



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Niagara University Cuts Ribbon On Renovated, Expanded Dining Commons

MICHAEL FREEDMAN April 27, 2017

| ISSUE: **HIGHER EDUCATION, STUDENTS**



Niagara University cut the ribbon today on an \$8 million renovation and expansion of its dining facility located at Clet Hall.

The new, 20,000-square-foot Dining Commons opened in the fall. The expansion was completed in January.

Improvements include:

- An open kitchen concept with new food preparation and serving areas.
- New seating options, including banquette/booth seating, a mix of round, rectangular and square tables and chairs, lounge seating within the dining area, and high-top tables and stool seating.
- A new dining addition with seating for 230 for sit-down dining. The addition can also be used as a theatre-style setup for 250, with a projector and presentation screen.
- Mobile device charging stations, and digital televisions and displays.
- Focused on energy efficiency, the facility will feature new rooftop units, kitchen equipment, and a dishwashing machine, all of which will save on utility expenses.
- Work that will be completed this summer includes a new patio with green space, patio-style tables and chairs, flowering planters, and a rain barrel to support 875 square feet of green space for container plantings of herbs and native plants.

The university received support from [Metz Culinary Management](#), its on-campus food service contractor, on the project. In addition, NU worked with local legislative leaders, including New York Senator Robert G. Ort and former Assemblyman John D. Ceretto, '75, M.S.Ed.'78, to make the project possible.

“We are continuously seeking to improve the student experience at Niagara University while also meeting an increasing demand for on-campus event and dining facilities,” said the Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., president. “This project has truly been a collaborative effort, involving students, employees, and our partners at Metz Culinary Management. We are also grateful to the elected officials who gave us their support.

“The new and improved Dining Commons provides our students and university community with a state-of-the-art facility that aligns with our enduring pledge to maximize our commitment to excellence and showcase the beauty of our campus surroundings.”

In January 2016, students were invited to participate in a presentation for the new dining hall and vote on concepts for the interior design.

Preliminary construction on the facility, including the installation of construction fencing, began April 11, 2016.

“We are excited to form a long-term partnership with Niagara University and work in the beautiful, newly renovated Dining Commons,” said Jeff Metz, president and CEO of Metz Culinary Management. “Metz prides itself on providing restaurant-inspired hospitality, and we look forward to offering Niagara University guests healthy, sustainable, locally sourced food options, while introducing popular national brands to the university.”