



GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA

# UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA WILKERSON COMMONS

**OPENING DATE**  
September 2015

**PROJECT SIZE**  
45,400 SF

**PEAK MEAL VOLUME**  
1600

**ESTIMATED EQUIPMENT COST**  
\$4,054,081

**SCOPE**  
Foodservice Renovation  
and Expansion

This project involved a complete renovation of an antiquated two-level residence hall dining center plus an addition of 20,900 square feet. This expansion accommodates a 425-seat main dining area with chef's table and a smaller reserveable dining room that seats 120. The upper level also includes a new culinary support center featuring cook/chill production and an 8-concept serving area with contemporary food-themed platforms. The lower level contains a large open gaming/gathering studying area, performance space, meeting rooms, residence life service center, computer labs, coffee shop, and a convenience store.

One of the challenges facing the design team was to enhance the perception of food at Wilkerson Hall which was previously seen as not equal to other venues on campus. The foodservice design needed to be impactful enough to change the students' minds. This was accomplished with display cooking at each station and by giving each individual food station its own identity based on the menu items being served.

Another challenge was that, given the significant investment, the university wanted to maximize flexibility of spaces to provide a variety of functions beyond dining. One of the ways this was accomplished was by designing parts of the building, such as the kitchen and serving area, to be shut down at certain times while other areas, such as seating, could remain open. The stone hearth pizza concept in the main serving area was designed to support this flexible use by incorporating an after-hours serving window that faces the dining room.