

SUCCESS Stories

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FLORIDA HOSPITAL *East Orlando*

The kitchen at Florida Hospital East Orlando does brisk business. The back of the house serves up 425 patient meals a day, while The Garden Market cafeteria, for employees and visitors, serves 970 meals a day during breakfast, lunch dinner and late-night hours.

The 93-seat cafeteria, which has a deli, hot station and grill, offers a varied menu. Breakfast choices include made-to-order omelets, breakfast sandwiches, eggs, pancakes and French toast. The lunch menu offers specialty items such as chipotle cheeseburgers, mushroom-Swiss burgers, Philly cheese-steak sandwiches, a fajita-style chicken entrée and even, on occasion, crab cakes. Prices are reasonable, ranging from \$2.89 to \$3.29 at breakfast, and about \$4.25 at lunch.

The equipment stars at this show are two Keating Miraclean® griddles: a five-foot model in the back of the house and a 48-inch model with two

Top-Side™ Cookers at the grill station. Don Bartlett, director of nutritional services at the hospital, purchased the Miraclean® griddles two years ago, when the cafeteria was renovated.

The cafeteria renovation took place ahead of the hospital expansion. A brand-new, 220-bed facility scheduled to open in March of 2007. "The cafeteria was already busting at the seams," Bartlett says. "We redesigned it for better space usage and better flow of customers."

The renovation included replacing an existing griddle. "It was just not keeping up," Bartlett says. "We just get slammed between noon and 2 p.m." To keep up, the kitchen had

been pre-cooking burgers, hot dogs and chicken breasts, then keeping them in hot water and sizzling them as they were ordered. "That's not a quality way of doing things," Bartlett says.

A colleague told Bartlett that he had seen a Miraclean® griddle with a Top-Side™ Cooker, which speeds up the cooking process by cooking both sides of an item at once. Bartlett then saw a demonstration of a Miraclean® at a trade show, and decided to give it a try.

"It was a big hit immediately," Bartlett says. The griddle helped speed through-put, and customers were thrilled to watch their food being prepared in front of them.

"They can say to put mushrooms, peppers or cheese in the omelet, or red onions on the chipotle burger, and we are able to do those quick made-to-order changes right in front of them," Bartlett says.

Bartlett is happy he ordered a 48-inch model, rather than a 36-inch version that was suggested to him. "We're using every bit of the 48-inch at lunch," he says. And the griddle gets



Don Bartlett, Florida Hospital Nutritional Services;
Eliza Keating, President, Keating of Chicago, Inc.;
Joe Jost, Preferred Marketing;
Bill Murray, Edward Don & Company

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a workout, since the grill station is open from 6:30 in the morning until midnight.

Bartlett was so happy with the Miraclean® griddle's performance that when an old griddle in the back of the house gave out, he replaced it with the five-foot Miraclean®. That Miraclean® cooks up salmon, liver-and-onions and other specialties for the cafeteria's hot line and food for catered events; it also handles foods for patient meals such as pancakes, hash browns and eggs.

"We decided on Keating because we were so happy with the griddle in front," Bartlett says, adding ease of care and maintenance, not only fast food production, as the griddle's benefits.



The Garden Market Cafeteria inside Florida Hospital East Orlando chose The Keating Miraclean® Griddle with optional Top-Side™ Cooker to keep their customers coming back for more. Above, Chef Kelvin Fox, prepares the popular Chicken Fajita sandwich.

Plus, the griddle throws off less heat than other models: "The staff isn't sweltering back there," Bartlett adds.

All told, the Miraclean® produces about 29 percent of the items on the cafeteria menu. Its speed has allowed Bartlett to add new menu items, such as quesadillas on the late-night menu and fajita-style entrees, very popular with the hospital's Hispanic employees. "It's allowed us a little flexibility to add variety," he says.

Customers have responded well: The month after Bartlett installed the first Miraclean®, transactions jumped to 28,000 from 25,000 per month. Check averages rose as well, to \$3.70 from \$3.48.

Patrons also commented favorably on the freshness, quality and variety of the menu. "That's one challenge here," Bartlett says. "We have a captive audience; they're here every day." Employees only get a half-hour for lunch, and the closest foodservice operation is a quarter-mile walk away. Employees must drive if they want to go to the nearest quick-service restaurant strip, Bartlett explains.

The cafeteria will expand again, when it moves to the new hospital building. The new cafeteria will have a wok station, a Mediterranean



Florida Hospital East Orlando's cafeteria, The Garden Market, uses Keating Miraclean® griddles to make their Chicken Fajita sandwiches delicious and picture perfect.

pizza and pasta station, three cashiers instead of two, more storage space, and a new name, thanks to an employee "name the cafeteria" contest.

And, thanks to their stellar performance, the Miraclean® griddles will make the move as well. "Quality of product is key for me," Bartlett says.

Philip Nicolai writes frequently about the restaurant industry.



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