



## Tech with Purpose: Advancing Food Equity Through Innovation and Care

Xavier University's Musketeer Meal Share—A Fully Autonomous, Anonymous Solution to Campus Hunger

At Xavier University, innovation doesn't just happen in the classroom—it happens in the spaces where care meets creativity. Musketeer Meal Share is the first fully autonomous, anonymous meal donation system in higher education, transforming how we support students facing food insecurity. Launched in November 2023, this groundbreaking program repurposes unused meal swipes into dignity-driven access to food—no forms, no stigma, no barriers. Built entirely by Auxiliary Services using existing campus infrastructure like Transact and the One Pass student ID, the program has already distributed over 700 meals, engaged 30% of meal plan holders, and inspired faculty and staff to contribute. The result: less food waste, higher retention, and a stronger sense of belonging. Musketeer Meal Share isn't just a program—it's a blueprint for equity, sustainability, and care-centered innovation in auxiliary services.

## Executive Summary

Finals week. One of the most stressful times for any student. For Tanner, a senior juggling two jobs and a full course load, it was more than exams keeping them up at night—it was hunger. They skipped meals to stretch what little they had, unsure if they'd make it through the week. That all changed the day they received a discreet notification on their phone: a meal was waiting for them, no questions asked.

This was the Musketeer Meal Share in action—a moment of dignity delivered with the quiet tap of a mobile credential.

And Tanner wasn't alone. A sophomore shared that they often skipped dinner just to make rent. A first-year student described how one meal gave them hope on a day they were ready to give up. We saw stories like these unfold quietly, over and over—moments of relief, of feeling seen. They reminded us that behind every donated swipe was a student choosing to care for another. Behind every accepted meal, a student reclaiming their footing.



The Musketeer Meal Share is Xavier University's bold, human-centered response to a persistent and often invisible crisis: food insecurity on college campuses. Rooted in care, powered by technology, and inspired by the belief that no student should go hungry, this initiative reimagines how universities can serve their students in the most fundamental way.

We didn't just build a program—we challenged the norms. At a time when students face rising costs, emotional strain, and limited safety nets, we chose to innovate through compassion. Our

approach combines the utility of the Transact Mobile App with the simplicity of Xavier's mobile credential (One Pass), tools our students already use daily—not just for retail food purchases, but for access to buildings, events, and now, their next meal.

Since launching in November 2023, this fully autonomous, anonymous, and stigma-free platform has changed lives. It has redirected surplus meal capacity to those in need. It has increased student engagement and reduced waste. It has proven that Auxiliary Services can be a catalyst for equity, well-being, and sustainable impact.

This is more than a service. It's a lifeline, made possible through partnership, intentional design, and a shared belief that technology should never be a barrier to compassion. This is a movement.

And it's just getting started.

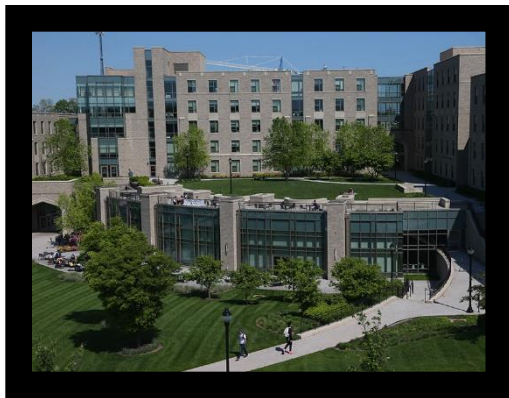
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## The Story of Xavier University

At Xavier University, we believe the college experience is about more than lectures and exams—it's about belonging. It's about walking into a space and feeling like you matter. It's about the quiet assurance that your needs, seen or unseen, will be met with compassion.

Founded in 1831 in Cincinnati, Ohio, our Jesuit Catholic mission is rooted in *cura personalis*—care for the whole person. Our campus is home to 5,500+ undergraduate and graduate students who come from all walks of life, carrying their hopes, ambitions, and sometimes, burdens. Here, we are called not only to educate minds, but to lift spirits and support the whole journey.

