

Reusable meal containers provide a green solution

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Through a partnership between Tulane Dining Services by Sodexo and the Tulane Green Club, Bruff To Go recently debuted a program in which students receive meals in reusable containers in an effort to reduce the waste output on the Tulane uptown campus.



Barbara Rainey, culinary supervisor at Bruff To Go, prepares to empty the collection machine of recycled containers. The new reusable take-out containers are helping reduce campus waste. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Students use tokens to obtain their meals and return the containers to be washed and sanitized, in exchange for new tokens. This OZZI system was developed by a Rhonde Island-based company, OZZI Enterprises, to help eliminate disposable take-out containers. The new program is expected to save more than 51,000 containers from the landfill per semester.

The initiative stemmed from student concern about the amount of waste generated by cardboard containers used previously by Bruff To Go. The Tulane Green Club and Tulane Dining by Sodexo collaborated to determine a viable solution, and chose the reusable OZZI containers as proposed by student and Green Club member Chloe Arnow.

Both groups spent time gauging student interest in the program through surveys, demonstrations and marketing campaigns. They also worked closely with University Services and Facilities Services to ensure that the program would be implemented effectively and integrated smoothly into Dining Services.

“We have received overwhelming appreciation for our effort to reduce waste,” said Emily Welcker, dining services marketing specialist. The team is now working on a way to utilize Splash cards in place of the token system, but they also have extensive goals for other sustainability initiatives.

They have created a sustainability team dedicated to reducing waste and streamlining environmentally friendly practices on campus, and their first objective is to implement the reusable container program at other locations across campus. Welcker says that the team has added Arnow as sustainability coordinator, as she was “instrumental in the development of the reusable container program.”

More information on the new program is available on the [dining services](#) website.

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