
DINING AWARDS RESEARCH & STRATEGY

Chartwells NC x The Agency at UF

CURRENT TIMELINE

Award Cycle One

Strategy Finalized

June 1 through June 4

Booklet Development

June 8 through June 19

Submission Review

June 22 through June 26

Award Cycle Two

Strategy Finalized

June 29 through July 2

Booklet Development

July 6 through July 17

Submission Review

July 20 through July 24

Award Cycle Three

Strategy Finalized

July 27 through July 30

Booklet Development

August 3 through August 14

Submission Review

August 17 through August 21

AWARD ONE



National Association of College &
University Food Services (NACUFS)
Loyal E. Horton Dining Award

Category
Nutrition & Wellness
Program of the Year

Deadline
March 31, 2027

Free Submission for
All NACUFS Members

AWARD OVERVIEW

Eligibility Focus

Recognizes dining programs that demonstrably support student health and well-being through:

- Menu development and dietary accommodations
- Nutrition education programming
- Wellness and performance-focused dining
- Campus wellness initiative alignment

Why Chartwells at Catawba Fits

- Performance Circle, a campus athletic wellness program embedded in dining
- New Year, New Fuel, January wellness activation already documented
- Menu health metrics: high-protein, low-allergen, performance-focused options
- RDN/ dietitian collaboration through the Chartwells System
- SGA partnership and student demand data pipeline

NOTABLE ACTIVATIONS & EVENTS

Pollinator Campus Event:

Partnered with General Mills and Catawba mascot "Blue" to engage students on dining sustainability.
Highlighted pollinator campus designation. Documented on @CatawbaEats.

Pineapple Peel Tea Activation:

Served tea made from pineapple peels to model zero-waste cooking.
Hands-on food waste education with strong visual storytelling. Documented on Instagram.

New Year New Fuel:

Seasonal student-facing activation demonstrating goal-oriented engagement programming.
Supports a year-round outreach narrative for the NACUFS submission.

ADDITIONAL METRICS NEEDED

Campus-specific
Performance Circle
data

Menu nutrition
labeling data

RDN/dietitian
collaboration
records

Dining survey
results on healthy
options

Coach or athlete
testimonials

Catawba athlete
enrollment numbers

Activation
Documentation

Student demand
survey data

Menu health
metrics

WHY THIS AWARD IS WORTH PRIORITIZING

Chartwells at Catawba already demonstrates:

- Performance Circle as a built-in campus wellness vehicle
- Existing documented activations (New Year New Fuel, dietary options)
- RDN/Chartwells system resources already available
- Student demand pipeline through SGA partnership

Main Focus Moving Forward

Build a Catawba-specific story anchored in Performance Circle data and student wellness demand. The national program provides the frame, and the local numbers make it win.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Build Out Performance Circle

- “Train Like a Champion” athlete spotlight series
- Performance Circle pop-up tastings at home games
- Locker room nutrition boards co-designed with coaches
- “Fuel Friday” pre-game menu activations

Build Out Student Demand Data

- “Fuel Your Day” wellness survey campaign
- Pop-up taste-test voting stations in dining halls
- “Build Your Plate” interactive nutrition challenge
- Wellness Wednesday Instagram polls and Q&As

AWARD TWO



Association for the Advancement of
Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

Category
Sustainability
Achievement Award

Deadline
January 22, 2027

**Free
Submission**

Submission Format
Formal Case Study

AWARD OVERVIEW

Award Focus Areas

- Campus-wide sustainability innovation
- Measurable environmental and social impact
- Student/community engagement
- Scalable sustainability initiatives
- Institutional collaboration

Why Chartwells at Catawba Fits

Chartwells already demonstrates a strong sustainability ecosystem through:

- Rooted in Good sustainability programming
- Campus-wide sustainability collaboration
- Student engagement initiatives
- Measurable environmental outcomes
- Institutionally aligned sustainability operations

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED

Updated 2026
sustainability metrics

Student testimonials

Engagement and event
attendance data

Social media analytics

Additional photography
and video assets

Local sourcing
percentages

Procurement-related
carbon reduction data

Supplier sustainability
certifications

WHY THIS AWARD IS WORTH PRIORITIZING

Chartwells NC already demonstrates:

- Strong institutional sustainability alignment
- Established local sourcing partnerships
- Visible student sustainability engagement
- Measurable waste reduction initiatives
- Procurement systems supporting operational sustainability

Biggest Opportunity

Frame existing initiatives into a cohesive, data-supported sustainability case study that highlights campus culture, engagement, and measurable impact.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Expand Sustainability Storytelling

- “Meet the Farm” video series
- Behind-the-scenes sustainability content
- Student dining experience testimonials
- Chef/farmer collaborations
- Sustainability spotlight campaigns

Increase Student Ownership

- Sustainability ambassador programs
- Student-athlete wellness partnerships
- TikTok and Instagram sustainability campaigns
- Interactive sustainability education experiences

Main Focus Moving Forward

Position Rooted in Good as a campus-wide sustainability culture initiative rather than solely a dining sustainability program.

AWARD THREE



**NACUFS Loyal E.
Horton Dining Award**

Category
Outreach & Education
Program of the Year

Deadline
March 31, 2027

**Free Submission for
All NACUFS Members**

AWARD OVERVIEW

Eligibility Focus

Open to NACUFS institutional members in good standing. Awarded to programs emphasizing teaching guests new skills, including:

- Culinary skills based in a teaching kitchen
- Cultural experiences
- Nutritional experiences
- Entries must reflect programs operated in the prior calendar year and cannot be company-wide promotions

Why Chartwells at Catawba Fits

- Stop Food Waste Day, Food For Thought infographic series, Sip Smart. Give Back.
- Rooted in Local educational signage and @CatawbaEats campaigns
- SGA partnership and collaboration with the Office of Sustainability
- Green Living Experience residential sustainability programming

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED

Stop Food Waste Day
attendance numbers

Pre- and post-
awareness survey
results from
sustainability events

Green Living
Experience
participation data

@CatawbaEats social
media analytics

Instagram
engagement metrics
from documented
activations

Event photography
and video assets from
past activations

Student testimonials
on dining
sustainability
programming

Formal year-round
outreach program
narrative

Office of
Sustainability
collaboration records

Evidence of
measurable guest
skill-building
outcomes

WHY THIS AWARD IS WORTH PRIORITIZING

Chartwells at Catawba already demonstrates:

- Strong existing activation portfolio —the gap is documentation, not programming
- Student-facing sustainability education is already embedded across campus dining
- Institutional sustainability partnerships (SGA, Office of Sustainability, Center for Environment)
- Instagram-documented events are ready to serve as visual submission assets

Biggest Opportunity

Build a peer-to-peer education dimension through sustainability ambassadors and turn Stop Food Waste Day 2026 into a fully documented, submission-ready activation with attendance tracking and survey data.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Maximize Scoring Potential

- Develop "Meet the Farm" as a structured outreach program with measurable engagement
- Add QR codes on Rooted in Local signage linking to supplier stories
- Document Stop Food Waste Day 2026 with attendance tracking, pre- and post-surveys, and photography from the start
- Expand sustainability ambassador involvement to add a peer-to-peer education dimension

Increase Procurement-Focused Education

- "Where Your Food Comes From" dining displays
- Sustainable sourcing education boards
- Sustainability trivia activations
- Earth Month dining campaigns and sustainability-themed chef tables
- TikTok and Instagram sustainability campaigns
- Student-athlete wellness partnerships

THANK YOU.

Questions? Thoughts? Early concerns?

APPENDIX

*Supplemental information supporting each award
recommendation*

AWARD ONE CONTENT

EXISTING PROCUREMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Catawba-Specific Programming

- New Year, New Fuel, wellness and activation
- High-protein, low-allergen menu labeling
- Performance-focused dining options
- Dining hall nutrition signage

Strategic Positioning

Current operations already balance:

- National program credibility
- Campus-specific wellness storytelling
- Student-athlete engagement
- Data-backed nutrition labeling

INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHS

Institutional recognition includes:

- Catawba Athletics performance partnership
- Title IX-aligned student-athlete programming
- Chartwells RDN/dietitian network access
- Campus wellness center collaboration
- Institutional commitment to student health outcomes

Institutional Alignment

Dining operations align with:

- Campus wellness priorities
- Student health and performance goals
- Athletics department standards
- Institutional dietary compliance

STUDENT EDUCATION & CONSUMER AWARENESS

Current education initiatives include:

1. New Year, New Fuel
2. Dietary accommodation labeling
3. Performance-focused menu signage
4. RDN/dietitian touchpoints
5. Catawba Athletics partnership

Current Strength

Students already encounter wellness messaging throughout dining operations, performance dining options, and campus athletic life.