That care goes far beyond classrooms and lecture halls. Auxiliary Services is the engine room of student life. We manage dining, access control, parking, the bookstore, ID services, vending, and more. When a first-year student buys their textbooks with confidence, when a commuter parks without stress before class, when a late-night study session is powered by a warm meal—we're there, creating the scaffolding for student success. But more than managing logistics, we curate the experience of daily life. We're there when a student taps their mobile credential (One Pass) to access their dorm late at night. We're behind every campus meal, every moment of ease that lets a student focus on learning instead of worrying.



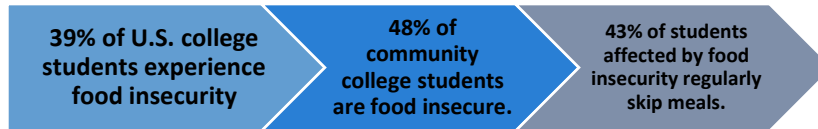
Our mission isn't just operational—it's transformational. Musketeer Meal Share reflects that ethos—born from deep listening, built with intention, and designed to uplift without judgment. We believe that when basic needs are met, students don't just succeed—they soar. And when we center dignity and empathy in how we serve, we create a culture where every student knows they belong.

This belief was the seed from which Musketeer Meal Share grew: a solution not just for a problem, but for a person. A way to serve not just systems, but stories.

And in telling those stories, we remind ourselves of what higher education is really about—not just access to knowledge, but access to care. Not just a degree, but a foundation for thriving.

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## The Hidden Crisis



We always suspected it was there—an undercurrent we couldn't see, but could feel. A student lingering too long in the student center. A casual

“I'm not hungry” that masked a deeper truth. Then came the data: 29% of Xavier students had experienced food insecurity in the last academic year.

That number hit us hard. It wasn't just a statistic. It was a wake-up call.

And it came with more signs. Our dining program showed a consistent surplus of unused meal swipes. Meanwhile, our on-campus food pantry saw a 20% spike in demand. These two realities existed side by side—excess and need—on the same sidewalks, in the same classrooms, often unnoticed by one another.

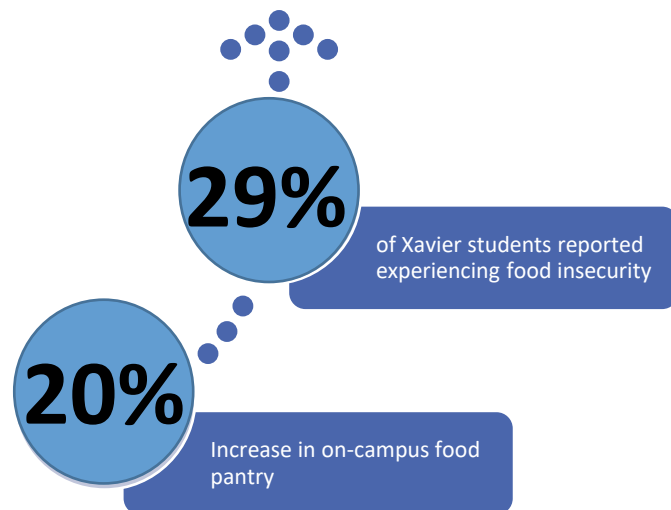
The silence was deafening. Students didn't always raise their hands. Many felt ashamed, unsure where to turn, or simply unaware help was available. We realized that even our best intentions were falling short.

Auxiliary Services had been discussing this problem for years. The traditional answers—manual meal vouchers, food pantries, paper forms—required students to identify themselves as “in need.” They had to fill out applications, receive meals separate from their peers, and in many cases, carry a visible reminder that they were struggling. Even when well-intentioned, these solutions unintentionally deepened the divide.

We weren't looking at a lack of resources. We were looking at a lack of access.

This wasn't just about meals. It was about missed opportunities, diminished mental health, and students quietly disappearing from the path toward their degrees. It was about retention, equity, and the kind of campus culture we wanted to build.

So, we asked ourselves: What would it look like if getting a meal was as simple—and stigma-free—as tapping your phone?



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## Building the Breakthrough

The breakthrough didn't come from a sudden brainstorm. It came from listening. We listened to students who were stretching their dollars—and their dignity—just to get through the week. We listened to campus partners who were doing what they could with the tools they had. And we listened to ourselves, as Auxiliary Services professionals, asking: *What if we could do more?*

The answer wasn't a new handout. It was a reimagining of how dignity, technology, and care could coexist.

That's when the idea took shape: What if we could create a system where students in need could receive a meal just like any other student—no forms, no questions, no spotlight?

