like minded membership. Having the annual meeting at host institutions is extremely valuable allowing us to see their best practices and learnings."

—W. COLIN MOORE, Director, Food Services | The University of British Columbia
Vancouver Campus | Musqueam Traditional Territory

"This was my first time attending the MCURC All-Member Meeting since our university recently joined the collaborative, and it was an inspiring experience from start to finish. I was amazed by the MCURC community—so open, thoughtful, and action-oriented, with a spirit of genuine collaboration. We came away energized and already spotted several projects where our team at Anahuac Mayab University can start contributing."

—DR. EMILIO MARTINEZ DE VELASCO AGRUIRRE, Director,
Laboratorio de Innovacion Colaborativa | Universidad Anahuac Mayab

"As Co-Chair of the Executive Chefs Committee, I continue to be inspired by how MCURC brings together campus leaders who are not only passionate about food but deeply committed to shaping a more sustainable and equitable food system. This year's gathering at Vanderbilt reaffirmed the power of collaboration—seeing research translated into action, and ideas evolve into initiatives that transform how we feed and educate our communities. For me, MCURC represents more than a network—it's a movement that empowers chefs and operators to lead meaningful change, one menu at a time."

—MATTHEW WARD, Executive Chef of Residential Dining, Co-Chair of MCURC Executive Chefs' Committee | Ambassador at CHOW (Culinary Hospitality Outreach Wellness)



"What's special about MCURC starts with its mission of cultivating the long-term well-being of all people and the planet. As a climate change and food expert this is in perfect alignment with the global challenges we face today. We need MCURC like never before."

—MICHAEL P. HOFFMAN, Professor Emeritus | Cornell University



“Attending the 2025 MCURC Conference was truly a meaningful experience for me. Sitting in those rooms, listening to people share their innovations and real-world interventions, many rooted in the MCURC toolkit made me feel both inspired and hopeful. It reminded me that change doesn’t happen in one big moment, but through thoughtful, consistent action by people who care deeply. I found myself becoming even more curious and passionate about plant-forward nutrition and sustainability. Hearing others speak not only expanded my perspective, but it also made me feel like I belong in these conversations too. Looking back, every effort it took to be there was worth it. I left with new ideas, new motivation, and a renewed sense of purpose.”

—GODISGREAT OKEKE, MPH-65 Graduate Student
Harvard T.H Chan School of Public Health | Department of Nutrition



“I loved meeting so many people who are rethinking how food and sustainability come together on college campuses. Being part of the student panel and seeing chefs and students collaborate so openly was super exciting — it’s awesome seeing a community so genuinely committed to making positive change.”

—ELIAS FORDING, Vanderbilt University
Climate and Environmental Studies | Public Policy



“Being a member of MCURC has emboldened our dining program’s approach to implementing the MOC principles throughout all our operations at CU Boulder. MCURC has given us the opportunity to learn from our peer institutions in a deeper way, share our stories, and most importantly, join each other in a unifying cause where we can support one another in this work. When my team gets to visit another dining program at the all-member meetings, we always walk away with fresh new ideas to implement into our program, and this keeps us driving forward with clear and defined goals for the year ahead. I always walk away from the all-member meetings with admiration, inspiration and a many new friends.”

—ELIAH GOLDEN, Associate Director for Residential Dining & Culinary Operations
Campus Dining & Hospitality University of Colorado Boulder | Musqueam Traditional Territory



“The MCURC is a truly inspiring group united by a simple but profound idea: collaborations within university dining spaces can positively impact student wellbeing and the future of our food system. I am continually energized by the creativity and dedication of MCURC members. The annual meeting is a place to connect, brainstorm, and celebrate the power of food to educate and empower students.”

—ROBERT VALGENTI, PH.D, Professor of Liberal Arts and Food Studies
The Culinary Institute of America

“It was an absolute honor to join the MCURC community as this year’s keynote speaker. From the moment I stepped into the room, it was clear that this is a network of people who don’t just feed campuses, they shape culture, shift systems, and build the kind of future we all want to live in. Sharing the stage with Sean Sherman and then diving into a conversation with Brian about turning meaningful values into real procurement practice, reminded me how powerful this community truly is. At a time when the food system is facing both enormous challenges and profound possibility, MCURC stands out as a values-aligned, impact-driven partner ready to lead. I left our time together energized by the commitment in the room and inspired by how institutions like Vanderbilt are proving that equity-centered sourcing isn’t theoretical—it’s happening, and it’s scalable. Shared work through genuine partnership will create real pathways for producer equity, foodways education, and sustainable sourcing to everyone’s benefit.”

—CASEY CRANE, Business Development Associate | Wholesome Crave