AWARD TWO CONTENT

CAMPUS-WIDE SUSTAINABILITY

Unique AASHE Requirements

Unlike procurement-focused awards, AASHE prioritizes:

- Cross-campus collaboration
- Institutional integration
- Sustainability culture building
- Community impact

Current Catawba Sustainability Efforts Include...

- Dining sustainability initiatives
- Student sustainability programming
- Institutional sustainability commitments
- Community partnerships
- Environmental education efforts

Strategic Positioning

Chartwells operates as part of Catawba's broader sustainability identity rather than as a standalone dining operation.

IMPORTANCE OF “ROOTED IN GOOD”

Core Sustainability

Pillars Include:

- Sustainable food systems
- Local sourcing
- Waste reduction
- Community partnerships
- Sustainability education

Why This Fits AASHE

The initiative already demonstrates:

- Long-term operational integration
- Scalable sustainability systems
- Student-facing engagement
- Measurable environmental outcomes

Key Strength

The platform combines operations, education, engagement, and environmental impact into one cohesive sustainability framework.

MEASURABLE SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

Current Documented Outcomes

- 34,450 lbs. composted/diverted from landfill in 2024
- 980 lbs. CO₂ prevented during Fall 2025 audit week
- 803 lbs. of food donated during the May 2025 closure

Why This Matters

AASHE strongly prioritizes:

- Quantifiable impact
- Demonstrated environmental outcomes
- Data-backed sustainability progress

Current Systems Supporting Impact

- Compost diversion partnerships
- Food recovery infrastructure
- Waste reduction initiatives
- Operational sustainability audits

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Current Regional Partnerships:

- Patterson Farms
- Eastern Carolina Organics
- Hines Family Farms
- Rowan Helping Ministries
- PLACE Food Resource Center

Community Impact Areas:

- Local economic support
- Ethical food sourcing
- Food insecurity support
- Community-centered sustainability

INNOVATION & SCALABILITY OPPORTUNITIES

Current Innovation Initiatives Include:

- Ozzi reusable packaging program
- Sip Smart reusable cup initiative
- Rooted in Local educational signage
- Sustainability-focused dining campaigns
- **Student Engagement:**
 - Stop Food Waste Day event, SGA partnership, Green Living Experience, student sustainability data collection, and @CatawbaEats sustainability campaigns

Scalability Opportunities

- Student sustainability ambassador programs
- Student-athlete wellness partnerships
- TikTok and Instagram sustainability content
- Behind-the-scenes sustainability storytelling
- Student testimonials and dining experience videos

AWARD THREE CONTENT

EXISTING OUTREACH ASSETS

Current Evidence

- Stop Food Waste Day & Food For Thought campaigns
- Rooted in Local educational signage
- Sip Smart. Give Back. reusable cup program
- Free Food Alert redistribution system

Why This Matters

- Strong year-round programming already exists
- The gap is documentation, not programming
- Instagram assets are ready for submission

Supporting Infrastructure

- @CatawbaEats Instagram
- SGA partnership
- Office of Sustainability collaboration

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

Current student engagement includes

1. SGA sustainability partnerships
2. Green Living Experience programming
3. @CatawbaEats sustainability campaigns
4. Student sustainability data collection
5. Dining-based sustainability education touchpoints

Current Strength

Sustainability education is already integrated throughout the student dining experience, creating consistent year-round engagement across campus life.

IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING A YEAR-LONG PROGRAM

Existing Activations

- Stop Food Waste Day
- Pollinator Campus Event
- Pineapple Peel Tea Activation
- Food For Thought campaigns
- New Year New Fuel

Strategic Opportunity

- Connect activations into one cohesive outreach strategy
- Build stronger year-round sustainability storytelling
- Increase measurable engagement touchpoints
- Create stronger award submission narratives

Why This Matters

- Strengthens campus sustainability culture
- Improves student education and engagement
- Creates continuous outreach visibility
- Supports NACUFS judging criteria