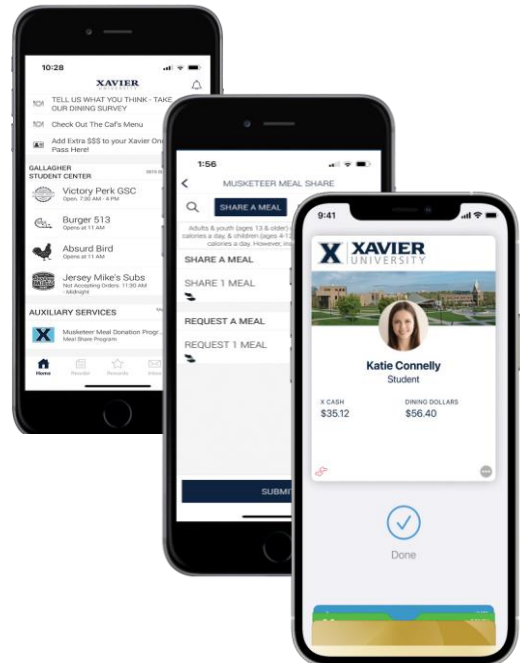
We already had the tools. Students were already using their mobile credentials (One Pass) to access buildings and dining. They were already using the Transact Mobile App to order food on campus. What we needed was a way to connect compassion to convenience—to turn existing infrastructure into a quiet, seamless support system.

So, we built it. Students with meal plans could donate unused swipes directly through the app. Students in need could request a meal the same way. When a meal became available, they'd get a discreet notification. Then, with a simple tap of their One Pass, they could walk into Hoff Dining Commons—no different from any of their peers.

The system was 99% automated. No one had to approve a form. No one had to be asked why they needed help. And no one had to feel “othered.” We didn't just create a program. We created an experience that felt normal, intuitive, and private—because dignity should never be compromised by logistics.

Of course, this wasn't built in a vacuum. It required tireless collaboration with Chartwells Higher Education, who ensured donated meals could be tracked and redeemed without disruption. It was supported by our Care Management team, who brought real-world insight into what students were experiencing. And it was designed and implemented entirely by Auxiliary Services—who not only had the vision, but the technical skill to configure it within the Transact ID and point-of-sale ecosystem.

What we launched in January 2024 was more than a new service—it was a quiet revolution. One that didn't ask students to speak their struggle, but instead invited them into a system built to serve them with empathy and ease.



And in doing so, we redefined what Auxiliary Services could be: not just a backbone of operations, but a bridge to belonging.

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## Impact You Can Feel

From the moment we launched Musketeer Meal Share, we knew we had tapped into something deeper than logistics. This wasn't just an operational success—it was emotional, cultural, and transformational.

Since its inception, over **1,000 meals** have been donated. More than **700 have been claimed**—quietly, anonymously, by students who may never have stepped into a food pantry or filled out a meal voucher form. Each swipe used wasn't just a statistic—it was a moment of relief, a day with one less thing to worry about.

Are you facing food insecurity?

### We can help!

Request a meal through the Musketeer Meal Share Program.

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### Do you have extra guest swipes? Are you on a block plan with extra swipes left?

Share a meal swipe with the new Musketeer Meal Share program.

Shared meals go directly to fellow Musketeers without meal plans and experiencing food insecurity.



Here's how to help:

1. Download the Transact Mobile ordering app using the QR code above.
2. Login with your Xavier credentials.
3. Scroll to the bottom to "Auxiliary Services."\*
4. Click on "Musketeer Meal Share."
5. There, you can choose to share 1 meal and submit, which will automatically deduct from your guest swipe balance or block plan balance, depending on your plan.

\*If the Auxiliary Services section is not appearing, logout of the app, and log back in.

Participation grew fast. **Nearly 30% of meal plan holders** chose to donate, often without ever knowing who would receive their swipe. They didn't need to. The act of giving became part of our culture—subtle, compassionate, and widespread.

And then something remarkable happened: **faculty and staff joined in.** Moved by the stories of students quietly struggling and the simplicity of the solution, Xavier employees began making contributions of their own. Some donated funds. Others raised awareness. Many simply asked, "*How can I help?*" The ripple had become a wave—proof that when the solution is easy, empathy becomes action.

