



# Concession Bites

Dedicated to the promotion of professional and successful concession and catering operations at college campuses across the country.

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## NACC Board Changeover is Almost Complete

**By: Chris Lauber**  
*Manager Ralph Engelstad Arena  
NACC President*

When the NACC convenes for our annual conference this June, the end of an era of how members serve on the NACC board will come to an end. Several years ago, the board was facing increasing challenges to getting school members to serve on the NACC board. The feedback the board was getting about people not wanting to serve boiled down to a couple main reasons; a four-year term is too long, or a person did not want to serve a specific position for one of those years, mainly as President the final year. Therefore, the board came up with the plan to have each position serve a two-year term that was similar to the allied vender board terms.

How exactly are things changing? The old system was to elect a school member to serve a four-year term.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Year Secretary
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Treasurer
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Vice President
- 4<sup>th</sup> Year President

When the board made the decision to shift terms to two years lengths, we decided to honor the commitment of the current board members that were elected to four-year terms and allow them to serve out their terms. So, over the course of the past several years, each year as a board member finished their four-year term, a board position would convert into a new two-year term. This started with the secretary position, followed the next year by the treasurer position, last summer we elected a new secretary and a vice president. This summer we will finalize the transition by electing a new treasurer and for the first time a president. As you can see one year, we elect a secretary and vice president and in the other year the treasurer and president. This means that in reality each year half of the school board members can change over. Keep in mind that every year we also elect an allied board member so up to 3 out of 7 board positions can change every year.

I personally want to encourage anyone that has not served on the board to put your name on the ballot this year and run for an open position. (FYI, to run for President, you must have served on the board in the past) It now is only a two-year term and from my experience being on the board for the past six years, it is a valuable experience, excellent job and personal growth opportunity and something I'm extremely happy I did. The relationships I got to

build with other school members and vendors are much stronger than the ones you create at the conference each summer. Plus, once we can travel again, you get to go to Las Vegas in January each year for the annual board meeting, living in Minnesota that was a great perk to escape the cold and snow for a few days.

If you are interested in running for the board, send a note to [info@nacc-online.com](mailto:info@nacc-online.com) and let Chuck know. If you are looking for more information about serving or have some questions, reach out to Chuck, myself, [chrisl@theralph.com](mailto:chrisl@theralph.com) or any other board member and we will get back to you. Good luck to everyone that runs for a board position this year.

## Reimagining the Future of Food Service

**By: Chelsea Luhta**  
*Director of Business Development- Aramark  
NACC Secretary*

Although the road to recovery seems daunting at times, one thing that has not changed is people's love for food. Even during shelter in place, lockdowns, and restrictions, there is a distinct human element that connects us. Food creates an emotional comfort and provides a sense of normalcy. Whether it is in the preparation of meals, virtually celebrating appetizers over Zoom, or socializing with friends and family outdoors, we are all learning to adapt without compromising our palette and cuisine.

The brave new world of food service is unwritten. We are seeing a reemergence of favorite past times. Experts say the nostalgia and practicality of carhops and drive-in movies are coming to fruition. What is exciting to think about is the recovery period and what innovations will take flight. Thinking back a decade ago, many culinary driven independents, food trucks, gastro pubs, and modern fast-casual concepts took their maiden voyage into the food and beverage heartstrings of consumers.

For the time being, existing restaurants, stadiums, and retail will adopt new menu strategies. In order to thrive in the new frictionless back drop, all must focus on stress free, safe, and contactless service for guests. We have already seen this momentum of delivery options, curbside pickup, and value strategies. With more individuals dining or cooking from home, this creates both a challenge and opportunity. Being able to replicate and enhance people's passion for food, by satisfying the foodie with innovative menu items, will be an artform within itself.

A thriving development of delivery-only restaurants are starting to find their niche. The emerging concept of Ghost Kitchens are becoming

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more prevalent, as traditional brick and mortars find difficulty in sustaining and/or operating. A ghost kitchen is where virtual brands are produced without a brick-and-mortar location. They are facilities that are made solely for producing virtual brands and do not include any dine in/store front accommodations. Majority of this growth has been fueled by the explosion of delivery, closures of operations which are providing equipment and space, money saved with reduced overhead, and new investments by private equity and others.

In addition to mitigating loss, some restaurants are throwing everything they have into virtual expansion, creating new brands that live online. Many Ghost Kitchens are partnering with large delivery companies, such as Door Dash and Uber Eats for online ordering, pickup, and delivery. On the contrary, other companies that build and operate kitchen facilities and host multiple concepts under one roof, have the infrastructure to self-operate and deliver. Ghost Kitchen Highlights:

- Generate high volumes of meals to go without having to pivot like traditional operators
  - Increased focus of catering to specific lifestyles like vegan, paleo, or keto
  - New revenue streams from meal kits, baking kits, cocktail kits, groceries, and proprietary products
  - Old school concepts that allow for social distancing, like carhops
  - Delivery-only restaurants could be \$1 trillion business by 2030.
- We can all recognize virtual space is ripe for innovation. As we reemerge into a new era of technology and food strategy, we must maintain the pillars of hospitality, focusing on quality and service excellence. It is exciting to think what opportunities await and our journey through this recovery period.

