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UMM dining services excel during surprise audit

Summary:

(February 20, 2004)-by Matt Gilmore '05, UMM News Service -- The food service staff at the University of Minnesota, Morris has been working hard to insure that the food eaten on campus is 100 percent safe. The staff recently passed a surprise audit by NSF International, a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization committed to public safety. Out of the possible 129 points on the audit, the staff and equipment received 130 points, after gaining one bonus point because all employees were wearing slip-resistant shoes.

"The food service staff should be commended," said Donna Bauck, the general manager of Sodexo Campus Services, which provides food service to the campus.

The audit, which took over six hours, included the personal safety of the staff as well as of the food. For example, it measured whether or not staff had received adequate training for hazardous equipment, as well as whether the meats are cooked to the correct temperature and stored correctly.

Documentation was required to show that training was held, temperatures have been taken, and for other various aspects. The auditor spent time watching the staff in action to be sure that staff is actually doing what was indicated. In the process of prepping a chicken wild rice salad for lunch, for example, an employee must use three different cutting boards, several different knives, and must automatically wash hands and change gloves several times during the process.

Staffers were quizzed on proper food temperatures, cooling, defrosting, and a host of other procedures. The auditor checked temperatures in the coolers and took temperatures of the food to make sure everything was being done properly. If one container of pasta was not in the proper ice bath, all the points for its section were lost. Every section was passed without incident.

"We are very pleased by the results of this audit, but we are not surprised," said Gary Strei, UMM senior administrative director of finance and administration who has oversight responsibility for the dining services at UMM. "The training and attention to quality are clearly evident to the consumer. I applaud the Sodexo Corporation, the on-site managers, and the Food Service employees for making this a reality."

Results of the audit are available from Donna Bauck in the Food Services building at UMM.

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