Early indicators show students who accessed the program experienced a **0.2 to 0.3-point increase in GPA** compared to peers who reported food

insecurity but did not participate. **Stress levels dropped. Engagement improved. Retention strengthened.**

Sustainability goals were met too. By redirecting unused meal swipes, we cut down on food waste and maximized the value of our existing resources. We didn't have to expand a budget—we simply reimagined what we already had.

But perhaps most importantly, we created a system that felt safe.

No one had to ask for help out loud. No one had to carry a visible pass or wait in a separate line. All it took was one tap—just like any other student, in line at Hoff Dining Commons.

That's the power of innovation rooted in empathy. It doesn't just fix a problem. It makes students feel like they never had one.

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## A Model for the Future

We didn't set out to build the first fully autonomous, anonymous meal share system in higher education. We set out to help students. But in listening deeply, designing intentionally, and refusing to accept outdated norms, we created a model that is not only effective—it's replicable.

What makes Musketeer Meal Share so adaptable is its simplicity. We didn't need a new platform—we leveraged existing infrastructure. If your institution uses student IDs and has a meal plan system, then you already have the foundation in place.

This program doesn't require a new budget line—it requires a new mindset.

And it doesn't need a massive team. At Xavier, the program was developed and configured entirely within Auxiliary Services, in collaboration with dining and care management teams. It runs quietly, efficiently, and with minimal manual oversight. That means other institutions can do this, too—without adding overhead.

The steps to replicate are clear:

- **Assess your need:** Survey students. Listen to your campus community.
- **Engage your dining partner:** Whether Chartwells, Aramark, Sodexo, or in-house, collaboration is key.
- **Use what you already have:** Student ID cards, campus apps, and your existing dining infrastructure.
- **Design with empathy:** Keep anonymity at the core. Center student dignity.
- **Tell the story:** Let your community know how they can help. Students, faculty, and staff will rise to meet the need.

*"This program was a game changer during finals week. I didn't have to worry about where my next meal was coming from." Senior Student*

Already, other universities have reached out to Xavier asking how they can bring this to their campuses. We've shared documentation, backend configurations, and walked through the philosophy that made it work.

Because this isn't just a Xavier success. This is a higher education opportunity.

An opportunity to redefine how we meet student needs. An opportunity to let technology serve compassion. An opportunity to show students that they are never alone—and that help doesn't have to come with a spotlight.

This is the future of Auxiliary Services: nimble, innovative, and deeply human.

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## Closing Reflection

At Xavier, *cura personalis*—care for the whole person—is more than a phrase. It’s a promise. A commitment to see and serve our students in every dimension of their lives, not just academically, but emotionally, socially, and physically. Musketeer Meal Share is that promise, lived out in every donated swipe and every quiet meal received.

We didn’t create this program to win awards—we created it to solve a real problem. But in doing so, we built something that is truly award-worthy. Because Musketeer Meal Share isn’t just effective—it’s disruptive, compassionate, and scalable. It challenges the old models and sets a new standard for what Auxiliary Services can and should be. And while the recognition is an honor, the real reward is knowing we’ve created something that has changed lives—and can change even more.

We built this program because students were hurting, and traditional systems weren’t meeting their needs. They needed help—but they also needed dignity. They needed a solution that respected their privacy, that didn’t separate them from their peers, or ask them to carry visible signs of hardship.

We designed a new way—one rooted in empathy, powered by existing technology, and intentionally built to restore agency and remove shame. And in doing so, we’ve watched our campus culture shift. Students now see giving as part of their role in the community. Faculty and staff have stepped in, not out of obligation, but out of shared purpose. The program hasn’t just addressed hunger—it has strengthened our collective sense of belonging.

This initiative has redefined what Auxiliary Services can be. It proves we can be innovators in equity, partners in student success, and architects of care-centered systems. It shows that even the most operational parts of a university—meal swipes, ID cards, app integrations—can become vehicles for profound human impact.

And we believe this is just the beginning.

Because the real innovation isn’t in the code or the configuration—it’s in the courage to lead with compassion. In the belief that small changes, made with intention, can create ripples that change lives.

Musketeer Meal Share is more than a program. It’s a blueprint. A call to reimagine how we meet needs on campus, and a challenge to do so without compromising the dignity of those we serve.

Because belonging starts with being seen. And sometimes, it starts with something as simple as a meal.