<https://datassential.com/coronavirus/> “The Road to Recovery”

<https://www.eater.com/21540765/ghost-kitchens-virtual-restaurants-covid-19-industry-impact> “Ghose Kitchens Are the Wave of the Future. But Is That a Good Thing?”

<https://roaminghunger.com/blog/15623/ghost-kitchens-everything-you-must-know>  
“Guide to Ghose Kitchens (2020) All You Need to Know”



**By: Chuck Aldridge**  
*Executive Director*  
NACC

The NACC has decided to go virtual for the Annual Conference! We have a great program scheduled for everyone and we hope you take advantage of this great event through a NEW platform, Whova. This event will provide a safe platform for our members to network, share ideas and learn from our fellow colleagues from colleges and universities across the country.

Vinny “Coco Vinny” Zaldivar will kick off the virtual conference as our keynote speaker. Vinny is an Eco-Inventor and Zero Waste Educator and has been featured on TV shows The Profit and Shark Tank.



Virtual programs include:

- Educational sessions on Alcohol Trends, Cashless operations, Online Ordering
- Roundtable discussions on NPO Recruitment / Retention, COVID Operations
- Stadium tour presentations of Clemson, North Texas, and Maryland
- Virtual trade show featuring our industry partners
- Ron Athey Award Presentation

The conference is free to all NACC School Members. To renew your membership and be able to access the conference go to <https://nacc-online.com/index.php/join>

Whova will send additional information after you sign up!

We plan to host an in-person conference at UNLV in June 2022.

## Safety First

**By: Mike Thar**  
Manager- Clemson University  
NACC Treasurer

This year has been a year like no other. Everything has been put on hold and in some parts of the country, everything is still on hold. As we see the numbers decrease throughout the United States there has been a shock wave through our Concession's community that safety is always first. As a slow re-opening begins, please remember safety should be at the forefront of everyone's mind. Safety is not just for our self and staff, but for our volunteers and guest as well.



The pandemic is not something that seems to not be going away and should serve as a reminder to refocus ourselves on safety standards and protocols. We should not just focus on sanitation of equipment and stands but dig deeper. Do your operations have the proper equipment to clean a fryer or to clean a flat top grill safely? Items like fryer gloves, burn sleeves, and even the proper face shield to clean a flat top grill are a must.

As we re-engage in our operations, we must not forget about the perception of the guest. Keeping them safe must remain at the top of our priority list. When stadiums and arenas start opening more to the public, our operations will become scrutinized to a new level. Going above and beyond to ease the minds of your guest will be more critical than

ever. New processes such as having counters wiped down in specific time intervals, having someone at lines stressing social distancing mandates and cleaning plexiglass barriers will be more paramount than ever. Making the effort to help our guests feel safe will lead to them being more comfortable in making more purchases at our stands, which remains our ultimate goal. Stay safe everyone!



## Mobile Ordering, Not What You Would Expect

**By: Paul Schertz**  
Manager- Bryce Jordan Center- Penn St.  
NACC Vice President

So, I am sure I was of the same mindset of most of you, in that mobile ordering generally causes more headaches than it is beneficial in the concession's world, and I would probably still agree with this if we were not going through this year that we have been having.

Penn State Dining had started the process of finding a vendor for mobile ordering in the fall of 2019, and so I participated in this search as the general manager of our building wanted to pursue this more for the arena. Because we had already been in the process, we were able to roll out a campus wide mobile ordering app at the start of the 2020 school year. With this school year being what it is, we have had classes in the arena, and so we are open for lunch each day. We have been pushing for everyone to order through the mobile app, as we are able to set the delay from when they order to when they pick up to whatever we need that time to be, and with that we are able to make to order. This has helped me, as it drives me crazy to see people standing around waiting for their food, and with us not knowing what to expect, we did not want to make a lot of food to get thrown away.

The ability to time delay came in very helpful for THON this year, as even though this was a virtual event this year, we still sold chicken tender baskets out of the ticket office for students to come pick up and take to go. The delay helped, as we got crushed, we were able to adjust the delay so that we could give ourselves time to catch up and then adjust it back as things slowed down.

Now for what I had not expected from mobile ordering, was for us to be able to pick up extra sales on the small attendance we have for basketball. With us only having 30-100 people for a basketball game, sales are very limited. What has helped is that the students having been mobile ordering during the games, and so we are able to deliver their order to the door and are able to pick up sales from people not attending the game. With those attending the game being so few, there is never much of any line, and so they do not find any value in ordering ahead, and so we are not getting mobile orders from those attending. This helps to know that if a mobile order comes in, I need to watch the door for when someone walks up to pick it up.

As mobile ordering is becoming more prevalent, I do imagine that mobile ordering will become more useful in the concessions' realm. As you evaluate whether or not mobile ordering is something you want to pursue, I thought I would give an example of how mobile ordering could grow sales that you might not expect.

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The NACC thanks all our vendors for their support of the 2019 NACC Conference!

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